

<p>Institution: London Metropolitan University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 27 - Area Studies</p>
<p>Title of case study: Humanitarian Migration Management: migrant young people in the global sex industry</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact Professor Nick Mai researched the mobilities and vulnerabilities of young men, women and transgender people, including minors, working in the sex industry in the UK, EU and internationally. His findings show that most young migrants decide to work in the sex industry, which they consider less exploitative than other sectors. They also show that anti-trafficking initiatives exacerbate the vulnerability of migrant sex workers by enforcing restrictive migration policies and the criminalisation of sex work. Mai's research impacted on public debates, policymaking and services, which as a result now recognize trafficking as distinct from sex work and specifically target the needs of migrant sex workers.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research Mai directed five interrelated research projects, which were externally funded by public and non-governmental bodies at a local, national and international level including the ESRC, Save the Children, the International Organisation for Migration, the French region PACA and Haringey Council. Mai's research spans a variety of emigration and immigration contexts including the EU, Eastern Europe, North Africa and Cuba. It addresses jointly men (including traffickers), transgender people and minors, thus complementing the focus on women that characterises sex work research. Mai is mostly credited for having discovered that only a minority of migrants are actually forced to work in the sex industry. This corresponds to the experience of the main sex work support organisations in the UK and internationally. In the words of a representative of the UK Network of Sex Work Projects (UKNSWP), 'member projects in London see thousands of sex workers a year and these findings reflect what they see'. Mai's research also introduced a more nuanced understanding of the vulnerabilities implicated in young migrants' involvement in the sex industry and other irregular economic activities. According to the English Collective of Prostitutes, a grass-roots organisation of sex workers with a national network throughout the UK, by providing evidence on 'the complex lives that those of us who are immigrants working in the sex industry live', Mai's research 'gave immigrant sex workers a voice and a face (...and...) helped people identify sex workers with other workers in the informal sector and see between various battles to improve occupational safety'. Mai's work adopted an innovative methodological combination of ethnographic observation and semi-structured interviewing, which included peer researchers and organisations representing the rights of the social groups being researched. Mai's research shows that by working in the sex industry and engaging in other irregular economic activities most young migrants, including minors, are able to achieve socio-economic and psychological autonomy, which contributes to their resilience and well-being. It also identifies psychological and socio-economic factors, such as psychological dependency, the stigmatization of sex work, the lack of legal migration status and socio-economic marginalization, which strongly contribute to migrants' vulnerability in social and individual terms. Mai's finding that anti-trafficking initiatives exacerbate the vulnerability of migrant sex workers was valued and owned by grass-root and other sex work support organisations, who underline how policies should focus on 'the under-reporting of violent and other crimes committed against sex workers' (UKNSWP representative). A representative of the IUSW, the International Union of Sex Workers, launched and endorsed the findings of the ESRC project by underlining that 'we will only successfully target trafficking within the sex industry when we make policy based on evidence and in reality'. According to the director of the NHS-funded Open Doors project supporting sex workers in East London, 'policy makers have to take into account a well-respected study that challenges the concepts on which they have built policy, listened to ideological rhetoric and generally taken an over-simplistic view of the sex industry'.</p>
<p>3. References to the research Mai directed the following Research Grants: 2010-2011 Haringey Council Evaluation of the Services Offered to Migrants in Haringey & Enfield (Service Agreement Service 10 January 2010) by SHOC (Sexual Health on Call). £20,000.</p>

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2007-2009 'Migrant Workers in the UK Sex Industry Research' funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (RES-622-26-367). £250,000.

2008 IOM, International Organisation of Migration – Rome HQ. One-year research project on the 'Psycho-Social Profile of Albanians and Romanian Traffickers'. £20,000.

2005-2007 Save the Children Italy – Rome. Two-year research project on the relation between child and youth migration, the involvement in illegal activities and social intervention. £20,000.

2005-2006 PACA French Regional Authority. Two-year project on minors and young adult male migrants selling sex in the EU. £20,000

Publications

1. Mai, N. (2009) 'Between Minor and Errant mobility: the Relation Between the Psychological Dynamics and the Migration Patterns of Young Men Selling Sex in the EU', *Mobilities*, 4(3), pp. 349-366.

2. Mai, N. (2010) '*The Politicisation of Migrant Minors: Italo-Romanian Geopolitics and EU Integration*', *AREA*, 42(2): 182-9.

3. Mai, N. (2011) 'Tampering with the Sex of "Angels": Migrant Male Minors and Young Adults Selling Sex in the EU', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 37(8): 1237-1252.

4. Mai, N. (2011) 'Marginalised (Male) Young Migrants in the EU: Caught Between the Desire for Autonomy and the Priorities of Social Protection', in *Migrating Alone: Unaccompanied and Separated Children's Migration to Europe*, Paris: UNESCO, pp. 69-90.

5. Mai, N. (2012) 'The Fractal Queerness of Non-Heteronormative Migrants Working in the UK Sex Industry', *Sexualities* 15(5-6): 570-585.

6. Mai, N. (2013) 'Embodied Cosmopolitanisms: the Subjective Mobility of Migrants Working in the Global Sex Industry', *Gender, Place and Culture*, 20(1): 107-124.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The Errant Mobility report was published on the EFUS (European Forum for Urban Security, an EU-wide network of 300 local and regional authorities) website and advertised through its listings. The findings officially informed the documentary 'Welcome Europa' (2006), which was produced and broadcast by the Arte channel and selected at the Sundance Film Festival (2007). They inform the 'Training, Information and Research on Unaccompanied Minors' policy document produced by the DEVMED (Mediterranean Development Department) of the PACA regional authority.

According to a representative of Save the Children Italy 'the report became a standard reference for Italian judges, policymakers and project workers in Italy to understand the intricate relationship between exploitation and advantage experienced by unaccompanied migrant minors'. The theoretical and methodological approach and the findings of Mai's research became the blueprint of the PUCAFREU (Promoting Unprotected Unaccompanied Children's Access to their Fundamental Rights in the European Union) EU-funded research project.

The combined findings of the ESRC-funded research, the Haringey Council evaluation and the IOM-funded project had an important impact on public debates, policymaking and service provision in the UK. They led to the implementation of specific language translation and outreach services for migrant sex workers in London and in the rest of the UK. Haringey Council used the evaluation results to successfully argue for the need to hire Romanian and Brazilian Portuguese speaking outreach workers. Mai's research reinforced ECP's 'priority as an organization to focus on providing rights based information in various languages as well as in English'. According to a representative of UKNSWP, 'project feedback was that that they had a greater understanding of the experiences of migrants which could inform their outreach and support service provision to ensure appropriate services were provided'.

The research informed and shifted public policies and media debates towards a distinction between migrants' involvement in the sex industry and trafficking (i.e. see Guardian article by Nick Davies on 'Prostitution and trafficking – the anatomy of a moral panic', 20 October 2009). The ECP

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used the research in their campaign against the 2009 Policing and Crime Act and 'the increased criminalization of sex workers and the closures of premises justified in the name of clamping down on trafficking'. Following the launch of the research findings, Mai was consulted by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) during the preparation of the 'Setting the Record' report, so far the only official police quantification of sex trafficking in England and Wales, confirming that only a minority of migrant sex workers are trafficked. The findings were presented at the ACPO 2010 and at two of the UKNSWP yearly national conferences in 2009 and 2010. The research completed a tradition of participative and ethnographic research engaging sex workers directly in identifying their needs and priorities. It has 'directly informed policy development at a national level and informed support service practice across the UK' (UKNSWP representative) and was pivotal in producing a forceful impact on current UK government guidelines and strategies on trafficking, which are now separate from those on prostitution and acknowledge that a minority of migrants working in the sex industry are trafficked. The findings of the research inform the influential 2012 report 'Silence on Violence' on the violence experienced by sex workers in London and on the way anti-trafficking campaigns exacerbated their vulnerability. The report was authored by a London GLA member, according to whom Mai's research 'helps both quantify and qualify' the 'options and choices open to trafficked people' and provided 'invaluable' insight in an area characterised by 'little data'.

Mai's film 'Normal' is informed by the combined findings of Mai's research and was selected at the Raindance International Film Festival 2012. It was screened at several projects and events of the UKNSWP, as well as at a range of national and international academic, policymaking and activist settings. The film has been regularly included in syllabi of teaching modules in Criminology, Gender and Sexuality, Public Health, Anthropology and Sociology at several UK (Leeds, LSE, LSHTM) and international (Paris – EHESS, Nijmegen – Radboud) universities and has impacted on the training of prospective practitioners and policymakers. It has been seen as helping sex workers to 'voice their own experiences of migrating to the UK' (Open Doors director) and 'helping break down stereotypes' (ECP) while project practitioners have seen it as 'an important resource to inform their partner agencies and the general public about migrant sex work' (UKNSWP representative).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

1. The ESRC research impacted directly on public debates and policymaking. It informed the parliamentary debates of the Policing and Crime Bill 2009 and several news items, including: three BBC programmes (Newsnight, BBC London News and London Politics Show); the Economist's advertising campaign in Winter 2011; two articles in the Guardian; two articles in Metro; one article in the Evening Standard, the Hackney Gazette, the Islington Informer, the Herald Scotland (Glasgow) and the Telegraph, and over 100 mentions in internet based newspapers and policymaking websites. They are also mentioned in at least 30 internet based UK and international newspapers – the list can be made available on request. In April 2013 Mai was interviewed by Danish TV in the context of a national debate on the criminalisation of sex work and by 'Information' and other national Danish newspapers. The following is a selection of the main UK and international media items through which Mai's research impacted on public debates:

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2009/oct/20/trafficking-numbers-women-exaggerated>

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/oct/25/catherine-bennett-prostitution-trafficking>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-15522279>

<http://www.standard.co.uk/news/majority-of-sex-workers-not-forced-or-trafficked-6362420.html>

<http://metro.co.uk/2011/10/31/prostitutes-believe-selling-sex-beats-doing-a-menial-job-study-202607/>

<http://www.spiked-online.com/newsite/article/7625#.UnEVZBZ4G2w>

<http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/crime-courts/is-there-really-a-sex-trafficking-epidemic.15396708>

<http://www.information.dk/456280> (in Danish)

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<http://www.information.dk/457129> (in Danish)

2. Save the Children Italy – on the impact of the Save the Children research on social interventions targeting unaccompanied migrant minors and young adults in Rome and in Italy. The report of the research is published online in Italian on the charity's website:

http://images.savethechildren.it/IT/f/img_publicazioni/img38_b.pdf

3. PUCAFREU Project – on the impact of Mai's research on migrant minors and young people on EU research and social interventions. The adoption of Mai's theoretical and methodological approach is mentioned on the project's webpage: <http://www.pucafreu.org/index.php/project-description>

4. UKNSWP (UK Network of Sex Work Projects). A contact at UKNSWP is provided, who will be able to explain the impact of the ESRC research findings and their dissemination (events, academic and non-academic publications and documentary filmmaking) on public debates, policymaking and service provision targeting migrant sex workers in the UK.

The research is mentioned and the final report is available on UKNSWP's website:

<http://www.uknswp.org/wp-content/uploads/policyfindingsMigrantsinUKSexIndustroct09.pdf>

A written testimony is held at the university and can be provided on request.

5. NHS – targeted services supporting sex workers. A contact is provided at the Open Door Project who will be able to comment on the impact of the ESRC research findings and their dissemination (events, non-academic publications and documentary filmmaking) on public debates, policymaking and service provision targeting migrant sex workers in London.

A written testimony is held at the university and can be provided on request.

6. ECP – English Collective of Prostitutes. A contact at ECP is provided, who will be able to explain the way the ESRC research findings and their dissemination (events, non-academic publications and documentary filmmaking) impacted on grass root support activities addressing migrant sex workers in the London. The research is mentioned on ECP's website:

<http://prostitutescollective.net/2009/11/21/report-and-thank-you-2/>

A written testimony is held at the university and can be provided on request.

7. IUSW (International Union of Sex Workers) – on the impact of the ESRC research on public debates, policymaking and social interventions addressing migrant sex workers in the UK. The research is mentioned on IUSW's website: <http://www.iusw.org/2011/10/majority-of-migrant-sex-workers-not-forced-or-trafficked/>

8. GLA (Greater London Assembly). A contact at GLA is provided. This is a London Assembly Member who will be able to comment on the impact of the ESRC research findings on public debates, policymaking and social interventions addressing migrant sex workers in London.

Mai's research is mentioned in the 2012 'Silence on Violence' report by LAM Andrew Boff <http://glaconservatives.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/03/Report-on-the-Safety-of-Sex-Workers-Silence-on-Violence.pdf>. It is also mentioned in the 2013 'Shadow City – exposing human trafficking in everyday London' report by the same author

<http://glaconservatives.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Shadow-City.pdf>.

9. Haringey Council. A contact is provided at the Drug & Alcohol Action Strategy Team, who will be able to explain the impact of the Haringey evaluation on services targeting migrant sex workers in the Enfield, Haringey and Barnet. The evaluation is available here:

<https://metranet.londonmet.ac.uk/research-units/iset/projects/esrc-migrant-workers.cfm>

10. X:talk project. The X:talk project is a sex worker-led co-operative offering English language teaching to fellow sex workers in London enabling them to work in safer conditions, to organise and to socialise with each other. Mai's research findings inform X:talk's 2010 'Human Rights, Sex Work and the Challenge of Trafficking Report', which is available here:

<http://www.xtalkproject.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/reportfinal1.pdf>.