

## Addressing Demand in Anti-Trafficking Efforts and Policies

# DemandAT

### Background

The DemandAT project investigates different approaches to addressing and reducing demand through anti-trafficking efforts and policies. The project addresses the challenge of **understanding what demand is in the context of trafficking in human beings (THB) conceptually, theoretically and empirically**. It draws on related policy areas to investigate the scope of demand-side measures to reduce demand for THB. While much of the literature to date analyses the vulnerability of (potential) 'victims' of THB, a demand-side analysis has the potential to re-centre attention onto those benefitting from THB, and therefore presumably bearing a degree of responsibility for it. In theory, the research will enable questioning of how the structure and regulation of particular markets allows for high levels of exploitation and, at the extreme, trafficking in human beings.

**Conceptually**, there is **considerable controversy about the meaning of demand in the context of THB** and whether a demand/supply model provides an adequate conceptual framework to better understand THB and other forms of severe exploitation. There are questions whether it is reasonable and analytically fruitful to speak of a specific demand for services, goods or labour provided by victims of THB. Or does the demand for specific services, labour and goods need to be looked at more broadly with the overall factors that contribute to exploitative situations (and possible policies to address these) that need to be the actual focus of policy measures on the demand side of THB. **From a theoretical perspective**, there are questions whether the occurrence of severe forms of exploitation can be fully understood within an analytical framework focusing on the economics of THB. If so, what policy tools are available to steer demand?

**Empirically**, the available studies within trafficking research typically cover only a limited number of fields, focusing mostly on prostitution, and to a lesser extent, labour exploitation. Little has been said about other areas in which THB occurs. In addition, there is only **limited**