EMPOWERMENT THROUGH RIGHTS AWARENESS

Manual on the empowerment of sex workers through the promotion of equal access to rights and legal protection

Funded by the European Union
INDOORS
Empowerment and skill building tools
for national and migrant female sex workers
working in hidden places

This guide is based on contributions from the nine partners of the INDOORS project. It was compiled within the framework of the INDOORS project (January 2013-December 2014), under the coordination of the following organisation:

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5 Definition of key terms
The third phase of the INDOORS project was carried out between January 2013 and December 2014 in partnership with nine organisations in nine member states of the European Union: Austria, Bulgaria, France, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain.

The main aim of the project was to reduce the exposure of female indoor-based sex workers to risks and violence by promoting their empowerment at a grass-roots level.

The INDOORS III objectives

- Spread and optimise the use of new technologies in order to:
  - adapt to the actual trends within the European sex industry
  - reach out to indoor-based sex workers who are less accessible
  - counsel even anonymously, sex workers on health, legal and social issues on a large scale
- Develop strategies to reach indoor-based sex workers, in particular those who work in hidden places, are more exposed to risk and are more vulnerable.
- Create and maintain contact with indoor-based sex workers by informing and supporting them in order to reduce isolation.
- Enhance the group's knowledge, access to services, rights and legal protection through information and practical advice.
- Tackle the issue of sex workers' rights by carrying out awareness campaigns aimed at the general public and, indirectly, potential clients and professionals who work with and for sex workers.
- Sensitise and assist professionals in establishing adequate services for sex workers who are victims of violence.
- Provide an updated overview of the needs expressed by the target group in order to facilitate a proactive adaptation of services.
- Provide an overview of the realities of the indoor sex work scene in nine European cities, namely: Amsterdam, Genoa, Hamburg, Helsinki, Madrid, Marseille, Porto, Sofia and Vienna.

Favour community engagement and community-based mobilisation through peer participation, while facilitating a horizontal exchange of knowledge and experience.

Favour the transferability of experiences and capacity building to increase the efficiency and impact of actions undertaken.

Favour networking at local, national and European levels in order to strengthen the impact and dissemination of actions carried out by the INDOORS project.

The INDOORS III products

- Flexible use of information technologies
  Development and implementation of information and communication technologies in outreach, advocacy and empowerment
- Advocating for the rights of sex workers
  Developing campaigns to sensitise the general public, policy makers and authorities
- Peer education in sex work
  A guide on the development and implementation of peer education methodologies within the context of sex work in eight European countries
- Empowerment through rights awareness
  Manual on the empowerment of sex workers through the promotion of equal access to rights and legal protection
- Outreach in indoor sex work settings
  2013 – 2014 | A report based on the mapping of the indoor sex work sector in nine European cities, contextualised by national overviews

The INDOORS products are available at www.indoors-project.eu and at the partners’ websites.

The main coordinator of the INDOORS project is the French organisation Autres Regards.
Partners

AUSTRIA | LEFÖ
Since the early 1990s, LEFÖ has offered counselling and support for migrant women doing sex work in Austria, and has actively lobbied for the legal and social recognition of sex workers. Since 1995, LEFÖ has been part of the European research and support network known as TAMPEP (European Network for HIV/STI Prevention and Health Promotion among Migrant Sex Workers).
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BULGARIA | HESED
HESED was founded in 1998 as a successor of the first organisation working in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention in Bulgaria. The organisation aims to create opportunities for individual and community development, promote health and social well-being and develop and promote effective approaches for the successful integration of disadvantaged communities. The foundation established, and still offers, outreach services for community mobilisation and psycho-social support for vulnerable groups.
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FINLAND | Pro-tukipiste
Pro-tukipiste ry was founded in 1990, and is a registered non-profit organisation that promotes sex workers’ rights and offers professional low threshold social support, healthcare services and legal advice for sex workers in the Helsinki and Tampere regions. Services are free of charge and anonymous, as well as politically and religiously independent. As a nation-wide expert organisation, Pro-tukipiste also offers consultation on issues concerning prostitution, sex work and trafficking in human beings.
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FRANCE | Autres Regards
Autres Regards is a community-based organisation located in Marseille that has worked with and for street-based sex workers of all genders since 1995. The organisation works on the prevention of HIV/AIDS and STIs, health promotion, the improvement of access to health services and fundamental rights for sex workers. In January 2009, Autres Regards extended its activities to indoor-based sex workers.
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GERMANY | Ragazza
Ragazza is an NGO that has offered support and counselling for drug using outdoor-based female sex workers in Hamburg since 1991. The organisation offers a secure place for the target group, including warm meals, overnight accommodation, a consumer room, needle exchange services, counselling on health and social issues and accompaniment to public health services. Ragazza carries out outreach activities, harm reduction interventions and advocacy work for the rights of drug-using sex workers.
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ITALY | Le Graziose, CDCP Genova
Le Graziose was created in 2007 as the Genoese branch of the Committee for Civil Rights of Prostitutes (CDCP – ONLUS), which was founded in 1982. It is a non-profit association that promotes the civil and human rights of sex workers, offers
counselling on sex work-related issues, implements empowerment strategies for sex workers and is involved in projects against
the exploitation and trafficking of human beings. Le Graziose also supports campaigns on HIV/AIDS, STIs and harm reduction
interventions.

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NETHERLANDS | TAMPEP International Foundation
The TAMPEP International Foundation carries out EU and international projects concerning migrant and national sex workers' health and
well-being, sex workers' rights, advocacy and health promotion. TAMPEP was founded in 1993 and started out as a regional network. TAMPEP currently leads a network of
community-based service providers operating in 28 European countries and is a member of the Global Network of Sex Work Projects and
ICRSE (International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe).

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PORTUGAL | APDES
APDES is a non-profit organisation that was founded in 2004. APDES promotes sustainable development among vulnerable
communities and populations (drug users, migrants, sex workers, unemployed persons) through the improvement of access to health
services, employment and education, thus seeking to empower these populations and reinforce social cohesion. Its interventions
are based on action-research principles, participatory methodologies, proximity strategies, and principles of citizenship and human rights. APDES implements national
and EU projects that seek to promote sex workers' rights and improve sex workers' working conditions.

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SPAIN | Hetaira
The Colectivo Hetaira was founded in 1995 as the initiative of a group of female sex workers and women from other working sectors, as a
means to fight social stigmatisation and as an instrument for sex workers to defend their rights. The association has since then been a reference point for the defence of sex
workers' rights to work in peace, to organise themselves, to unionise, to contribute to a state pension, and to be free to denounce physical aggressions.

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The red umbrella is the symbol for sex workers' rights around the world. It is used in images and during public demonstrations. It has been
a worldwide symbol since 2001, when it was used for the first time by sex workers during a demonstration at the Venice Art Biennale, as part of an art installation of the Slovenian artist Tadej Pogačar.

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Empowerment through rights awareness

As human rights are universal, they apply to everyone. Every human being is entitled to the highest attainable standard of health, privacy, liberty and security, freedom of expression and assembly, gender equality, freedom from violence and arbitrary arrest, free choice of employment and just and favourable working conditions, non-discrimination, and the prohibition of forced labour, child labour and trafficking.¹

UNAIDS Guidance Note on HIV and Sex Work, 2009

Sex workers, like every human being, have inherent rights. These rights should be protected, respected and fulfilled by the law, and advocated for through different stakeholders in the field of sex work. This human rights principle is key to this manual.

Drawing on this, the INDOORS project stands for a human rights-based, non-judgmental approach to sex work and sex workers. It recognises sex work as work and, from a sex workers’ rights perspective, emphasises the importance of approaching those within the sex industry respectfully.

Sex workers’ realities are diverse. Sex workers are at times victims of human rights abuses, economic exploitation and violence. However, it is worth noting that these violations are not inherent to sex work. There is a difference between voluntary sex work, which is defined as a consensual contract between adults, and forced labour or slavery, which is non-consensual and therefore a violation of human rights.

Violence against women, transgender people and vulnerable groups is a reflection of the existing gender imbalances and socio-economic determinants in our society – but it is not part of sex work. Nevertheless, legal and policy barriers, including the lack of access to legal protection, can

put sex workers at risk of severe human rights violations. In this context, an enabling legal environment is essential to tackling violence and the factors that put sex workers in a position of vulnerability.

Aims of the Manual

As citizens, sex workers are entitled to fundamental rights. However, due to the often marginalised and isolated situation of the sex worker community, not only do sex workers mostly lack information on their rights, but their access to rights is furthermore frequently denied. Considering these challenges, sex workers need to be empowered and aware of their rights and how to demand them on the local, national and international levels.

The lack of information on rights and legal protection can lead to increased exposure to economic exploitation and human rights abuses. In order to empower sex workers and increase their access to information and rights, organisations in the field should promote rights awareness and tools for overcoming structural barriers.

This manual thus focuses on activities targeted at strengthening empowerment through equal access to rights and legal protection, and aims:

- To present examples that promote and strengthen the empowerment of female indoor-based sex workers so that they are better equipped to improve their working conditions, access health services and information and fight against violence and discrimination, ensuring that they learn how to access their fundamental rights.
- To present examples of innovative tools for empowerment activities that favour equal access to rights and legal protection.
- To present examples that enhance sex workers' knowledge of access to services, rights and legal protection through information and practical advice.
- To promote community building through peer counselling and the sharing of experiences.

The development, implementation and presentation of good practices in this manual was made possible thanks to the INDOORS project partner organisations' extensive experience with and knowledge of the indoor prostitution scenes in their nine (European) cities.
The good practices presented in this manual are based on several criteria. Depending on the perspective, every definition of good practices focuses on diverse factors (for example, the definition given by the European Commission\(^1\) or UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation)\(^{16}\)).

In the context of sex work, it is important to highlight the following aspects when it comes to defining a good practice: the diversity of sex workers’ environments should be kept in mind, sex workers should participate actively in the development and implementation of the activity, and every activity should be based on a respectful and non-judgmental attitude.

The INDOORS project follows the definition of good practices developed by the TAMPEP\(^2\) Network, which the members of the project are a part of. According to this definition, good practices are “(...) activities, projects or ways of working that have been considered successful in dealing with problems or phenomena, thus making a positive contribution to the issue at hand. The framework of good practices is a useful tool not only as a way of learning and disseminating knowledge but also to supply practical means of partnership between communities, governments and the private sector. Good practices provide a much-needed link between research and policy-making by inspiring decision-makers with successful initiatives and model projects that can make an innovative and sustainable contribution to solving problems in society.”\(^3\)

The good practices presented were based on these criteria and on the following four characteristics, the INDOORS criteria\(^4\):

- The activity promotes and encourages the participation of sex workers in its preparation, implementation and/or evaluation
- The activity is transferable to other contexts and cities
- The activity promotes a non-judgmental attitude and respect for sex workers’ rights
- The activity has been evaluated

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\(^1\) The European Network for HIV/STI Prevention and Health Promotion among Migrant Sex Workers was founded in 1993. From 1993 to 2009, it was financed by the European Commission and DG SANCO/Health and Consumer Protection, and co-financed by national governmental and non-governmental organisations.

\(^2\) TAMPEP 2009: 10.


These criteria can be understood as stringent principles upon which different good practices can be built. At the same time, it is important to point out that every good practice is unique and innovative in its setting and implementation. The examples presented in the following pages reveal how activities can be modified, adapted and developed in line with the local context of each environment and city.

Finally, the manual aims to illustrate the diverse strategies that exist for the promotion of indoor sex workers’ empowerment and access to rights and legal protection. The lessons learned from these experiences – both positive and negative – should inspire further initiatives and projects by demonstrating what successful interventions can look like.

Methodology and structure

All INDOORS partner organisations have extensive experience working with and in-depth knowledge of the field of sex work. According to the specific environment and the identified needs of indoor sex workers, each organisation provides a range of activities promoting the empowerment of sex workers and their access to fundamental human and labour rights. Thus, the manual is the result of the INDOORS partner organisations experience in working with and for female and transgender national and migrant sex workers in nine EU countries.

The manual presents the elaboration, development and implementation of good practices in the area of workshops and online sessions (which were carried out by the project’s partners). It is divided into three sections:

1. **Human rights in the context of sex work** | The importance of human rights principles is analysed concretely through the examination of key human rights in the context of sex work.

2. **Legal protection for sex workers in Europe** | A general introduction to the legal and political framework of prostitution in Europe, followed by an analysis of the negative impacts of legal environments on sex workers and the barriers that they face in accessing their rights.

3. **Examples of good practices** | A presentation of the specific empowerment activities carried out in each project country. The activities presented in this manual include workshops, legal workshops and online sessions.
An overview of the legislative and political frameworks of the nine countries in which the activities took place is essential to providing insight into the prostitution scene of each country and the needs of female, transgender, national and migrant indoor sex workers. Focusing on the barriers created by national and legal frameworks and their impact on the living and working conditions of sex workers enables us to identify sex workers’ needs in terms of legal protection in a specific environment.

It is important to underscore that the reported activities that were carried out by the partner organisations were developed in different contexts. Thus, they also had different outcomes. Although all of the activities were based on the same methodology and principles, each partner designed and implemented interventions according to their specific local situations and the needs of the sex workers involved.

The examples that are presented in this manual are a selection of all of the activities implemented within the frame of the INDOORS project.
Human rights in the context of sex work

Human rights: a universal principle

Article 7

- All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 13

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.
- (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his/her own, and to return to his/her country.¹

Article 23

- (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
- (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
- (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for him/her and his/her family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
- (4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights establishes equal sets of rights for every human being. It protects citizens from violations committed by state actors, and calls on states' obligation to protect citizens from human rights violations by others.

Nevertheless, sex workers around the world often experience several human rights violations, which are intrinsically connected to the unsafe working and living conditions that they are subjected to. This part of the report therefore calls attention to rights awareness to affirm sex workers' human rights.
Based on international human rights treaties, in October 2005, the ICRSE | the International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe drafted the Declaration of the Rights of Sex Workers. With this act, 120 sex workers and 80 allies and politicians from 30 countries emphasised and reaffirmed that sex workers have the same fundamental rights as every human being and presented during the first European Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labour and Migration (Brussels, October 2005). It is still the main advocacy document for sex workers in Europe today.

The Declaration states that:

“[governments] should protect the human rights of all sex workers: female, male and transgender, migrant and domestic. These are common and accepted rights that apply to citizens of every nation. Governments have already agreed to these rights by signing treaties, but they are still denied to sex workers.”

Although this conference and the Declaration mark a high point in sex workers’ rights, other alliances and networks advocated these principles long before, and have continued to play a fundamental role in global advocacy for sex workers’ rights. NSWP | the Global Network of Sex Work Projects has influenced policies and programmes on sex work and participated in several international human rights forums. As a result of this successful lobbying and advocacy, NSWP has also managed to facilitate networking between sex workers on a global level. The success of NSWP’s work is evidenced by its own growth over the years from an informal alliance to a formal structure with member organisations. Today, NSWP is a large international network of sex worker-led organisations and organisations supporting the rights of sex workers.

Sex worker-led organisations play an important role in advocacy for sex workers’ rights around the world. In the past, strong, collaborative sex workers’ movements have risen up and spoken out, calling for sex workers’

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7 For more information on the history, different projects and member organisations of the NSWP please see http://www.nswp.org
rights and the implementation of human rights for sex workers. Sex workers themselves are best positioned to know what they need and are best placed to do something about it.

Based on this perspective, the Declaration of the Rights of Sex Workers, as well as other advocacy documents, such as the Consensus Statement of NSWP, serve as reference points for European sex workers’ rights advocacy.

THE SEX WORKERS’ DECLARATION

October 2005, Brussels

The Declaration of the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe is a civil society document (signed by individuals and organisations) that was inspired by the international human rights framework. It highlights the importance of ensuring access to equal rights for all individuals in Europe (and worldwide), and underlines states’ role in providing protection and respect for every human being. Sex workers share the same human rights and protection under international law, and states have an obligation to ensure that these rights are not violated by their own actors, society or individuals. In this regard, the Declaration continues to play a key role in advocacy for sex workers’ rights in the European context, with the following articles being used to lobby for sex workers’ rights and influence policy decisions and programmes on sex work.

The Declaration of the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe

This Declaration is made by sex workers and by organisations dedicated to promoting their human rights and welfare. The Declaration lists rights that all individuals within Europe, including sex workers, enjoy under international human rights law; the Declaration then prescribes measures and recommends practices that the signatories of the Declaration believe are the minimum necessary to ensure that these rights are respected and protected. These rights must be respected and protected in the development and implementation of policies and programmes designed to address trafficking, irregular migration or terrorism.

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8 More detailed information on the different sex worker-led organisations can be found under http://www.redumbrellafund.org/
The Declaration

All individuals within Europe, including sex workers, are entitled to the following rights under international human rights law. All European Governments are obliged to respect, protect and fulfil:

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<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>The right to life, liberty and security of person</td>
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<td>II.</td>
<td>The right to be free from arbitrary interference with one's private and family life, home or correspondence and from attacks on honour and reputation</td>
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<td>III.</td>
<td>The right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health</td>
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<td>IV.</td>
<td>The right to freedom of movement and residence</td>
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<td>V.</td>
<td>The right to be free from slavery, forced labour and servitude</td>
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<td>VI.</td>
<td>The right to equal protection of the law and protection against discrimination and any incitement to discrimination under any of the varied and intersecting [statuses] of gender, race, citizenship, sexual orientation, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>The right to marry and found a family</td>
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<td>VIII.</td>
<td>The right to work, to free choice of employment and to just and favourable conditions of work</td>
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<td>IX.</td>
<td>The right to peaceful assembly and association</td>
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<td>X.</td>
<td>The right to leave any country, including one's own, and to return to one's own country</td>
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<tr>
<td>XI.</td>
<td>The right to seek asylum and to non-refoulement</td>
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<tr>
<td>XII.</td>
<td>The right to participate in the cultural and public life of society</td>
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Sex workers' rights in practice

The states that have signed and ratified international human rights treaties are obliged to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all persons within their jurisdictions, without discrimination. In spite of this, the same states that have signed human rights treaties are responsible for implementing legislation or carrying out practices and measures that limit or even violate the fundamental rights and freedoms of sex workers.
On this matter, UNAIDS, like several other international organisations, has pointed out that:

“[laws], police practices and policies in many countries undermine sex workers' enjoyment of their rights. Criminalisation of sex work and the application of non-criminal laws to sex work exacerbate the stigma and moral judgementalism experienced by sex workers.”

Sex workers should be entitled to the same human rights as any other worker under international human rights treaties, regardless of whether prostitution is considered legal or not on a national level. Every female, male or transgender sex worker should be able to freely choose this occupation, to decide with whom to have sex, under which conditions to work and which sexual services to provide. The autonomy of sex workers is a fundamental element that needs to be guaranteed by national law in order to fulfil their human rights.

However, in reality, these human rights obligations often remain theoretical without practical implementation. This fact indicates a general problem in the human rights paradigm, as most rights are not enforced at the local or national level. States parties, obliged to enforce human rights in their own countries, do not properly implement adequate domestic laws to meet human rights goals – namely those that affect sex workers. Therefore, sex workers face various legal barriers that hinder their freedom and autonomy in governing their own lives and working conditions. In the following chapter, some of the fundamental rights as well as existing barriers to these rights will be analysed in the context of sex work. The examples mentioned here refer to the legal framework of the countries in which the INDOORS project took place, and should serve as an illustration of sex worker' rights in practice.

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11 The sex workers' rights that were selected and analysed follow the recommendations of the Sex Workers' Rights Declaration of 2005. Available at http://www.sexworkeurope.org/resources/declaration-rights-sex-workers-europe
The right to equal protection of the law and equal protection from discrimination

Sex workers have the right to equal protection of the law, as well as protection from discrimination and any incitement to discrimination. Regardless of their status as sex workers and whatever legal regimes governments implement concerning sex work, sex workers’ rights should be respected in every sense. This means:

- Law enforcement officers should be trained to act as partners in the defence of the human rights of sex workers, instead of violating rights arbitrarily and devaluing crimes against sex workers.

**IN PRACTICE** Police harassment of sex workers is common in several countries, especially in countries with an abolitionist framework and no recognition of sex work as an occupation (such as in Spain, Portugal and Italy). In Italy, the police regularly abuse their power during police raids, leaving sex workers vulnerable to rights violations. In addition, this abuse of power often prevents sex workers from reporting crimes committed against them because they feel that they cannot trust law enforcement.

- States should ensure that sex workers are not subjected to mandatory HIV testing or restrictions on their civil liberties, and that they have unimpeded access to all HIV prevention, treatment, care and support programmes. Prevention programmes should ensure access to lubricants as well as condoms. HIV-positive sex workers must be considered a high priority population for uninterrupted access to treatment and care services.

**IN PRACTICE** In Austria, sexual health checks for sex workers are mandatory, and are a form of severe discrimination against sex workers.

**IN PRACTICE** Full access to HIV prevention and treatment is not guaranteed in many EU countries. UNAIDS states that "(...) few national policies and programmes adequately address the HIV-related needs of sex workers and their clients, or their potential to contribute to national responses to HIV."\(^{12}\)

Measures should be taken to protect sex workers and their dependents from discrimination in the areas of employment, housing, legal services, childcare and the provision of medical, social and welfare services, as well as from arbitrary and unjustified discrimination from private insurance companies.

**IN PRACTICE** In several countries, for example Bulgaria and the Netherlands, which take very different legal approaches to sex work, sex workers face discrimination when renting flats.

**IN PRACTICE** Access to medical services is not ensured for many sex workers. In Portugal, as in most EU countries, migrant sex workers face restrictions to accessing healthcare.

> **The right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work**

Sex workers have the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection from unemployment. This includes:

- The acknowledgement of sex work as labour or a profession to ensure sex workers’ access to protection provided by national and European labour legislation.

**IN PRACTICE** In countries such as Portugal, France and Bulgaria, sex work is not recognised as labour. This lack of acknowledgement negatively affects the working conditions of sex workers because it results in an inherent denial of labour rights.

- Sex workers should be able to determine, without interference or pressure from others, the nature and conditions of the sexual services that they provide.

**IN PRACTICE** Legal measures in many countries throughout Europe, such as municipal by-laws, restrict the number of legal workplaces for sex workers, forcing them to work under precarious conditions and denying them freedom of choice in the matter.
Sex workers should be entitled to equitable employment and social security benefits, including sick leave and pay, pregnancy and parental leave and pay, holidays and the right to unemployment benefits if their employment is terminated or if they decide to leave sex work.

**IN PRACTICE** The non-recognition of sex work as labour hampers access to social security benefits and labour rights.

**The right to be free from trafficking and slavery**

Sex workers have the right to be free from slavery, forced labour and servitude. This includes:

- The full enjoyment of labour rights, being informed of these rights and having access to the full range of measures and standards to end exploitative working conditions.

**IN PRACTICE** In Spain, as in several other countries, governments use anti-trafficking laws to implement their anti-prostitution and anti-migration agendas, which seek to prevent migrant sex workers from working or travelling. In this manner, such laws restrict migrant sex workers’ freedom of movement and deny sex workers the freedom of choice to practice sex work rather than protecting victims of trafficking.

**The right to form and join trade unions for the protection of one's interests, the right to peaceful assembly and association**

Sex workers have the right to peaceful assembly and association. This means:

- Engagement in sex work should not be considered grounds for limiting sex workers' ability to cooperate, unite and create associations to express their opinions, engage in collective bargaining and advocate for their rights.
**In Practice** In Finland, the pandering law makes it illegal for two or more sex workers to work together, effectively denying sex workers the possibility of associating for the purposes of working together, which violates their right to peaceful assembly and association.

These examples demonstrate the gap between the projected impact of human rights laws and their scant implementation by states in reality.

Sex workers are often confronted with a series of legislative measures and legal practices that deny them full access to legal protection and restrict their fundamental rights and freedoms on local, national and international levels.

In the following chapter, existing laws and regulations will be analysed in more detail. First, different approaches will be described on a European level, focusing on the main trends related to sex work.

Based on this, the national frameworks in nine different countries will then be delineated by identifying national barriers to accessing human rights and the impact of these national policies on sex workers.
On February 27, 2014, the vast majority of the members of European Parliament voted in favour of the criminalisation of clients of sex workers (in order to end demand). This decision came on the heels of a report, written and presented by the British MEP Mary Honeyball, that stated that prostitution was a symbol of patriarchy and a form of violence against women. This landmark decision – even if it was non-binding and therefore had no mandatory political or legal consequences – revealed the European Union’s ideological and political position regarding sex work. The title “Report on Prostitution and Sexual Exploitation and its Impact on Gender Equality” clearly illustrates the report’s intention: to suggest a link between prostitution and violence and to stress that prostitution does not align with human dignity or human rights.

The association of sex work with crime and the conclusion that sex workers are all victims is nothing new, marking instead continuity in the political and legal approaches that EU member states have taken to sex work. This perception of sex work is characterised by its ambiguous character and the general attitude of focusing on reducing sex work or the demand for sex work in society, rather than on the protection of the human rights of sex workers.

13 The resolution was adopted by a margin of 343 votes to 139, with 105 abstentions. Press release “Punish the client, not the prostitute.” Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality, 26.02.2014.

14 See the press release “Punish the client, not the prostitute.” Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality, 26.02.2014.
“Sex work is predominantly discussed within the contexts of morality, violence, criminality and trafficking but seldom within the frame of human rights, autonomy or self-regulation. The different legal systems bear common elements that have similar consequences on sex workers’ human rights and on their access to public health and social care services.”

Some of these common elements have been described and analysed by TAMPEP in a report published in 2009 based on national assessments carried out in 25 European countries. Despite the long period of time that has passed since the release of this report, the main tendencies that the assessment uncovered are still significant and valid today. In fact, it seems that the trends that were revealed then in terms of legislation and policy have become more severe in recent years.

These are:

- An increase of repressive and punitive laws that criminalise sex workers
- The de jure and de facto criminalisation of sex workers’ clients
- A clamp-down on street prostitution
- An increase in repressive policies and juridification
- The conflation of sex work with trafficking, and the instrumentalisation of the combat against trafficking

Across Europe, the trend towards criminalisation, coupled with repressive and exclusionary legislation, policies and practices, is becoming more powerful and dominant. This development has led to an increase of human rights violations, stigma and discrimination against sex workers. For example, repressive and exclusionary laws have thus far evidenced an increase in sex workers’ lack of access to health services, such as HIV/STI prevention, as well as to support services and legal protection.

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16 Sex Work, Migration, Health TAMPEP 2009: 52-54.
17 There are several reports that state that the Swedish legal framework around sex work has increased the sex workers’ vulnerability and decreased possibilities for support services to reach sex workers to provide information and practical advice. See, above others: Wagenaar, Altink, Amesberger: "Final Report of the International Comparative Study of Prostitution Policy: Austria and the Netherlands" with an appendix to "The Swedish Purchase Act" 2013; UNAIDS Advisory Group on HIV and Sex Work. Geneva 2011. Available at http://www.hst.org.za/sites/default/files/20111215_Report-UNAIDS-Advisory-group-HIV-Sex-
Sex workers’ dignity and self-determination are undermined by states’ disregard for the existence of voluntary sex work, as well as by their failure to take the voices and demands of sex workers’ rights organisations into account.18

Instead of promulgating legislation that focuses on repression and criminalisation, states should implement laws that empower and support the independence and autonomy of sex workers while improving their working and living conditions. Based on a human rights perspective, legal and political measures dealing with sex work should facilitate universal access to equal rights and legal protection for female, male and transgender sex workers.

Several human rights organisations as well as international bodies highlight the importance of a non-discriminatory approach to sex work and the necessity of legal measures that focus on the protection of the rights of sex workers, and therefore oppose the criminalisation of sex work – this includes the UNDP’s Global Commission on HIV and the Law, the World Health Organisation and UNAIDS.19 In addition to this, other international human rights organisations have begun discussing their position on the decriminalisation of sex work.

According to TAMPEP,

“[a] policy of inclusion that considers sex workers as social subjects and not as objects of exclusion is a necessary condition to overcome marginalisation and discrimination. This demands a will and a politics of co-operation between sex workers’ organisations, NGOs and official bodies on all levels of planning, decision-making and implementing such measures. At the same time, it is urgent to find not only national solutions but transnational perspectives to establish co-ordinated measures of effective interventions and to ensure the full protection of sex workers’ human rights.”20

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18 For example, over 560 sex workers’ organisations and NGOs signed an appeal urging the European Parliament to reject the report promoting the criminalisation of the purchase of sex. http://www.sexworkeurope.org/de/node/488


The impact of national legislation on sex work and sex workers in nine European countries

While the preceding chapters analysed the human rights framework in general terms and outlined developments in European legislation on sex work in recent years, the following chapter focuses on the LEGAL FRAMEWORKS in nine European countries and their impact on sex workers.

As was previously mentioned, a noticeable trend towards criminalisation and the repression of sex workers is visible in these national examples.

The LEGAL frameworks

AUSTRIA

National legislation on sex work

- Legal approach to sex work: regulatory
- Laws and policies: municipal restrictions, criminalisation of sex workers/third parties, mandatory sexual health checks, licensing system

In Austria, sex work is regulated by national and provincial laws. According to article 118 of the National Constitution, however, the issue of prostitution belongs in the provincial sphere, which means that every province independently regulates the initiation and provision of sexual services within its territory. The various provincial laws deal with prostitution in a regulatory, abolitionist and sometimes even prohibitionist manner. Practicing and soliciting prostitution is only permitted in a licensed brothel.
Outdoor prostitution is only allowed in Vienna, outside the city’s residential areas.

However, there are also national laws that are applied throughout the entire country. For instance, it is compulsory for sex workers to register (either with the municipality or the police) and to undergo regular sexual health checks, and sex workers are taxed as self-employed.

Sex work has not been considered against good morals since April 2012. This means, theoretically, that sex workers can write contracts, work as employees and pursue claims concerning unpaid remunerations. However, in practice this amendment has not yet had concrete consequences.

Other laws having an impact on sex work

MIGRATION | Austrian and EU citizens can officially register as self-employed sex workers. Since 2003, asylum seekers who have been living in Austria legally for at least three months have also been able to engage in sex work within the legal framework of self-employment. Non-EU citizens have faced a drastic increase in restrictions since the immigration package of 2006, when the former “prostitution visa,” a short-term residence permit for self-employed sex workers, was replaced with a standard visa for a maximum of 6 months within a 12-month period. The initial application and any extension applications must be submitted abroad, and require proof of previous work experience in the sex industry in an EU country. This regulation makes it almost impossible for non-EU citizens to work in Austria as sex workers.

Each person living in Austria permanently is obliged to have health insurance covering all possible expenses in case of illness. However, most of the sex workers from other EU countries do not have health insurance in Austria, as they are allowed to stay there without insurance for a period of three months. After this period they must leave the country for a minimum of one day, after which they can return. In this case, they are treated as tourists and have no access to the healthcare system or other social welfare benefits.

MUNICIPAL LAWS | As sex work in Austria differs from province to province, there are several local regulations dealing with sex work. Street prostitution is forbidden in nearly every province, and indoor sex work is only allowed in the licensed sector.
Impact of the legal framework on sex work and sex workers

Mandatory sexual health examinations for sex workers are a form of discrimination, as they suggest that sex workers are a danger to public health. Sex workers are forced to undergo mandatory health examinations on a regular basis (in some provinces, such as Vienna, even weekly, and in others twice a month), and in some places sex workers must even pay for this "service."

The regulations concerning sex work in Austria are characterised by severe restrictions. Little importance is attached to the quality of sex workers’ working conditions or their protection against economic exploitation or violence. Most of the regulations deal with sex work in a repressive and criminalising manner, and restrict legal workplaces for sex workers by prohibiting street prostitution or prostitution in sex workers’ flats (for example). This leads to the displacement of sex workers to more marginalised and precarious workplaces as well as into the illegalised sector, with severe negative consequences.

BULGARIA

National legislation on sex work

- Legal approach to sex work: not specified, abolitionist framing
- Laws and policies: criminalisation of sex workers/third parties, considered "immoral"

The legal framework in Bulgaria does not directly address sex workers – their activities are neither legalised nor criminalised. Sex workers do not require legal permission to offer sexual services, regardless of their origin or nationality. The penal code places restrictions on sex business owners and human trafficking. The following are defined as criminal acts: pimping and persuasion into prostitution; forced prostitution and the prostitution of minors; human trafficking.

Organising and offering venues for prostitution (indoor sex work) is also criminalised, and managers as well as sex workers can be punished by law for pimping if they rent an apartment or other venue.

There is an old article in the penal code, called “Unearned income through immoral means,” that states that able-bodied persons of age who
continuously fail to engage in socially beneficial work, or those who receive income through unwarranted or immoral means, can be subject to up to two years of imprisonment or probation.

There are currently no regulations on offering sexual services via the internet.

**Other laws having an impact on sex work**

**MIGRATION** | As sex work is not on the list of official professional and trade activities, it is not possible for migrants to obtain a work visa or permit for sex work, even if they are entering the country legally.

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL INSURANCE** | Every insured person (nationals and legal migrant residents) can use public healthcare services in exchange for paying appropriate monthly taxes (fixed by the state in a special law that is changed every year) and a small fee paid upon visiting the general practitioner (again, fixed by the state). Anyone who does not have health insurance but is in need of medical care has access to any kind of medical service at a higher cost. All emergency cases are free of charge for everyone, regardless of their nationality, citizenship or insurance status.

One must have an employment contract to gain access to the health insurance system, or else one must be registered as self-insured. Sex workers gain access to health insurance through other means than their occupation because sex work is not an officially registered profession.

Indoor sex workers often have fictitious contracts with their indoor venues for practicing another officially registered profession, such as waitressing, dancing, bartending, etc. By having these signed contracts, managers meet police and tax authority requirements while allowing sex workers to have health insurance.

In brothels and apartments, which are not as public or visible, there are sex workers who do not have labour contracts (even for practicing other activities) or insurance, which means that they remain outside of the health insurance system. This situation is also very typical for outdoor sex workers.

**LOCAL RESTRICTIONS** | There are no local restrictions, all regulation is centralised under national legislation.
Impact of the legal framework on sex work and sex workers

Unclear regulations and the lack of a specific legal framework for sex work open up grey areas in legal businesses and make it possible to hide sex work using other activities. This alters the public's perception and understanding of the problem and deepens stigmatisation of sex workers, placing them in an increasingly vulnerable position.

Furthermore, the lack of clear rules deprives sex workers of their citizenship rights, as the state reneges on its obligations to this segment of its citizenry, including its obligation to provide them with alternatives for better living and working conditions. State institutions have generally taken the approach of applying restrictive rather than protective policies, especially in the case of socially excluded groups.

FINLAND

National legislation on sex work

- Legal approach to sex work: not specified, abolitionist framing
- Laws and policies: criminalisation of sex workers/third parties, considered "immoral"

Finnish law does not recognise the concepts of sex work or sex worker. Prostitution is defined in Finnish law as engaging in sexual intercourse or associated sexual acts in exchange for reward.

Even though prostitution itself is not illegal and is not punishable as a crime, there are several regulations that restrict prostitution in Finland. In addition to the Criminal Code, Public Order Act and Aliens Act, sex work is regulated by various regulations within common law.

The Criminal Code forbids pimping, human trafficking and the purchase of sexual services from victims of human trafficking or pimping (under the law entitled “Abuse of a victim of the sex trade”). Furthermore, it is illegal to purchase sexual services from minors – anyone under 18 years old. Due to the criminalisation of pimping, it is illegal to open a brothel in Finland, for example.

Pandering is defined as seeking financial benefit from the prostitution of another person. These provisions do not apply to persons selling their own
services, nor to clients buying sexual services for themselves from an adult. The provisions apply to a third party benefiting from or exploiting the prostitution of another person.

**Other laws having an impact on sex work**

**MIGRATION** | According to the Aliens Act, an individual from outside the EU can be deported from Finland if they are suspected of selling sexual services. As a rule, the deportation is often combined with a year’s ban on entry, whether into Finland or the entire Schengen area.

**PUBLIC ORDER ACT** | The Public Order Act (POA) entered into force in Finland in 2003. The POA applies to places designated for public use, irrespective of ownership. It strives to promote general public order and safety. The POA does not in itself mention prostitution. The legislator has, however, taken the stance that overt prostitution disrupts public order. For this reason, the POA bans buying or providing sexual services for a fee in public places.

**OTHER REGULATIONS** | Common law regulations are regulations that are not written into acts upon which officials can base their decisions. For example, a contract for the sale of sexual services is seen as invalid due to its unethical nature, which means that a sex worker cannot pursue a client through the courts for non-payment.

**Impact of the legal framework on sex work and sex workers**

In practice, pimping may entail, for example, that person A rents an apartment to person B for the purposes of prostitution, and is aware of the prostitution. The following are also considered to constitute pimping: renting a room at a higher than normal rate to a person selling sexual services, supplying clients for a fee or charging a prostitute so-called protection money. Pimping also entails publishing online advertisements for the sexual services of another person and charging money for it. Furthermore, tempting or otherwise coercing another person to engage in prostitution by promising financial or other benefits is considered pimping. Economic exploitation is integral to a pimping relationship.
National legislation on sex work

- Legal approach to sex work: not specified, abolitionist framing
- Laws and policies: criminalisation of sex workers/third parties

In France, sex work is neither prohibited nor regulated. Since 2003, active and passive soliciting have been prohibited despite the French Senate’s vote to repeal the ban on passive soliciting in March 2013. Passive soliciting concerns any person who "has the intention" of proposing a remunerated sexual service. This is forbidden in any public place. The punishment for passive soliciting is two months' imprisonment and a 3,750 euro fine. This legislation is national in scope, but its application is regional and is dependent upon the actions of individual prefectures.

Pimping, human trafficking and sexual exploitation are forbidden. Pimping covers a broad range of actions, such that partners of sex workers can also be charged with pimping if they cannot prove that they have their own financial resources.

Organising indoor sex work is forbidden. Sex work is prohibited in hotels, saunas, bars, clubs and other areas open to the public. Sex workers who are working together in an apartment can be accused of pimping, even if they all have their names on the lease.

According to recent police practices, sex workers advertising on the internet are being monitored, and any subsequent evidence can be used by the tax administration for an audit.

In December 2013, the French National Assembly voted in favour of the bill on the criminalisation of clients, despite the high mobilisation of sex workers and allies. The bill will be presented in the Senate before the end of 2014, thus making it a current issue. For this reason, mobilisation against this law and advocacy for sex workers’ rights has increased.

Other laws having an impact on sex work

**MIGRATION** | There are no specific provisions for migrants with regard to sex work.

EU citizens enjoy the right to enter and stay in France with the possession of a valid passport or a valid identity card. The only restriction concerns
medical care for low-income persons without a labour contract: they need to prove that they have resided in France for at least three months.

Non-EU citizens have the possibility of sojourning in the country by means of a work contract, marriage to a French citizen, being the parent of a French child (if the other parent is French) or official matriculation as a student or a researcher. Additionally, the person has to prove that she/he has sufficient financial resources to live in France.

Non-EU citizens’ knowledge of the French language and the republic’s laws and values are also checked if they wish to stay in France. If the person is in an irregular situation, there is the risk that they might receive a letter obligating them to leave the country, which may in some cases include a ban from returning to the country.

Since sex work is not considered legitimate work, it is not a legal means of regularising one’s situation. The multiplication of municipal by-laws against sex work and the toughening of migration policies place sex workers in a highly vulnerable situation.

Impact of the legal framework on sex work and sex workers

Aside from the fact that sex work is neither prohibited nor regulated, French legislation is clearly abolitionist, often making sex workers the targets of laws that impact their ability to work in favourable conditions. As a result of the current national legislation, sex work is still a marginalised and clandestine activity.

The law on pimping has a visibly negative impact on sex workers’ working conditions and lives: sex workers face difficulties when working in the same place, which impedes contact, protection and support between colleagues, and sex workers cannot enjoy the basic human right to a private and family life.

The law criminalising clients will increase the negative consequences that arose with the law criminalising soliciting. Because of police repression, sex workers must hide in order to work, go to the outskirts of cities and move to other regions and countries. Sex workers find themselves increasingly isolated and in precarious situations. Under these conditions, access to health and rights, and thus the prevention of STIs and HIV, is complicated.
GERMANY

National legislation on sex work

- Legal approach to sex work: legalised/regulatory, recognised as labour activity
- Laws and policies: municipal restrictions, prohibition zones

Since 2002, when the Act Regulating the Legal Situation for Prostitutes came into force, sex work has not been considered immoral. In Germany, sex work is legalised and recognised as labour. Sex workers have the right to cancel work contracts, to work as self-employed, and to benefit from social security.

The act made the agreement on services and prices between sex worker and client a legally binding contract, and decriminalised the promotion of sex work, thus making the provision of suitable working conditions no longer punishable.

Nationals of EU member states can practice sex work as employees as well as self-employed persons through a fairly uncomplicated bureaucratic process. The Prostitution Law applies only to documented migrant sex workers.

Pimping and the economic exploitation of sex workers are prohibited. The promotion of sexual services in newspapers and on the internet is also prohibited but tolerated.

The majority of German and documented migrant sex workers are self-employed. They can obtain private health insurance without any risk assessment (no medical examination is required beforehand) and without risk loading (no higher costs are demanded because of the job’s risks).

**Health** | There are no mandatory health checks for sex workers in Germany. HIV and STI testing are offered on a voluntary, anonymous, and free of charge basis by HIV/STI public health services, regardless of whether the person is documented or health insured, including sex workers. Those who do not have health insurance that is valid in Germany must pay for all costs related to any consultations or treatments, including HIV/AIDS treatment.

**The new Prostitutes’ Protection Bill** | The German government will further develop the Prostitution Law of 2002 as part of the current government’s coalition agreement. This new law will be called the
Prostitutes' Protection Law. The first draft of the law was presented in August 2014. The official version must be ready by June 2015, and the new law will come into force on January 1st, 2016. The propositions of the new law are: mandatory registration of all sex workers, mandatory concessions for brothels and other sex work venues, complete control over sex work venues by all authorities, prohibition of advertisement, reintroduction of mandatory sexual health examinations, maintenance of all "prohibited zones" (Sperrgebiete) and the raising of the age of consent for working in prostitution from 18 to 21.

Compared to the 2002 Prostitution Law, the new law will completely roll back the rights of sex workers by enabling law enforcement agencies to persecute sex workers and operators of prostitution businesses. This bill appears to be based on the perception of sex work as a social evil that the government cannot rid society of, obligating the state to further regulate it. The bill adds to the existing stigma attached to sex work and the violence resulting from it. This will not protect sex workers, but rather force them underground.\(^{21}\)

### Other laws having an impact on sex work

**MIGRATION** | The majority of female, male and transgender sex workers in Germany are migrants, mostly from EU countries, especially Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and the Baltic countries. However, despite their right to reside and work in the German sex industry, a great number do not know about these rights, which still leads to dependence on third parties.

For citizens from outside the EU, the Prostitution Law does not provide sufficient grounds for applying for a visa, residence and/or work permit as a sex worker. These migrants need residence and work permits (granted on other grounds) to be able to engage in sex work in Germany.

**TAXES** | Germany is a federation, which means that each of its 16 states has the autonomy to adapt laws according to its legislation. This situation is very visible, not only in the "prohibited zone" regulation (Sperrgebiete-verordnung), but also in the payment of taxes for sex work. Depending on the town, sex workers have to pay different lump sums or no taxes at all.

even. This leads to great insecurity and misunderstandings, both for sex workers as well as the authorities.

**PROHIBITED ZONES** | The *Sperrgebietsverordnung*, the law that determines where outdoor and/or indoor prostitution are prohibited, varies from city to city and from state to state. For instance, in some cities, brothels are permitted only in commercial and industrial areas, but self-employed sex workers may work in apartments in residential areas. Munich, for instance, is a so-called *Sperrgebiet*, a "prohibited zone" for both indoor and outdoor prostitution, while Berlin has no such regulation, and the state of Baden-Württemberg is a 98% *Sperrgebiet*. Street prostitution has been the target of the most severe repression. In Hamburg and Dortmund, sex workers and their clients have been fined on the streets. An increasing number of towns are adopting these measures.

**Impact of the legal framework on sex work and sex workers**

Due to a high level of mobility, stigmatisation and differentiated regulations on taxes and "prohibited zones," a significant number of sex workers in Germany lack legal information. Also, given different levels of education, there is a significant need for information on health issues. At the same time, sex workers from EU countries who intend to establish themselves in Germany have increasingly expressed the wish to learn German.

**ITALY**

**National legislation on sex work**

- Legal approach to sex work: not specified, abolitionist framing
- Laws and policies: criminalisation of sex workers/third parties, municipal restrictions

In Italy, prostitution is neither legal nor illegal. The Merlin Act of 1958 shut down state-run brothels and freed women from mandatory registration and medical examinations. However, in its spirit and intent, the law is abolitionist. It imposes numerous restrictions on sex workers, who are forced to work in legally marginal conditions. For instance, sex workers cannot legally work in the company of a partner or a colleague, as they are required by law to be alone. Anyone who provides a sex worker with
support can be charged with aiding and abetting. This forces sex workers to remain isolated, with greater exposure to possible violence.

It is prohibited to work in closed quarters of any sort. However, in practice, private apartments with only one sex worker are “tolerated.” The law also penalises economic exploitation and juvenile prostitution. In addition, it penalises soliciting and abetting without giving a precise definition of the terms or clearly stating under what conditions or in which situations these offences may occur. Therefore, the police are left with ample room for interpretation.

Even family ties are seriously compromised by the law, as charges for aiding and abetting or exploiting a sex worker increase if the person involved is the sex worker’s partner or family member.

Whoever provides assistance to a woman (the law deals solely with women) in prostitution, either by letting a house or a building; tolerating the presence of prostitutes in public places, such as bars, clubs or other public facilities; employing any person to work as a prostitute or helping a sex worker on the street is severely punished for the offence of aiding and abetting. There have even been cases of drivers being accused of this for rendering their services to sex workers.

Mayors and city councils have the power to issue by-laws that severely penalise explicit solicitation with a fine. Simply standing on the street to wait for clients is sanctioned with a fine of 1,000 euros, as the penal code considers this solicitation.

Other laws having an impact on sex work

**MIGRATION** | Italian immigration law is stringent. The presence of irregular migrants without a residence permit is considered a crime that is punishable even by detention in prison or in detention centres. Immigration law is used against irregular migrant sex workers, who are sent to detention centres and subsequently deported. EU citizens from Romania and Bulgaria can also be expelled from Italy due to the enactment of the Public Security Law in 2009. In 2009, the Italian government enacted Security Measures aimed at reinforcing sanctions against social conduct that was considered indecent, such as sex work, begging and the sale of illegal goods, as well as socially dangerous acts, such as the consumption of alcohol, gambling, involvement in unauthorised demonstrations, etc. As a matter of fact, the Security Measures invested mayors with greater powers against migrants and anyone participating in protests against government policies.
LOCAL RESTRICTIONS | In several municipalities, including Genoa, sanctions against sex workers and their clients were introduced into local police regulations. These regulations vary from city to city and impose fines of up to 500 euros on clients buying sexual services, additionally fining sex workers accused of provocative dressing and/or indecent behaviour.

Impact of the legal framework on sex work and sex workers

Overall, this legislation has a negative effect on sex workers. Although sex work is not penalised, sex workers can easily and arbitrarily be accused of various crimes related to sex work (economic exploitation, soliciting and abetting). As a result, sex workers work in precarious conditions on the verge of illegality, and are often subject to police patrolling and abuse of power.

This situation reduces sex workers’ bargaining power and leaves them highly exposed to violence. Many sex workers do not report crimes against them (such as theft, violence, etc.) because they do not trust the police.

In addition, there is much conflation of those who work freely with those who are in reality victims of trafficking or economic exploitation. When two or more sex workers decide to work together in the same flat, they can be accused of economic exploitation in the same manner as truly exploitative third parties. This is also true for friends and family members who live with a sex worker.

PORTUGAL

National legislation on sex work

- Legal approach to sex work: not specified, abolitionist framing
- Laws and policies: criminalisation of third parties

Sex work has been neither legal nor illegal in Portugal since 1983, which means that although sex work is not legally recognised, it is not considered a crime. Sex workers cannot be arrested for providing sexual services, but cannot demand labour rights on the grounds of sex work either. The penal code designates "pandering" as a criminal offence, and this prevents any kind of self-organisation, which has a direct impact on sex workers’ living and working conditions.
Other laws having an impact on sex work

MIGRATION | Migration - Portuguese laws on migration increase sex workers’ vulnerability. In order to obtain a visa/residence permit, migrants must meet certain requirements, such as having an employment contract. As sex work is not recognised as work, sex workers cannot obtain a visa on the grounds of a contract for sex work.

Not having a residence permit leaves migrant sex workers in a highly exposed position: they fear contact with the authorities and are more vulnerable to violence; they face more discrimination, even when using conventional services; they face real bureaucratic obstacles to accessing health services.

Impact of the legal framework on sex work and sex workers

The current legal framework on sex work in Portugal is a barrier in terms of human rights, restricting access to health and safe, hygienic and dignified working conditions, therefore hindering sex workers’ ability to practice safer sex (condom use) and driving sex work into the margins of society.

The non-recognition of sex work as a legitimate occupation that should be taxed and entitled to benefits limits sex workers’ access to judicial protection, social support and other labour rights, and gives rise to stigmatisation and stereotyping.

SPAIN

National legislation on sex work

- Legal approach to sex work: not specified, abolitionist framing
- Laws and policies: criminalisation of sex workers/third parties, municipal restrictions

In Spain, sex work is not regulated; it is therefore neither prohibited nor recognised as work. Sex work was decriminalised in 1995, but sex workers’ rights were not recognised. Only pimping is considered a criminal offence.

Prostitution is not specifically regulated, which allows each city council to create its own measures. These usually entail police harassment, fining and the creation of specific public space regulations, all of which increase sex workers’ vulnerability.
There are no specific laws on sex work and migration, although there are laws on human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Immigration laws are restrictive, as in other EU countries.

Spanish immigration law forbids remaining in the country without a residence permit or a work permit. Sex work is not considered an occupation, and those who do sex work have no legal means of regularising their situation; sex workers therefore live and work under very precarious conditions, making them extremely vulnerable.

Other laws having an impact on sex work

**MIGRATION** | Spanish immigration law is applied with particular severity against persons in an irregular administrative situation; they are pursued in different spheres, with prostitution being one of the main targets. The authorities deprive sex workers of their freedom when they have an irregular immigration status. This is done via police raids in prostitution venues and public spaces, which result in sex workers being sent to Alien Internment Centres [in Spanish, CIE] for eventual deportation to their countries of origin.

**LOCAL RESTRICTIONS** | For some years now, municipal regulations have been introduced for the fining of prostitutes and/or their clients in several Spanish towns. These regulations infringe basic constitutional rights and also criminalise and stigmatise sex workers, making prostitution increasingly clandestine and worsening sex workers’ working conditions, ultimately exposing them to situations of increased vulnerability.

In recent months, there has been a wave of repression against sex work in Spain, with public administrations announcing their intention to promulgate regulations that criminalise sex work. The “Civic Safety Law” not only restricts basic rights, such as the right to demonstrate, but also aims to ban prostitution in public spaces through road safety regulations, which can fine sex workers’ clients up to 30,000 euros.

The Madrid City Council has also announced a public space regulation by-law limiting the use of public spaces – especially by vulnerable collectives. As far as prostitution is concerned, the intention is to fine clients. These measures criminalise sex workers, increasing stigmatisation and worsening their working conditions.
Impact of the legal framework on sex work and sex workers

The non-recognition of sex work as labour puts sex workers in a precarious social and legal situation. This also drives sex work underground, with negative consequences for sex workers, whose most fundamental rights, such as freedom and personal safety, are restricted.

Street sex workers must often work in more remote and unsafe areas, which amplifies the insecurity caused by police harassment and municipal regulations that prevent them from working freely in open spaces. In indoor prostitution venues, it is the owners who impose their conditions, while sex workers lack legal instruments to protect themselves against abuses in these contexts. This happens because prostitution is not regulated by labour law, but is instead dealt with in the Penal Code. Consequently, in order not to be incriminated, club owners claim having no employment relationship with sex workers, alleging instead that they are simply renting the space; this is not true, as there is a labour relationship concerning percentages, schedules, imposed practices, etc., and sex workers cannot protect themselves against abuse.

In many cases, when sex workers are abused by their partners, they are not protected by the Gender Violence Law because the abuser is not considered their partner, but their pimp. They are also often denied any credibility when they report sexual assault.

Foreign sex workers face an additional challenge: their right to migrate from their country of origin is restricted because all migrant sex workers are considered victims of human trafficking. They are denied freedom of speech and the possibility of remaining in Spain to earn a living from sex work (even if this was their choice).

They are also denied access to citizenship rights, such as the right to strike, the right to maternity or illness leave allowances, holiday entitlement, the right to report non-payment, etc.

As long as their profession lacks official recognition, sex workers’ labour rights will also go unrecognised.
National legislation on sex work

Legal approach to sex work: legalised/regulatory, recognised as labour activity
Laws and policies: municipal restrictions, licensing system

In 2000, the ban on brothels was lifted, making brothels fully legal and licensed businesses subject to municipal regulation.

Depending on the sector, there are three types of labour relationships that apply to sex workers working in the Netherlands. These include self-employment, employment, and structural conditionality. As a self-employed person, a sex worker does not work for the owner of a sex business, but is rather an independent worker. A self-employed sex worker must apply for a license (if the sex worker is running her/his own individual business, for example in an apartment or as an individual escort), register with the Chamber of Commerce and make independent arrangements for all accounting and tax-related matters.

The labour relationship in window brothels is one of self-employment, but without the licencing obligation, as the window brothel is the licence holder. If a sex worker works for the owner of a sex business, for example at a sex club, massage parlor or private home, the sex worker is then considered employed, or in a situation of structural conditionality (opting-in).

Structural conditionality falls between self-employment and employment, and (when it is applicable) constitutes an employment relationship for the owner (who then has the duties of an employer), although the sex worker would not be considered an employee (the sex worker’s situation would be closer to that of a freelancer).

Structural conditionality means that the owner of the sex business has concluded an agreement with the Tax and Customs Administration, whereby she/he withholds taxes and social security payments from wages and pays these deductions to the Tax and Customs Administration and the Employee Insurance Agency.

This means that the sex worker does not need to make these payments herself, but still has no employee benefits and many of the same duties as an entrepreneur. The general obligation to declare and pay income taxes applies to all sex workers regardless of the type of labour relationship they are in.
Currently, a person can work as sex worker in the Netherlands if she/he: is 18 years of age or older, has permanent residence, was not forced or coerced into working and works in a venue that has a permit. However, under the proposed law the “Regulation of Prostitution and Suppression of Abuse in the Sex Industry Act,” there would be several changes.

The goal of this bill is to tighten the regulation of prostitution, in particular the licensing requirements for brothels and other sex establishments, and improve government oversight at a national level. The government expects stricter regulations to have a strong deterrent effect on traffickers and to help prevent exploitative practices.

The new bill’s primary measures:

- Raising the minimum age from 18 to 21: it will be illegal to work in any form of prostitution before age 21. Sex workers under 21 will be fined.
- Uniform national licensing system for all businesses in the sex industry, but municipalities are still free to apply their own additional regulations.
- Being the client of a sex worker who is under 21 years of age will be a criminal act that can be punished with up to a year of prison time and/or a high fine. Licence holders that allow sex workers under the age of 21 to work on their premises will be punished according to criminal law.
- Working outside licenced premises will be considered illegal.
- Employers who do not comply with licensing requirements can be prosecuted.

Other laws having an impact on sex work

MIGRATION | Citizens of a country in the European Economic Area (EEA) can legally practice sex work in the Netherlands. The EEA includes countries in the EU, along with Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway. The Netherlands does not issue work permits to non-EU citizens for sex-related services. Non-EU citizens must therefore establish permanent residency before they can legally become involved in sex work, and must have a residence permit that allows them to work in the Netherlands.

Before January 2014, citizens from Romania or Bulgaria had to take additional steps to work legally in the Netherlands. They needed to have a "confirmation of stay" ("bevestiging van verblijf") stamp in their passports. Additionally, they needed a business plan ("ondernemingsplan").

Under these conditions, they were still only allowed to work as independent workers/entrepreneurs, but not as employees or in an opting-in arrangement. This meant that, for example, it was not feasible to work in a brothel
or in a club. However, in January 2014 these special rules for all workers (regardless of their occupation) from Bulgaria and Romania were revoked. Now the position of Romanian and Bulgarian sex workers is equal to that of other EU citizens who do sex work.

Impact of the legal framework on sex work and sex workers

This trend of implementing progressively stricter rules has a deeply negative impact on the working conditions of (national and migrant) sex workers. The legalisation of prostitution in 2000 recognised sex work as a labour activity and extended labour rights to national and migrant sex workers (only from EU countries).

Despite this, the majority of sex workers do not exercise their rights and in many cases are unaware of their rights and obligations. The authorities have largely neglected the importance of supporting the position of sex workers as labourers, which would have given them the tools and knowledge to resist work-related exploitation.

As a result, sex workers have experienced little measurable improvement in their social position. Furthermore, legalisation has led to greater regulation of the sex industry and to increasingly repressive policies and policy implementation. Furthermore, the ongoing closure of legal brothels and windows has precipitated a shift of sex workers to more clandestine sex work settings, where dependence on third parties and the potential for control by organisers are greater.

Though prostitution is considered work according to the act that was passed in 2000, fourteen years later, adequate labour relations still elude the sector. Due to pressure from the Ministry of Justice, the current tendency is to involve the institutions that regularly deal with sex workers in the fight against human trafficking. This includes, for example, the Chamber of Commerce, the lessors of facilities (those who rent out facilities), and the GGD (municipal public health services).

This can result in increased stigma as well as irrelevant questioning around factual STI testing, and is a threat to the trust that is the basis for securing health and healthy working conditions (e.g. people who work illegally or irregularly in sex work may avoid the GGD and not get tested as a consequence of this control).

However, legalisation allows for policy dialogue on the improvement of the position of sex workers in the frame of labour and tax institutions, as well as the comparison of sex workers’ working conditions to those of other labourers.
3 Good practice for the empowerment of sex workers

Within the context of the abovementioned national legislations and policies on sex work, the INDOORS project developed different activities aimed at reinforcing the empowerment of sex workers based on barriers identified, existing problems and sex workers' needs.

The activities were implemented in a wide range of scenarios, contexts and legislative frameworks. Thus, due to the different situations in each country, the activities are diverse in content, form of intervention and method of implementation.

However, they were unified by the aim of improving access to legal protection for migrant female and transgender indoor sex workers, promoting empowerment by better equipping them with important tools and information and enhancing their knowledge of their rights and how to access to these rights.

The nine partner organisations' understandings of human rights-based empowerment activities were diverse. As will be demonstrated by the different examples in the following chapter, these interpretations not only included empowerment through legal information, but – in terms of the right to self-determination and self-organisation – also included information on HIV/STI prevention, support in civic mobilisation and advocacy against stigma in sex work, etc. All of these activities were based on the previously outlined human rights principles, and focused on empowering sex workers through various means.

Thus, the following examples of good practices – like all of the activities that were implemented – adhere to the same ethical guidelines.
The service providers used a human rights-based approach that respected sex workers and their work. A non-judgemental attitude and methods that valorise sex workers and their profession should be basic operating principles for service providers working with and for sex workers.

Empowerment activities were carried out online or through workshops. Each partner, given their expertise and local context, opted for the most effective and efficient methodology. The topics of the different activities were chosen based on indoor sex workers’ requests for information on health, risk reduction, legal matters, administrative or judicial help, sex workers’ rights, self-determination and self-organisation, negotiation strategies, etc.

Workshops on LEGAL ISSUES

Access to rights as an EU citizen

WHY

Most of the migrant sex workers in Vienna are EU citizens. They can move freely within the European Union and often do so, searching for better living and working conditions. This mobility allows them to test different options and choose what suits them best. There are, however, certain disadvantages to this way of living if migrants do not know their rights, including: paying taxes and insurance in several EU countries, losing track of the money paid for retirement benefits in different countries and receiving no family allowance for their children if they do not live in the same country.

EU laws and the social welfare system are a challenge even for legal experts and/or people working in that field.
This is why LEFÖ decided to organise a legal workshop in **two phases:**

1. for its staff (so that they could better advise their clients on this topic)
2. for the sex workers

**HOW**

The first workshop for the members of LEFÖ’s team was prepared and held by a lawyer on the organisation’s premises. Afterwards, the cultural mediators organised a second legal workshop for the peer educators so that they could share this information with their colleagues.

The lawyer prepared a hand-out with the relevant information; this was later modified into a training kit and translated into different languages by the cultural mediators so that it would suit the needs of sex workers and be used in further workshops or for distribution during outreach.

**The workshop’s topics**

- Legal rights as an EU citizen (travelling, residing and working in the EU)
- Documents for permanent residency in Austria (*Anmeldebescheinigung*)
- Health insurance
- Taxes for sex workers
- Registration as a sex worker
- Social welfare

Flyer with legal information about sex work in Austria for sex workers coming from EU-countries, including taxes, access to labour market, etc., as well as relevant addresses in Vienna

All of this information was summarised in the training kit, and the addresses of relevant institutions and help organisations were also included. Five sex workers took part in the legal workshop (three Romanians, one Bulgarian and one Polish).
Both the LEFÖ staff and the peer educators who participated in the legal workshop expressed their satisfaction with the knowledge gained and felt that many issues had been clarified. Unfortunately, the topics in question are so complicated that even state organisations and their employees are not always aware of the different laws and regulations, and can sometimes handle problems arbitrarily. It will take more time and work to effectively claim migrants’ and sex workers’ rights.

**IMPACT**

**BULGARIA**

HESED | www.hesed.bg

Bulgaria’s first legal workshop with sex workers

**WHY**

The legal workshop was implemented for two reasons:

1. To improve the knowledge and competency of HESED’s outreach workers so that they could offer basic legal consultations (when needed) during their interactions with sex workers

2. To raise sex workers’ awareness of their personal and civil rights.

The aim of the legal workshop was to expand sex workers’ knowledge base related to current laws and regulations, police practices, the authorities, how to deal with police raids, etc.

Due to sex workers’ general lack of legal awareness, they must frequently withstand police corruption, violence, blackmail and other arbitrary abuses. During the preparation phase of the legal workshop, these were the main issues that sex workers said they wanted to discuss in greater detail, but
other desired topics included basic rights and current legislation, especially a particular article in the Penal Code concerning apartment rental.

**HOW**

The legal workshop for sex workers was held as a part of peer training. It was organised in HESED’s office and carried out by external experts, who were human rights lawyers.

As this was the first workshop of its kind in Bulgaria, it was crucial for HESED’s team to appoint a competent, non-stigmatising expert who had professional contact with the target group. The workshop was prepared after serious discussions with the external experts and within HESED’s team. The main topics were determined on the basis of extensive outreach work and the legal problems sex workers reported.

The three-hour workshop started with a short presentation on the current legal situation in Bulgaria with regard to prostitution and basic human rights. Themes such as police raids, police violence, blackmail, pimping, raid procedures, practical tips on how to deal with police raids, trafficking, how to avoid legal restrictions, etc., were discussed through the sharing of sex workers’ personal experiences.

Participants received a training kit consisting of an information sheet related to legal issues in sex work.

**IMPACT**

The workshop facilitated contact between sex workers and experts, who provided concrete consultations on some court cases. Sex workers also gained insight into the basic human rights that the police must uphold, even during a raid.

The discussion was long and lively, as sex workers had many questions about their personal human rights and the powers and procedures of the police (such as during a raid).

As this workshop was part of peer training, much of the information that it provided will be distributed to the sex worker community.
Taxation and entrepreneurship

Why

Finnish law does not recognise the concepts of sex work or sex worker. Prostitution is defined in Finnish law as engaging in sexual intercourse or associated sexual acts in exchange for reward.

Even though prostitution itself is not illegal and is not punishable as a crime, there are several regulations that restrict prostitution in Finland. In addition to the Criminal Code, Public Order Act and Aliens Act, sex work is regulated by various regulations within common law.

This ambiguity leaves sex work in a legal grey area, creating problems for sex workers whenever they need to interact with state institutions in the process of conducting business.

As a result, Pro-tukipiste held a targeted legal training for sex workers on several subjects: laws impacting sex work in Finland, taxation and sex workers’ rights when dealing with the police. These subjects were requested by sex workers, and the aim of the training was to better equip them to deal with these issues from a position of strength, particularly in police interactions.

How

The training was held in Pro-tukipiste’s Helsinki drop-in office, and was led by a peer educator specialised in the subject.

The training was intended for sex workers and peer workers interested in finding out more about how Finnish law impacts their work and daily lives. Training materials included informational flyers, a handout of presentation notes, and a PowerPoint presentation.

Topics for the training were selected based on the requests and concerns of sex workers visiting Pro-tukipiste’s drop-ins, leading to subject matter and materials that were a direct result of collaboration between the peer educator, drop-in staff and drop-in visitors.

The purpose of the training and its materials was to provide practical and working knowledge of the topics presented. Sex workers could then apply
this information when negotiating their way through taxation, migration matters and welfare. The training also provided valuable information on the Finnish police, including standard procedures during raids and searches, as well as sex workers’ rights in those situations.

**IMPACT**

Participants in the training were highly satisfied with the information that was presented. In cases where language was an issue, an interpreter or translation was provided, and there was continuous and active discussion throughout the training.

Some of the information on tax law was already known to a few of the participants, but most of the information presented was new and well received. Of notable importance was the portion of the training devoted to the Finnish police. Many sex workers and peer workers were surprised to learn that they even had rights when dealing with the police, in particular if they were non-nationals.

Some participants wished that the training would have provided more specialised information on the intersection of tax and migration law, in which case the drop-in staff tried to direct them to field experts.

Overall, attendees felt that the information they had received was relevant and useful, with a special emphasis on the knowledge they had gained with regard to their rights in police raid, search, investigation and interview scenarios.

*Training kit*

Paying taxes and how to deal with the police
Legal framework of sex work, including rights and obligations

**WHY**

Sex work is neither prohibited nor regulated in France. Though there is no legislation that directly addresses sex work, there are various laws that regulate certain issues around it: laws on pimping, soliciting, migration law, tax law and the pending law on the criminalisation of clients, etc.

Following the principles of peer education and bottom-up assessment, the themes of the legal workshop were chosen according to the needs of sex workers. Sex workers asked for clarification on the forthcoming law on the criminalisation of clients, as well as for more information on all of the legal obstacles that they face in their daily lives and work.

The aims of this legal workshop were to favour equal access to rights and legal protection through updated information and practical advice, and to promote the empowerment of sex workers by better equipping them to deal with rights violations and increasing their opportunities to discuss concrete situations with each other.

**HOW**

The legal workshop was prepared by the team, peer educators and sex workers. It was intended for all sex workers (it was open to both indoor and outdoor sex workers), and took place over a half-day at Autres Regards’ office. It was important to choose a place that sex workers knew and felt safe in.
The legal workshop was carried out by an external expert, a jurist specialised in sex work issues works with STRASS | the Sex Workers' Trade Union. The workshop began informally with a small buffet. This was the occasion for introductions and the establishment of a trustful atmosphere. Several topics were addressed according to the interests of the participants: the criminalisation of clients and its consequences; what exactly procuring means; taxes and how to register as a self-employed person; a person's rights when in custody; police methods in profiling sex workers; etc.

Several materials were used for the training kit: leaflets made by STRASS on the issues that were discussed (in French, English, Bulgarian, Spanish, Romanian) and booklets on the legal framework of sex work (in French). As the existing materials were appropriate, they were simply updated and no new materials were created.

**IMPACT**

Twenty sex workers, four peer educators and four other team members participated in the legal workshop. The active participation of peer educators and sex workers favoured exchange among the participants. The feedback was very positive: the expert provided clear and accurate legal information, and sex workers exchanged practical advice and tips.

Some sex workers expressed their interest in having other legal workshops. This activity also had a positive impact on the empowerment of sex workers: one sex worker expressed the desire to start advocacy work with STRASS, which led to a discussion of the possible creation of a local office for STRASS in Marseille.
Legal information for promoting professionalisation

WHY

Sex work has been legal and recognised as labour in Germany since 2002. Sex workers have the right to draw up labour contracts, work as self-employed and benefit from social security. However, this recognition does not make sex work sufficient grounds for non-EU citizens to enter the country and obtain a residence permit. There has been an increase in repression against street prostitution in some cities, such as Hamburg and Dortmund, including the criminalisation of sex workers and their clients.

The main goal of the workshops on legal issues was to increase sex workers’ professionalisation by providing them with information on their labour and social rights, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to negotiate better working conditions and demand respect and recognition.

HOW

The workshops targeted German and migrant female and transgender sex workers. They were carried out in apartments, brothels, Laufhäuser or massage parlours by cultural mediators specially trained by profiS | Professional Education for Sex Workers in their Work Place (www.highlights-berlin.de/DAH-KonzeptKurzfassung.pdf).

The workshops were only carried out after an appointment had been made with the sex workers and/or the manager of the venue. Sex workers were the ones to choose the topics to be discussed; each workshop was developed according to their questions. They were also the ones to decide the duration of each workshop, depending on their level of interest or the time they had available.

The topics tackled

- Prostitution Law and the rights of sex workers in Germany
- Alien Law
- Rights of EU citizens
The different topics were usually brought up through examples given by sex workers and then commented on by the trainers. The aim of the discussion that followed was to clarify, inform and/or provide reference to an organisation or institution. The materials used for the training kit included special leaflets on how to register with the tax authorities, how to do one’s own accounting, where to go in Hamburg for health or legal support, etc.

One important aspect to mention was that sex workers were able to receive clients during the workshop, and when they returned to the group the information that they had missed was repeated by the trainers.

**IMPACT**

The results of these workshops show that the professionalisation of sex workers is a crucial step in empowering them to fight stigma, giving them self-confidence in their negotiation skills and promoting community solidarity.

Another significant impact of these workshops was the independence gained by sex workers in resolving practical problems, such as making income tax declarations.

The feedback that sex workers gave was very positive; the workshops encouraged them to be independent and increased their self-esteem.

The trainers will have the opportunity to conduct periodic evaluations, which will take place during special meetings organised by ProfiS for this purpose. During these meetings, trainers from different German organisations will be able to exchange information on the situations in different cities, as all as identify service needs and gaps.
Rights of sex workers during police raids

WHY

The Genoese branch of CDCP, *Le Graziose*, was formed so that sex workers could defend themselves against local regulations that increasingly criminalise them. In recent years, the municipality of Genoa has adopted contradictory policies regarding sex work. While on the one hand it has issued provisions against sex workers and clients, on the other it has started roundtable discussions with *Le Graziose*. The situation became even more complicated after the last elections, which brought in a new local government and new city council members.

Regulations are applied in an unpredictable manner. Days of fury are followed by days of relative tranquillity. Police raids are quite frequent and abusive, depending on the period, with some areas being patrolled more than others.

Sex workers in the Maddalena district were frustrated with this situation, as they felt unsafe and exposed to police abuse of power.

This explains why participants at the peer educator training asked for a workshop on legislation and legal instruments for preventing abuse during police investigations and obtaining respect for sex workers' rights.

HOW

The workshop was conducted during the peer educator training, and the topics were chosen in cooperation with sex workers who attended the training. By common agreement, the workshop was extended to other sex workers who were interested in the same issues.

The workshop was held in one of the district theatre’s halls, which the municipality granted free of charge. A lawyer collaborating with *Le Graziose* conducted the workshop with two counsellors of *Le Graziose*.

Participants were given a training kit with printed copies of the most critical parts of legislation that referred to violations. Lawyers, organisations and their contact numbers were also listed in case of emergency. The training kit was made available for distribution to their colleagues afterwards.
IMPACT

Participants in the training showed a great deal of interest in the workshop, to the extent that they invited some of their colleagues. The need to discuss several issues was so high that it was difficult to adhere to the schedule. At the end of the workshop, all of the participants asked to meet the lawyer again in order to learn more about some of the subjects that had been discussed.

Strategies for media-based denunciation and advocacy were also considered. The first goal was to inform the public that sex workers in Genoa knew their rights and were organised, united and ready to help their colleagues. The second goal was to push the municipality and law enforcement to acknowledge that sex workers were not harmful but were, on the contrary, actively making recommendations to the city.

The national and local press reported positively on the training. A few weeks after the training, peer educators supported a number of colleagues in reacting to the violation of their privacy by the police (during inspections) and by a state-run TV news broadcast that, in an attempt to blame sex work, drug pushers and other illegal activities for the degradation of the neighbourhood, aired stolen and unauthorised images of two sex workers. One of these sex workers had attended the training on peer education and reacted by involving other colleagues. They all decided to call a lawyer to defend their right to privacy. This prompt reaction was possible thanks to the empowerment encouraged by the training.

PORTUGAL

APDES | www.apdes.pt

Legal issues related to sex work and migration

WHY

There is no specific legislation related to sex work in Portugal. Voluntary prostitution is not a crime, although it is not recognised as a profession. The penal code designates “pandering” as a criminal offence; this prevents any kind of self-organisation, which has a direct impact on sex workers’ working and living conditions.
There are no mandatory sexual health checks for sex workers. Article 64 of the Portuguese Constitution states that “Every citizen has the right to health and the duty to protect it,” but it is not always easy to ensure this universal right to health, especially for migrant sex workers without a residence permit.

There are no reliable statistics on the number of sex workers in Portugal. Any published number underestimates the magnitude of the phenomenon, which is highly marginalised.

The general aim of the legal workshops was to promote sex workers' empowerment, autonomy and self-efficacy. APDES tried to create a safe environment where it would be possible to share relevant information and give peer educators the tools to inform their peers about their rights.

**HOW**

The topics of the workshop were decided based on the questions raised by sex workers during outreach and legal support consultations with APDES's partner, the São Cirilo Community Centre, which provides several services for the migrant population. APDES also asked the members of the National Network on Sex Work about their target population's usual legal concerns. Sex workers, peer educators and cultural mediators were involved in the development, dissemination and evaluation of the workshop.

**APDES chose to focus on migrants' needs**

- Opportunities for obtaining a residence permit, access to health and other universal rights, what to do in case of expulsion
- How to report violence: physical, verbal, psychological, as well as economic exploitation
- General laws concerning prostitution, pimping and trafficking in Portugal

The workshop was led by a lawyer who works at the São Cirilo Community Centre, and was held at the High Institute of Public Health of Oporto University.
The workshop training kit consisted of one booklet with information on the migrant regularisation process in Portugal, contact information for national services available to migrants and a leaflet on access to public healthcare. APDES also provided postcards from the campaign Different Jobs. Equal Rights. This legal kit will be available to other sex workers.

**IMPACT**

The workshop leader used a questionnaire to evaluate the training, and the result was very positive. The participants said that the information provided was very important in helping them understand their situation in Portugal and how they could access their rights. They also felt motivated to share what they had learned with other sex workers.

**SPAIN**

HETAIRA | www.colectivohetaira.org

Legal workshop on working autonomously

**WHY**

The legal non-recognition of prostitution as a profession leaves sex workers without any labour rights or access to basic labour or social welfare benefits that other citizens have.

This absence of labour rights means that sex workers cannot pay social security contributions, which would give them social welfare coverage, such as the right to a pension.

Traditionally, many women who work in prostitution choose to register as self-employed domestic workers in order to pay social security contributions. In 2009, a judge successfully registered herself as a self-employed sex worker in the social security system (for research purposes). She then elaborated the necessary steps and bureaucratic arrangements for other sex workers to do this.

Some sex workers are still unaware of this possibility. The members of Hetaira therefore determined that it would be necessary to inform sex workers of this option so that they would be able to access their social welfare benefits.
Informative leaflets were distributed in prostitution clubs, flats and public spaces to promote the workshop.

The workshop was carried out on Hetaira’s premises for two hours. It was attended by eight women and led by the association's volunteer attorney.

The aim of the workshop was to acquaint sex workers with the social welfare benefits that they could obtain by registering as self-employed, and how to do so.

It consisted of an informative talk, which the women participated in actively, sharing their personal situations and raising questions.

The materials used included a Power Point presentation of the contents of the legal workshop to make following the presentation easier. In addition, Hetaira created and handed out a training kit to the attendees; this consisted of an informative leaflet with basic information on the procedure for becoming an autonomous worker in Spain.

The participants showed interest in the content and participated actively in the workshop, asking questions and sharing their opinions.

Assessment of the workshop was carried out via direct conversation with the attendees. All of the women responded positively regarding the development and contents of the workshop, although many did not appreciate the legal procedure itself, as in many cases immigrants had problems registering, and given the current economic crisis, some women could not afford the monthly social security fee.

This is a problem that Hetaira has encountered many times: migrant female sex workers find the idea of contributing as self-employed workers quite interesting, but obstacles due to migration and high expenses prevent them from pursuing this option.
Labour laws and regulation in prostitution

WHY

In the Netherlands, a law proposal that would introduce several new regulations on sex work has been under discussion since 2009. The legal framework of sex work in the Netherlands, including the different municipalities’ regulations, is very complex. There are also various employment statuses within the framework of labour law and the taxation system. This complexity impacts the working conditions of indoor sex workers.

HOW

Preparation: The training modules, items and setting were prepared with an external legal expert in labour law and regulations on prostitution. Afterwards, sex workers' rights activists were contacted regarding the contents in order to ensure that the modules corresponded to the needs and experiences of sex workers, and addressed the daily problems that sex workers faced as a result of legalisation.

Target: 17 sex workers selected from different cities (nationals and migrants). Fifteen participated in the full training, two only on the first day.

Location: A conference room was rented in a friendly community centre. The training was carried out April 8-9, 2013 for two full working days.

Development of the training workshop

- The first day was dedicated to introducing labour rights principles and the Dutch system of labour regulation: being an independent worker; being independent but with a labour contract (opting in), being an entrepreneur; working in a cooperative.

- The second day was dedicated to all issues related to human and labour rights: how human rights tools can be used, what human rights mean in the context of sex work and what labour rights instruments can be applied to sex work.
The two-day workshop closed with a round of feedback, planning for future activities and a small party.

Several different materials were used for the training kit: fact sheets were prepared for the participants, and governmental and institutional websites, such as those related to health, taxation, the municipality, human rights publications, tools for community mobilisation, etc., were also used during the legal workshop.

**IMPACT**

The impact of the legal workshop was the following: improvement of sex workers’ knowledge in relation to labour, human rights and obligations; information on the advantages and disadvantages of each different employment status; motivation to share information with other colleagues and empowerment.

**Feedback:** In general, the feedback was positive, but there were also comments that the workshop was too brief and that some information needed to be presented in greater detail. The consensus, however, was that this intense workshop was good introduction to all work-related issues, and was a useful tool for learning what to do and whom to contact for all individual questions and problems. The majority of the participants evaluated the information received as being practical and applicable to their own reality. The participants also expressed appreciation for support and recognition as workers.
Workshops on HEALTH & RIGHTS

Regulations concerning sex work and labour rights

WHY

Sex workers in Austria are considered self-employed, and are obligated to pay taxes and have insurance if their income exceeds a certain limit. In addition, migrant sex workers from other EU countries must register as permanent residents if they are staying in Austria for more than three months. Most sex workers are not aware of these regulations and have little information on their rights or obligations. This leads to their partial or total exclusion from the social welfare system in Austria, on the one hand, and to fines and higher expenses on the other.

LEFÖ noticed the need for information on all of these issues, and decided to carry out workshops on the following topics: permanent residence for EU citizens (Anmeldebescheinigung), taxes, health insurance, access to the labour market for new EU citizens and access to social welfare benefits. The aim of these workshops was to address this information gap and empower migrant women working in the sex industry in Austria.

HOW

Four workshops on the abovementioned topics took place in different establishments, always at the sex workers’ workplace, including two bars, one apartment and one Laufhaus. In the bars, the bartenders’ support was essential to the implementation of the workshops. To begin with, it was the bartenders who granted LEFÖ access to the bars and arranged for the premises to open earlier, before the clients arrived, so that LEFÖ could talk to the sex workers without being disturbed.
They also informed sex workers who worked on other days about the workshop, and invited them to attend. The workshops in the apartment and the Laufhaus were prepared and carried out with the support of LEFÖ's peer educators: a Romanian and a Polish sex worker, who used their contacts in the field to gain access to these venues. The presence of peers ensured the higher participation of sex workers in the discussions during the workshops.

The workshops were carried out by LEFÖ's cultural mediators. Two workshops were held by a team consisting of a cultural mediator and a peer educator. The languages spoken during the workshops were Romanian, Polish and German, according to the needs of the participants. All participants received brief handouts with basic information on the topics discussed.

**IMPACT**

It is difficult to measure the exact impact of the workshops because these changes take time. LEFÖ found it positive that the participants took the time to listen to the cultural mediators and peers and ask questions about the topics discussed. Many participants visited the organisation's office for individual consultations directly after the workshops. The peers also told LEFÖ that the participants liked the workshops and were spreading the word among their colleagues and friends. Furthermore, sex workers reacted positively to LEFÖ's invitations to take part in future workshops on different topics.

Venue managers and bar staff also appreciated LEFÖ's presence and said that they would be ready for further cooperation in the future. However, it is still difficult to bring sex workers to LEFÖ's office for a workshop or keep their attention for longer than an hour and a half. This is problematic, as when LEFÖ carried out the workshops in sex work venues, there were other people present (staff, clients), which may have affected sex workers' level of participation. Sex workers also do not feel completely free to ask questions or express their opinions when their bosses are present.
Health bulletins and rapping for empowerment

WHY

The 2013 study Health in Sex and Erotic Work (conducted by Pro-tukipiste and Finland's National Institute for Health and Welfare) revealed significant differences in the health and wellbeing of different groups of sex workers and their access to services. Thai-speaking respondents particularly considered their health, welfare and financial situations poor. Furthermore, mobile groups and women from different African countries were often excluded from public services for lack of a Finnish health insurance card. Pro-tukipiste therefore wished created workshops as a starting point for addressing these needs.

HOW

Workshops were arranged for Thai and Nigerian sex workers in Helsinki.

- **Workshop 1** | A Finnish rap artist known as Rauha-täti had approached Pro-tukipiste to ask if any Thai women would be interested in writing rap lyrics with her. This became the basis of two workshops, where three Thai women wrote lyrics for one of Rauha-täti’s songs. This song will most likely be released in 2015.

- **Workshop 2** | Two workshops were arranged for Nigerian women to provide them with a venue for asking questions about health issues and their rights. The workshop was led by one peer worker and Pro-tukipiste’s nurse.

IMPACT

- **Workshop 1** | The feedback was very positive. The participants said that they had acquired new skills, and felt empowered and encouraged to try new things. They also appreciated that Rauha-täti respected them and treated them with dignity.

- **Workshop 2** | The workshop initiated the production of tailored health information for Nigerian sex workers. The peer worker also began creating health bulletins with Pro-tukipiste’s nurse, a process that will continue in spring 2015.
Spontaneous workshops on health as an empowerment strategy

WHY

Prostitution is legal in Germany, and sex workers have labour rights and social security. In Germany, sexual services are mainly offered indoors, in apartments, brothels, Laufhäuser (large houses with several individual rooms, rented by sex workers on a daily or weekly basis), massage parlours, bars and clubs.

Main goals

- To assess the needs of sex workers regarding their access to health services and identify gaps in their knowledge of health issues, and
- To develop empowerment strategies and provide information on safer sex, HIV/STI prevention and local support organisations, including the public health service (all of which offer anonymous, voluntary and free of charge counselling, testing and treatment).

HOW

The workshops were aimed at German and migrant female and transgender sex workers. They were carried out in Hamburg during regular outreach activities by cultural mediators and migrant nurses in apartments, brothels, Laufhäuser and massage parlours.

The workshops were offered on a spontaneous basis, without previous appointment with the sex workers or managers of the venues.
A workshop only took place if one or more sex workers showed interest in acquiring more detailed information on health issues and wanted to devote time to such an activity. The sex workers determined the duration of the workshop and the subjects discussed, and the workshop was developed according to their questions. The materials used included a variety of condoms, contraceptives, lubricants, sponges, dildos, dental dams, leaflets on health promotion in different languages and images of STIs.

**The issues tackled**

- Safer sex practices
- HIV/STI prevention
- Contraception, pregnancy and abortion
- What to do in case a condom breaks
- Strategies for negotiating safer sex with clients
- Referral to other organisations, the public health service and health services that treat undocumented migrants

**IMPACT**

The presence of cultural mediators and migrant nurses increased reliability, while the workshops increased sex workers’ knowledge. Due to their high mobility, sex workers facilitate the spread of accurate information among their colleagues, which improves their negotiation skills. The knowledge that they gained is a very important empowerment tool that facilitates solidarity.

Evaluation was done informally during or after the workshops. Each workshop was evaluated using a special form for the collection of general information, including when and where the workshop took place, its duration, the number of sex workers present, their nationalities, the topics addressed and the materials used. This was the foundation of a report (written afterwards) that included the evaluations of sex workers and trainers – positive and negative feedback, comments and observations on what could or should be done to improve the workshops.
Discussion of legislative proposals on sex work

WHY

While the training for peer educators was being held in Genoa, the EU Parliament was preparing to vote on the Honeyball Resolution that would affect European sex worker-led organisations. Launched a campaign on social media networks through an extraordinary mobilisation of activists and supporters against the approval of this resolution. It was therefore essential to involve peer trainees in this activity.

At the same time, a member of the Italian Senate proposed a bill on the regulation of sex work as work. As a result of this situation, sex workers organised a focus group entitled Debate on the legislative bill regarding sex work, proposals for action to give visibility and power to sex workers, which was held at the end of the training course to inform sex workers and poll their opinions. During the debate, there was a collective discussion on the excessive complexity of the bill and the significant changes that would occur if the bill passed in the Senate. Sex workers also pointed out aspects of the bill that they did not approve of.

HOW

Peer education training participants were involved in the preparation and realisation of the workshop, which was conducted by two counsellors from CDCP. CDCP’s national coordinator, Pia Covre, was also present at this debate in Genoa. The first part of the workshop centred on European mobilisation and an analysis of the responses from ICRSE activists. The second part focused on the recent bill that was proposed in the Italian
Senate, and analysed counterproposals made by some CDCP activists. Sex workers at the debate made an effort to identify possible activities that could be organised with other colleagues, and how to make sex workers' opinions heard.

Handouts were distributed in order to ensure full participation during the workshop, and comprised of copies of the bill on sex work in the Italian Senate, CDCP's counterproposals, the EU Honeyball resolution that would criminalise clients and the declarations of members of the European movement ICRSE.

The workshop took place in a hall assigned by the municipality of Genoa, located in the Maddalena district, where sex workers who enrolled in the training worked.

**IMPACT**

Participants showed great interest in the topic, although they feared the possible consequences of prohibitionist laws. Networking and cooperation with other European sex workers' organisations helped them realise that they were not alone, although it was not clear how they could benefit from these contacts in a broad and continuous manner (the majority of sex workers still have limited use of mailing lists, platforms, websites, etc.).

At the end of the workshop, they decided to organise a public meeting with sex workers and invite the member of the Italian Senate who introduced the bill on the regulation of sex work. In addition, more ideas on how to make sex workers' voices heard were discussed. Workshop participants decided to meet periodically in order to implement these initiatives and involve other sex workers.
STI prevention workshops at an erotic fair

WHY
Eros Porto is an erotic fair that takes place annually in Oporto, and is attended by several Portuguese and foreign sex workers in striptease, erotic massage, sadomasochism, the porn industry, etc., who come to work there (approximately 50 sex workers). This makes the fair a relevant context for the dissemination of information; thus, aside from having an information stand for the potential clients of sexual services, APDES also promoted workshops at each sex work stand, where APDES’s staff distributed preventive materials and discussed safer sex, safer working conditions, sex workers’ rights and mobilisation.

HOW
The workshops were prepared based on APDES’s past experiences. Every year, the organisation tries to provide information on safer sex and rights, always adapting the contents to the setting and labour contexts (such as porn, swing, BDSM, etc.). Taking these aspects into consideration, APDES strives to transmit objective information according to sex workers’ needs, and this was the basis of the workshops’ design. APDES also incorporated some new topics, such as the flash mob on sex workers’ rights on March 8th, and the presentation of the INDOORS campaign Different Jobs. Equal Rights.

The target group was sex workers working in Eros Porto, and the workshops took place at the stands where sex workers offered different services (striptease, live sex shows, swing, sadomasochism, HSH). At each stand, APDES gathered a group of sex workers and shared information on safer sex and harm reduction practices, and discussed the importance of sex workers’ community mobilisation. In addition to this, APDES offered the sex workers several preventive materials: condoms (male, female), lubricants, flyers about oral and anal sex, the INDOORS flyer about safety at work and postcards from the Different Jobs. Equal Rights. campaign.
**IMPACT**

The evaluation presented here is based on the team's perceptions. Given the dynamic environment at Eros Porto, it was difficult to formally evaluate the impact of the workshops.

Sex workers were available at each stand to listen to APDES's staff and discuss their work and sexual practices. Generally, they appreciated the staff's initiative and congratulated the organisation for its work. Some sex workers went to the information stand to ask for more materials (mainly those who were participating in the live sex shows) and information, and sometimes brought their friends as well. The participants gave APDES very positive feedback on the organisation's advocacy work, and also participated in the flash mob that APDES organised at the fair.

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**SPAIN**

HETAIRA | www.colectivohetaira.org

**Workshop on negotiation skills**

**WHY**

In such an unfavourable legal and social context, professionalisation is key to the improvement of sex workers' working and living conditions.

Professionalisation implies empowerment: sex workers would be in total control of their work, determining the conditions under which sexual services are rendered.

The poor working conditions, secrecy and social stigma that sex workers face make it impossible for many of them to access basic information on how to improve their working conditions in terms of safety, health, etc.

One of the primary ways for sex workers to develop their capacity for decision-making is to build their negotiation skills. Obtaining the necessary social and professional skills for negotiation with clients is very important for female sex workers in the realisation of their work in an autonomous manner, so that they can determine the conditions and services provided.
The objective of the workshop was to help sex workers improve their negotiation skills so that they could be in full control of their work, ultimately setting their own rules and limits for clients.

**HOW**

The workshop was carried out by Hetaira's outreach team in indoors prostitution venues (clubs and apartments in Madrid) with female sex workers who were at their workplace at the time of the visit.

The following general topics were presented via PowerPoint: workshop objectives, what negotiation means, social skills used in sex work, what to bear in mind when starting a new job, the importance of establishing one's own limits, conditions in agreements with a client, the importance of assertive behaviour, negotiation skills and the importance of solidarity between colleagues.

Throughout the explanation, women took an active part in the workshop, sharing their knowledge, experiences, doubts and thoughts.

The PowerPoint presentation was the only didactic material used.

**IMPACT**

The assessment was carried out via informal conversations with women after the workshop. The two main questions asked of the attendees were: their degree of satisfaction with the way the workshop was carried out, and their degree of satisfaction with the workshop's contents and applicability to their work.

Two participants did not reply to the questions. The rest of the attendees stated that they were satisfied with the way the workshop was conducted, as well as with the contents. More precisely, they said that they learned new things from the workshop, and that the issues addressed could be very useful to their work.
Knowledge of new local prostitution regulations and challenges

WHY
The legal context of municipal regulations is very complex. Taking into account the new prostitution law proposal, it was essential to inform and train sex workers on the complex rules and obligations related to working in legal indoor settings. Sex workers in Amsterdam often ask questions about the new local prostitution regulations and their consequences for working conditions, autonomy and the protection of sex workers' anonymity.

The new local prostitution regulation will introduce the following changes: only sex workers above 21 years of age will be allowed to register, the closing time of window-brothels will be lowered and brothel owners will be requested to assess the language and communication skills of non-national sex workers in order to determine their level of autonomy.

HOW
Preparation: As part of the preparations for the workshop, sex workers' questions and concerns were collected by TAMPEP, as well as by a working group of sex workers that additionally gathered information on all of the problems that sex workers faced in legal registration as independent workers, the gaps in sex workers' legal position and the unfavourable aspects of the municipal regulations.

The targets of the workshop were migrant and national sex workers.

Location: An apartment was rented for a month (October 2013) as a field station close to the window brothel area in Amsterdam for the dual purposes of carrying out legal support and peer support.

In addition to individual consultations, the workshops were organised on the following topics:

- The rules for registration at the Chamber of Commerce (compulsory for independent sex workers)
- Police raids to check identification papers in brothels
New municipal regulations on brothels, new obligations for brothel owners and workers
Problems with banks and other financial institutions that refuse to open business accounts for sex workers
Payment of taxes and regulations on the different employment statuses of sex workers in legal indoor settings
The new situation of Romanian and Bulgarian sex workers
Analysis of contracts with brothel owners and employment relationships

IMPACT
The workshops improved sex workers’ knowledge of their labour rights, as the sex industry was legalised under certain regulations that have since undergone constant change. The employment status, contractual relationship with brothel owners (what owners are obliged to provide, working conditions, working hours and contact with clients) and legal obligations of sex workers (especially taxation obligations) were clarified.

Outcome: Sex workers who attended the workshops shared the information that they learned. Some of the participants also became more engaged in activism, participated in a discussion with the municipality and became members of the Dutch platform on sex work. The group of 15 sex workers who participated in the previous two-day legal workshop were active in these shorter workshops because they had received more comprehensive training and were able to inform the other participants.

Feedback: Most of the feedback was positive, but some criticism was raised: the workshops were too short for such complicated issues, more training and information would have been needed and a more specialised expert should have been present for consultation.
SMS as an interactive communication tool

WHY
For many sex workers in Vienna, leaving their workplace to visit LEFÖ’s office for a consultation is difficult due to the intensiveness of their work. At the same time, they lack information on the different prostitution and migration laws, health issues, the prevention of violence, sex workers’ rights and other topics related to sex work. Many sex workers call LEFÖ’s office or mobile phone regularly. LEFÖ’s staff noticed, however, that many of them were not accustomed to leaving messages on the answering machine when they called outside of office hours, and preferred to send text messages. LEFÖ’s staff began to answer these text messages, and found this to be a very convenient way of exchanging brief information bites. Text messaging is also used for inviting contacts to workshops and public events, and for reminding them of appointments.

HOW
As sex workers themselves began using text messaging to contact LEFÖ, no special preparation was needed. LEFÖ simply broadened its way of using its mobile phone as a communication tool to respond to the needs of sex workers. The targets of text messages are mostly sex workers, but sometimes also venue managers who cooperate with the organisation. There are three types of text messages that LEFÖ sends: a response to a sex worker’s text message with information that was requested, invitations or reminders for upcoming events. Most of the information needed relates to the addresses or phone numbers of institutions, directions to LEFÖ’s office, another institution or organisation and the list of documents needed for applying or registering for something. Sex workers also use text messages to cancel their appointments or inform the staff that they are coming later.
IMPACT

Next to phone calls, text messages are the most frequently used tool by sex workers in their communication with LEFÖ. They find it very convenient because they can send messages in their own language any time, and know that they can rely on a reply as soon as the staff see the message. Using this method of communication also means that sex workers will always have the information they asked for or appointment confirmations saved in their phones to check later, if necessary. LEFÖ’s staff also appreciate this form of communication, mostly for the same reasons. In addition, text messaging makes it possible to invite a large group of sex workers to an event with just one click. Text messages often replace emails because not every sex worker has an email account, but all sex workers have mobile phones.

BULGARIA

HESED | www.hesed.bg

Information and communication technology (ICT) as way for sex workers to access cost-free mobile medical services

WHY

HESED has striven to extend the scope of its online outreach activities since 2009. The team has also tested several strategies and tools, and in the last two or three years the most effective have been email consultations and chat sessions on the SIT (the Social Intervention Tool, a customisable chat site). Almost all of the requests that HESED receives are related to the free of charge HIV/STI testing and consultations offered by HESED’s outreach specialists.

As internet-based activities are not yet regulated by national legislation, the internet is a good way to reach hidden sex workers.

All medical activities that HESED implements adhere to two regulations issued by the Ministry of Health:

- Ordinance № 7 / 07.09.2011 on the conditions and rules for the implementation of programmes for harm reduction in relation to drug use
Ordinance № 47 / 11.12.2009 on the conditions and rules for testing, informing and reporting infection in relation to HIV/AIDS

HESED has obtained all necessary permissions for the implementation of harm reduction and medical activities from the National Centre for Addictions and the municipality of Sofia.

**HOW**

The chat website [https://hesed.sittool.net/chat](https://hesed.sittool.net/chat) is the first of its kind in Bulgaria for the provision of online consultations and the possibility of scheduling in-person appointments for HIV, syphilis, and hepatitis B and C testing with HESED’s team. The SIT is especially useful for sex workers who use the internet and are not necessarily reached by HESED’s outreach services, and contains the same information that is offered during face-to-face outreach consultations. Consultations are available for all sex workers who speak Bulgarian and English, but the mobile medical service can only be used in the Sofia area.

**The steps involved**

- Online session (emails, SIT chats)
- Referral to an appointment with HESED’s mobile medical service
- Collection of blood samples, pre-testing consultations
- Informing the person of test results, post-testing consultation
- Case management if the results are positive

All of the activities described are implemented by a HESED specialist according to the main principles of anonymity and confidentiality, as well as free of charge and respectful treatment.

**IMPACT**

In 2013, almost all online requests were focused on HIV consultation and testing, and ICT tools constituted a significant bridge between clients and the service.
Example from a real SIT chat session

Anonymous:
15.04.2013 / 17:04

Не, благодаря Ви и аз за информацията, лек ден и искам да Ви кажа, че това което правите е страшно полезно :)

“No, thank you for the information, have a nice day, and I want to tell you that what you do is extremely useful :)

Quotation from an email

From: k...... ......ev [mailto:......e@abv.bg]
Sent: Monday, November 04, 2013 5:07 PM
To: Polina Avramova

“ОК Поли, ще мина другата седмица.
благодаря Ти за доброто отношение, успешна седмица
Поздрави”

“Ok, Poli, I will come next week.
Thank you for the good attitude, have a nice week.
Best!”

While HESED offers a variety of services, those offered by the organisation's mobile medical unit are the most frequently requested by sex workers. Free testing and medical counselling are also the most sought after services online, demonstrating that ICT tools can be used to successfully reach many hidden sex workers and ensure thorough coverage by all preventive and harm reduction programmes.
Sex workers’ own blogs

WHY

The discussion on placing a general ban on the purchase of sex was renewed in Finland when the national Supreme Court overturned the sentences of select cases tied to the purchase of sex because there was insufficient evidence that the buyers should have known that the person selling sex was a victim of pandering or human trafficking. The Minister of Justice consequently announced that she would be commissioning a report with the objective of evaluating how well a current ban on the purchase of sex would work and whether Finland should also ban the purchase of sex.

The main message of the report was that Finland’s current regulations do not work, and that existing laws need to be revised to place a general ban on the purchase of sex, or else changed such that there would no longer need to be proof that a buyer knew or suspected pandering/human trafficking.

While the report’s authors were in the process of drafting the report, Pro-tukipiste recommended that they include the voices of sex workers and offered to work as a facilitator to that effect. Nevertheless, sex workers went unheard, the explanation being that it would be too troublesome and difficult on a tight schedule.

Such disregard for sex workers’ opinions on such a significant matter generated much discussion among sex workers.

HOW

Several sex workers approached Pro-tukipiste to ask how they could make their voices heard, and how they could participate in the discussion on a matter that so directly affected them.

Pro-tukipiste met with eight sex workers to outline what was (to the organisation’s knowledge) currently happening in the criminalisation process. The group discussed the challenges of making sex workers’ voices heard in the debates surrounding the matter, and agreed that sex workers could write blog entries, which would then be published on Pro-tukipiste’s homepage.
Drafts of blog entries would be sent to Pro-tukipiste's publicist, who would then publish them under different pseudonyms. Sex workers attending the INDOORS media trainings were also encouraged to participate.

The aim was to reach as wide an audience as possible; to this end, blog postings were announced on Pro-tukipiste’s Facebook page and Twitter. The first blog entry was published in May 2013, followed by four more during the fall in two-month intervals. Three blogs were in Finnish, one was in Thai (also translated to Finnish and English), and one was in English. It was possible to leave comments on the blogs; these were moderated by Pro-tukipiste’s publicist.

**IMPACT**

The blog entries were widely read and popular. The first entry was shared several times on Facebook and Twitter. A link to the blog was also publicised in a popular TV show and cited in a newspaper. The number of homepage visitors rose to almost 16,000, and the author of the second blog entry was interviewed on national radio. The blogs thus achieved their intended goals—they generated much discussion about why sex workers were not being heard in legislation debates and why sex workers were generally being disregarded in discussions surrounding prostitution politics.

The majority of the feedback was positive and in favour of making sex workers part of the current discussion. A smaller share of the feedback expressed doubts that the blogs were authentic (their language was “too good”) or representative. The feedback from sex workers was positive, and in their opinion blogging was an empowering experience. All blog entries can still be read on Pro-tukipiste’s website.
Chats on Facebook and the SIT

WHY

Following an increase in repressive measures and the pending law on the criminalisation of clients, which has already begun to affect the work and safety of sex workers, more sex workers are advertising their services online and trying to remain anonymous, as they fear investigation. The legislation has also impacted the method of contact: visits directly at sex workers’ workplaces are often problematic, and sex workers can sometimes refuse visits.

According to the team’s previous online experience and to peer educators, indoor sex workers need legal information, information on HIV/STI prevention and to discuss their work with a peer. Several tools were tested, and chat through Facebook and the SIT appeared to be the best ways to communicate with indoor sex workers.

The aims were thus to empower sex workers by providing general information and by promoting community building through mutual counselling and the sharing of experience.

HOW

In order to diversify chat possibilities and target a wider segment of indoor sex workers, two main tools were implemented: Facebook and the SIT. The SIT chat took place once a week from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm, and was moderated by a peer worker and an outreach worker. The chat on Facebook took place several times a week on an irregular basis, upon request. While Facebook only reached sex workers with whom contact had already been established, the SIT made it possible to reach new contacts (sex workers).

The promotion of chat sessions, especially SIT chats, was a very important step in this communication strategy. Several channels were used: information was disseminated during outreach work, on the organisation’s website using a banner, through peer activity, on Facebook and through other service providers.

Some digital materials were also available for these online sessions, but they were only used a few times.
IMPACT

The chat on Facebook had a greater impact than the SIT chat. The team had several exchanges with four different sex workers on the SIT and 10 different sex workers on Facebook. Despite active promotion of the chat sessions, only a small number of sex workers used these channels of communication. However, the impact was positive for these persons, as it helped in solving their problems (legal and health-related), and encouraged some of them to meet other sex workers and come in person to meet the team at the organisation's office.

The evaluation of the chat tools yielded two main recommendations:

- Investing in the promotion of a chat tool is necessary, but the channels of promotion should be carefully chosen for a greater impact.
- The chat tool could be used in rotation by several organisations with the same values; this would pool resources and make it possible to offer more chat hours.

ITALY

CDCP-ONLUS | www.lucciole.org

Influencing public opinion
through the use of ICT tools

WHY

The European continent is in a delicate and particular historical period, as political debates and voting increasingly push for legislation that persecutes the buyers of sexual services in many states. There has also been an ongoing debate in the Italian Senate on sex work policies following the presentation of a bill for the legalisation of sex work as a profession.

All of this, taken with the nationalist wing's propaganda calling for the repeal of the present Merlin Law, inspired online activism. CDCP’s goal was to inform sex workers and train them to sustain debates on sex work and sex workers’ working conditions.

As an innovative source of information, online communication offers ample opportunities for interacting with a large number of people. It is an effective channel for sex work activists and sex workers who wish to state their
opinions, make their points of view heard and share the truth about their working conditions.

As a result of multiple requests from sex works that CDCP’s staff make public statements in response to incorrect and inconsiderate TV broadcasts and newspaper articles, a small taskforce of sex workers was formed to make online statements. For instance, the taskforce posted comments on blogs, articles published in newspapers and Facebook where sex work-related issues were discussed.

**HOW**

CDCP decided to host online sessions dedicated to training sex workers on how to use Facebook and other online instruments to improve their capacity for advocacy and public debate.

A number of sex workers who seemed to have good internet and writing skills were chosen from those who had contacted CDCP by email, chat or phone. These sex workers then participated in online training sessions and chats aimed at introducing them to activism and online media and social networks. Some activists and bloggers supported CDCP in this phase of training, such as by writing or indicating websites and (online) articles to work on.

- The first step was to train sex workers who already had basic internet skills. With the assistance of an ICT specialist, 10 practical online sessions were exclusively dedicated to training peer educators and sex workers on the efficient use of online media and social media networks as spaces for communication, where their opinions could be posted and shared on a massive scale.

- Secondly, they were briefed on current legal and political issues and on European online activism.

- Thirdly, volunteers were kept abreast of available instruments, services and support groups in order to include them in the activism as well.

**IMPACT**

The snowball effect that was generated by the high number of participants visiting CDCP’s Facebook page resulted in an increase in online contacts and networking. Some sex workers proved to be particularly active in the dissemination of information on other Facebook pages, in blogs and debates on Facebook and through CDCP’s as well as other mailing lists.
Another result was an increase in the number of interviews given by sex workers, who are generally quite reluctant to expose themselves in the media. There was also an increase in articles and comments during this period. Thanks to Facebook, people were more willing to make comments and suggestions.

Whereas some sex workers use new forms of communication more often, reaching the majority of sex workers online is still a great challenge.

**PORTUGAL**

APDES | www.apdes.pt

**Participation in websites and forums related to the topic of sex and sex work**

**WHY**

The fact that Portuguese legislation does not criminalise nor decriminalise sex work inhibits sex workers’ access to rights and allows institutions and clients to stigmatise and discriminate against them, consequently hindering service providers’ access to sex workers. However, this gap in communication can potentially be remedied by online tools as a result of their anonymous and confidential character.

Sex workers increasingly use the internet to advertise their services on specific websites and forums. These are privileged channels for contacting sex workers, getting closer to their clients, providing information and answering questions immediately and confidentially.

As a result, APDES has begun using these websites to enlarge its field of intervention with sex workers, clients and the general community. In doing so, the organisation foresees a wider dissemination of information related to the services it provides, safer sex practices, health education, rights and other relevant subjects.
**HOW**

APDES began by contacting the managers of a selection of websites and forums related to the topic of sex and sex work. Some of these administrators also reached out to APDES and requested information and materials to post on their websites.

The use of websites and forums allows APDES to disseminate information on its services, objectives and campaigns, as well as to share news and important dates. This method also allows APDES to transmit risk reduction strategies to promote safer sex and empowerment through information on rights. All of this information is available on several websites. In addition, APDES regularly conducts research in a forum that is frequently used by sex workers and clients (in Portugal) to see if there are topic threads where the staff can introduce some useful information and promote discussion.

This strategy allows the continuity and reinforcement of messages transmitted during outreach, and is implemented by the entire team.

**IMPACT**

APDES has established a confidential relationship with several website administrators, who host the organisation's SIT banner and often request further information (such as on safer sex, sex workers' rights, etc.) to share on their website.

This method of communication has proven to be very efficient and effective in disseminating information on the organisation and safer sex practices with sex workers and the general population at large, including clients.

APDES has received feedback on most of its interventions, and in many cases clients have shown interest in participating in discussions and learning about certain topics (especially safer sex). There were also many comments in the forum commending APDES's work.
Recommendations for implementing activities to empower sex workers

These recommendations were jointly developed by the INDOORS partners, and are based on their extensive experience in the implementation of activities to empower sex workers and promote their rights.

Activities aimed at empowering sex workers can differ in context, method and form, but each activity should be based on the following general recommendations:

- **Respect sex workers' knowledge and skills**
  Sex workers are experts in their own realities. When implementing an activity aimed at empowering sex workers, it is important to acknowledge their skills and expertise in this area and treat them with full acceptance and respect.

- **Respect sex workers' cultural and linguistic differences**
  The multicultural and multilingual realities of sex workers in European countries should be respected during the implementation of each activity. In order to effectively reach (migrant) sex workers, it is important to be aware of their different backgrounds and communities, and to work with a multidisciplinary and multilingual team that includes cultural mediators.

- **Respect sex workers' realities: be flexible regarding time and place**
  Indoor sex workers are mobile; their workplaces and living conditions fluctuate. This requires great flexibility and adaptability from the service provider in charge of the activities. The timing, modality and setting of the activities should correspond as much as possible to the needs of sex workers in order to facilitate their participation.
During the implementation of their activities, the INDOORS partners realised that planning around the time and location needs of sex workers made it easier and more appealing for them to participate.

**Build the activity around sex workers' needs, and adjust it to their context and moment**

Activities aimed at the empowerment of sex workers should respond to the needs of sex workers in the context and period in which they are taking place. It is therefore necessary to adjust the form, method and content of each activity based on the setting in which it is being implemented.

The examples of good practices that were presented in this manual were organised based on a needs assessment carried out before the implementation of each activity, focusing on gaps identified in terms of rights, legal protection and the needs expressed by sex workers. This method permitted the substantial involvement of sex workers before, during and after the completion of activities, as it responded to their problems and needs at that precise moment.

**Focus on advocacy and awareness-raising**

One aspect that is fundamental to the empowerment of sex workers is support for advocacy and awareness-raising for their rights. Activities aimed at the empowerment of sex workers should focus on this principle and be guided by the aim of advocating for and promoting sex workers’ rights. The activities should also support sex workers in the defence and promotion of their rights, as well as in advocacy, awareness-raising, self-determination and self-organisation.

**Involve peer educators and cultural mediators**

Involving peer educators in the implementation of activities is very important, as they possess specific knowledge of the realities and living and working conditions of sex workers. When working with migrant sex workers, including cultural mediators is essential, as they share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
Guarantee that information is high quality, up-to-date and relevant to sex workers' realities

In order to provide sex workers with the necessary tools to promote their empowerment, it is important to equip them with quality information and materials that are applicable to their realities and the current social, political and legal contexts. These tools (such as the training kit) should address the gaps identified and needs expressed by sex workers to ensure a positive and sustainable impact.

Guarantee the activity's continuity

The accumulation of experience throughout the INDOORS project has shown that sex workers lack information on their rights and how to access them. Participants in the activities expressed the desire to continue learning more about the legal context of sex work and how to fight for their rights. Therefore, empowerment activities should be held regularly rather than sporadically.

Involve sex workers in the development of the strategy to be used

The involvement and participation of sex workers in the design and development of each activity is essential to ensuring the best outcome. Given the diverse contexts of sex workers’ realities and the wide range of possible interventions, each empowerment activity should be chosen and developed in cooperation with sex workers.

Involve sex workers' organisations in advocacy

Sex workers and sex workers’ projects have long-term experience in promoting their rights and advocating for human rights/sex workers’ rights. Existing networks and sex worker-led organisations should be involved in advocacy campaigns for the recognition of sex workers’ rights and included as experts in all advocacy-related activities.
Involve sex workers in the evaluation of each activity

The involvement of sex workers in the evaluation of each activity is crucial to measuring effectiveness and impact. Sex workers are in the best position to determine how well an activity met their needs, provided them with the necessary tools for empowerment and helped them to better access their rights and legal protection. This feedback allows service providers to gauge if the activity’s aims were achieved and what should be improved.

Guarantee low threshold, anonymous and non-discriminatory activities

Activities aimed at empowering sex workers should guarantee respectful and non-judgmental treatment. Given the prevalence of stigma in society and the existing obstacles for sex workers’ access to legal protection and support services, interventions should strive to reduce barriers by offering low threshold, anonymous and non-discriminatory activities.
The following definitions clarify terms used in the INDOORS products, and provide a basis for a better understanding of the terminology surrounding sex work. The definitions were provided by the European TAMPEP (www.tampep.eu) and INDOORS (www.indoors-project.eu) projects.

**GENERAL DEFINITIONS**

**Abolition**
Abolition refers to a policy model that criminalises or partially criminalises sex work. The sale of sexual services is legal, but activities related to prostitution, such as solicitation or brothel-keeping, are banned and/or subject to zoning restrictions. Furthermore, customers are often punished. This concept is based on the assumption that all sex workers are victims of systematic patriarchal exploitation.

**Abolitionist**
Seeks to abolish prostitution by penalising procurers and pimps rather than sex workers.

**Advocacy**
Advocacy is any action directed at changing the policies, positions or programs of any type of institution.

**Client**
The term "client" is used to describe a person purchasing sexual services.

**Community-based approach**
A community-based approach refers to (an organisation’s) partnership with sex workers in all stages of a project or activity addressing the sex worker community. It implies that sex workers are active in the preparation, implementation and/or evaluation of the project. This approach recognises and valorises the skills and resources of sex workers, and does not limit them to a particular role.

**Counselling**
Counselling utilises an interpersonal relationship to enable a person to develop self-understanding and make changes in her/his life. Counselling aims to help people develop their educational, vocational and psychological skills, and to achieve an optimal level of empowerment, self-esteem and well-being in society.

**Criminalisation**
This term is used to describe the wide range of legal statutes that illegalise sex work—either directly by prohibiting the selling of sexual services, or indirectly by criminalising other activities surrounding sex work. Furthermore, sex work can also be criminalised on a municipal level, where sex workers are frequently prosecuted for administrative rather than criminal offences. Generally speaking, criminalisation refers to the direct and indirect criminalisation of sex work and sex workers through different legal measures.22

**Decriminalisation**
Decriminalisation refers to the removal of all criminal laws that prohibit selling, buying or facilitating (procuring) sex

22 Open Society Foundation: 10 reasons to decriminalise sex work, p 1
work. The focus of this legal model lies in the acceptance of sex work as an occupation, utilising labour laws to address the working conditions and rights of sex workers.

**Empowerment**

On a personal level, empowerment is understood as awareness and the strengthening of an individual’s skills to control and improve her/his life. Meanwhile, community empowerment strengthens a community’s ability to generate positive change. Social empowerment enables sex workers to fight for their rights and acceptance in society.

**At a grassroots level**

See “Community-based approach.”

**HIV**

This term is used in preference to "HIV/AIDS," “HIV virus” or “AIDS virus” (unless specifically referring to AIDS). HIV means "human immunodeficiency virus," which makes it redundant to refer to it as the HIV virus. Meanwhile, AIDS is a syndrome, which makes it incorrect to refer to it as the "AIDS virus." AIDS is what causes death, and HIV is the infection that causes AIDS.

**Indoor-based sex worker**

This term refers to sex workers who establish contact with clients in an indoor setting or via the internet. Indoor sex work is often advertised in the media or online. See "Forms of sex work" below for examples of indoor-based venues.

**Legalisation**

Seeks to make sex work legal, regulating the industry through civil and labour laws.

**Migrants**

While frequency and scope of migration vary nationally and internationally, within the INDOORS products, migrants are understood to be persons who are/were originally nationals of a different country than the one they are currently in, and can include EU citizens.

**Outdoor-based sex worker**

This term refers to sex workers who establish contact with clients in outdoor settings (streets, roads, motorways, parks, etc.). Outdoor sex work settings are not advertised, but are areas that sex workers are known to frequent.

**Partner (of a sex worker)**

This term is used for individuals in a relationship with a sex worker, and should not be seen as synonymous with “pimp.”

**Peer supporter**

A peer supporter is a sex worker who offers support to her/his peers. A peer supporter’s role goes beyond that of an educator. The main characteristic of peer support lies in the promotion of mutual support among sex workers for the adoption of safe sex techniques, the defence of their rights and improvement of working conditions. A peer supporter focuses on solidarity, support and understanding between sex workers. Generally, a peer supporter acts as a go-between for the service provider and facilitates contact with sex workers; she/he helps them voice their needs and enables the dissemination of information.

**Peer educator**

Peer educator refers to a person who works or has worked as a sex worker, and who, with respect to sex work-related intervention, participates in specific trainings that provide her/him with the necessary skills to carry out educational activities with a group of peers. A peer educator disseminates information on health promotion, sex workers’ rights, access to services, etc., and organises workshops with colleagues on these issues. A peer educator can work in projects that involve sex workers and participate in workgroups to develop and evaluate actions. Generally, a peer educator is part of the service provider’s team and should receive compensation for her/his services as a peer.

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23 Legal frameworks that deal with sex work and human trafficking – an overview of terminology and an examination of evidence.
Peer training
Courses that provide the knowledge and tools necessary for fulfilling the role of peer educator.

People posing as clients
This concept is used in distinction to the term "client" to point out that violence is nothing inherent to sex work and that not all clients are violent or aggressive. People posing as clients are predators who use the context of sex work, with its precarious working conditions and lack of protection by law enforcement, to inflict harm on sex workers. Meanwhile, "bad clients" are those who treat sex workers with disrespect. A bad client is considered an "aggressor" if she/he is violent against a sex worker.

Prohibition
Prohibition is understood as a legislative model that seeks to punish any acts or persons involved in sex work, including the sex worker. Prostitution is seen as a criminal offense and all activities related to prostitution are criminalised.

Prohibitionist
Seeks to prohibit prostitution, and penalises sex workers and pimps alike (although not necessarily clients).

Public services
This term refers to public organisations and institutions that provide services to the general public, and can directly or indirectly provide services to sex workers.

Regulationist
Seeks to regulate rather than to prohibit or abolish prostitution.

Safer sex
This term is used in preference to "safe sex," which may imply complete safety. The term "safer sex" more accurately reflects the idea that choices can be made and behaviours adapted to reduce or minimise risk.

Service providers
This term is used to describe any organisations, public or private, that provide services, such as health promotion, legal and social support, to sex workers.

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
This term is used in preference to "venereal disease (VD)" or "sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)," which do not convey the concept of asymptomatic sexually transmitted infections. Sexually transmitted infections are spread by the transfer of organisms from person to person during sexual contact. In addition to so-called traditional STIs (syphilis and gonorrhoea), the spectrum of STIs now includes HIV, which causes AIDS; Chlamydia trachomatis; human papilloma virus (HPV), which can cause cervical or anal cancer; genital herpes; chancroid; genital mycoplasmas; hepatitis B; trichomoniasis; enteric infections and ectoparasitic diseases (i.e., diseases caused by organisms that live on the outside of the host's body). The complexity and scope of sexually transmitted infections have increased dramatically since the 1980s; more than 20 organisms and syndromes are now recognised as belonging in this category.

Sex worker
Sex work is consensual sex between adults. It can take many forms, and varies between and within countries and communities. Sex work also varies in the degree to which it is more or less "formal," or organised. As defined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), children and adolescents under the age of 18 who exchange sex for money, goods or favours are "sexually exploited" and not defined as sex workers.

The term "sex worker" is used in preference to "prostitute," as it is intended to be non-judgemental, focusing on the conditions under which sexual services are sold. The term "commercial sex worker" is no longer used because it is seen as repeating the same meaning using different words.

24 Managing Sex Work, page 7 and Language Matters: Talking about sex work. Infosheet produced by STELLA, April 2013, page 3
25 Legal frameworks that deal with sex work and human trafficking – an overview of terminology and an examination of evidence

26 Consolidated guidelines on HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care for key populations. WHO, July 2014
Trafficker
A trafficker is an agent of the crime of trafficking.

Trafficking
"Trafficking in Persons shall mean 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 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." Broken down into its components, the definition comprises acts, means, and purpose. One or more elements of each of the three components must be present in order for the definition’s criteria to be fulfilled. A victim’s consent is irrelevant if any of the above means are used or if the victim is under 18 years old.

Transgender
Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and expression does not conform to the norms and expectations traditionally associated with the sex assigned to them at birth; it includes people who are transsexual, transgender or otherwise gender non-conforming. Transgender people may self-identify as transgender, female, male, transwoman or transman, transsexual or, in specific cultures, as hijra (India), kathoey (Thailand), waria (Indonesia) or one of many other transgender identities. They may express their genders in a variety of masculine, feminine and/or androgynous ways.

Third parties
This term is used to describe anyone involved in the transaction of sex work who is neither the client nor the sex worker. The term third parties is broad, as it can refer to people sex workers work for (owners, managers, agents), work with (agents, bookers) or hire (drivers, web designers), as well as to individuals associated with sex work venues (receptionists, security). A third party is understood as an individual who controls, coordinates or supervises sex workers’ labour practices (how they work) or labour process (when and where they work) for direct or indirect financial compensation. Also, sex workers can be considered third parties when they work together with other sex workers.

Tutor
A person who follows and supports the participants in a training throughout the entire learning process.

Unprotected sex/unsafe sex
This term is used in preference to "risky sex" or "high-risk sex."

FORMS OF SEX WORK

Apartment
An apartment used in the context of sex work is a place where one to three sex workers work, mostly autonomously. This apartment may be their home as well as their workplace.

Bassi
Bassi are only found in Italy. They are rooms in the historic centre of Genoa, where sex work has long been practised. These rooms are located on the ground floor and have an independent entrance accessible directly from the narrow streets (vicoli) in this area. Generally, they are made up of one or two rooms with no windows and a small bathroom. In the past, they were used as shops or storerooms, though in the last fifty years they have been transformed into bedrooms.

Bar
In the context of the sex industry, a bar is a place to meet sex workers and have a drink. Sex workers generally go

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27 Work Safe in Sex Work, a European manual on good practices in work with and for sex workers, TAMPEP International Foundation, 2009
28 Consolidated guidelines on HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care for key populations. WHO, July 2014
29 Managing Sex Work, page 7 and Language Matters: Talking about sex work. Infosheet produced by STELLA, April 2013, page 4
elsewhere (hotels, apartments, etc.) with clients to perform sexual services, but some bars may have private areas that are used, officially or not, for this purpose.

**Brothel**
A brothel is a place where four or more sex workers work. This business is mostly organised by a third party.

**Club**
In the context of the sex industry, a club is a place to meet sex workers, have a drink, watch striptease shows and visit private rooms, where sex workers can go with clients to provide sexual services.

**Incalls**
This term refers to sexual services provided by the sex worker at her/his workplace or home. The client visits the sex worker to purchase sexual services.

**Laufhaus**
Laufhäuser are very common in Austria and Germany. They are large houses with several individual rooms, which are rented by sex workers on a daily or weekly basis. Laufhaus means "walk house" because men walk through the corridors until they choose a sex worker.

**Massage parlours and saunas**
These are venues where the primary business is related to massage services or sauna facilities, but where sexual services may be provided as well.

**Other indoor venues**
Cinemas, saunas, peep shows, striptease bars.

**Outcalls**
This term refers to sexual services provided by the sex worker outside her/his workplace. Outcalls can take place in hotels, at the client’s home or in another location.

**Sex shop**
A sex shop is a commercial venue selling a range of sexual accessories, with private rooms where clients can watch live shows or videos and seek sexual services.

**SM Studio**
Used in Germany to describe venues offering sadomasochistic services.

**Studio**
Studios are found in Austria, and are apartments in a building’s ground level that have their own entrance separate from that to other apartments in the building. Studios are places where one to three sex workers work autonomously or are organised by a third person, mostly the owner.

**Windows**
Windows, or window brothels, which are mostly found in the Netherlands, are small rooms used by self-employed sex workers who rent them for work purposes for day or night shifts. Sex workers are not allowed to live there. The windows (like shop windows) are normally on the ground floor of the building. Sex workers sit or stand behind the window and negotiate with clients at the door. There are two ways of indicating that the sex worker is busy: the outside red light is on and the window curtains are closed. Windows are concentrated on streets where the municipality allows such businesses to operate, and window owners are responsible for the working conditions and policies in their venues.

**REACHING SEX WORKERS**

**ICT (Information and Communication Technology)**
ICT is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, such as radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, and the services and applications associated with them. Almost all service providers and activists use some ICT tools in their activities and communication.

**Online outreach (e-outreach)**
Online outreach refers to outreach work that is conducted in internet-based settings, such as chat rooms, forums, instant messaging services or other online interfaces that facilitate
conversation. Online outreach is done in order to establish dialogue with a certain target group, and typically consists of promoting services and/or support. This work should always be carefully planned and evaluated.

**Outreach services**
Outreach services refer to all activities that aim to reach out to and engage with a certain target group, often with the intention of offering information, services and/or support. Within the scope of the INDOORS project, this mostly refers to outreach work done with and for indoor sex workers, mainly in the context of visits to indoor sex work venues. These visits can include medical personnel, such as nurses or doctors, as well as cultural mediators (when reaching out to migrants). Great care must be taken when providing clinical services in order to protect the confidentiality of sex workers’ medical care and test results. Methods of arranging outreach vary depending on the local context and resources available – some organisations respond to sex workers’ requests for visits, others phone to offer visits, while others still visit spontaneously without warning the establishments. Regardless of the method used, all outreach requires negotiation with gatekeepers and sex workers, and should be based on sex workers’ consent.

**SIT (Social Intervention Tool)**
The SIT is an advanced, customisable chat tool that was specifically developed by an expert group of the Correlation Network for organisations working with marginalised or vulnerable persons, such as drug users, sex workers, MSM and young people at risk. For more information on the SIT, visit [http://sitool.eu/index.html](http://sitool.eu/index.html)
DIFFERENT JOBS.
EQUAL RIGHTS.

ADVOCATING
FOR THE RIGHTS OF
SEX WORKERS