NORDIC NETWORK
31.05.-01.06.2012

For Social- and Health Organisations,
Sex Workers and Researchers working in
The Field of Prostitution.

Røde Kors Konferansesenter, Hausmannsgate 7, Oslo
Conference Language will be English.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000-1010</td>
<td><strong>Welcome by The Minister of Justice</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1010-1045</td>
<td>Researcher May-Len Skilbrei, FAFO Oslo:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“How can we understand the Relationship between the Criminal Justice Approach and Social Work?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1045-1100</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1100-1130</td>
<td>Anthropologist Jeanett Bjønness:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Between emotional Politics and biased Practices in Denmark”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1130-1150</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1150-1210</td>
<td>Criminologist Sarah Warpe:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“There is no such thing as a Support Service”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experiences from Norwegian Women involved with Drug and Prostitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1210-1230</td>
<td>Founder of Rose Alliance and Project Manager of HIV-Sweden Pye Jacobsson:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“EXIT – from what, why and how?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1230-1330</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1330-1400</td>
<td>Consultant Mogens Holm Sørensen, Socialstyrelsen København:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Leaving Prostitution”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1400-1430</td>
<td>Laura Agustin – The naked Anthropologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Why do I call it the Rescue Industry?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1430-1445</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1445-1600</td>
<td>Plenary discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700-2000</td>
<td>Boat Trip</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Friday 01.06. “Manyfold work”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Speakers and Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0900-0945</td>
<td>Manager of Nadheim, Olav Lægdene and ROSA, Maya Brenna Nielsen: “Advantages and Disadvantages with the Law prohibiting the Purchase of Sexual Services”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0945-1000</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-1045</td>
<td>Astrid Renland, Administrator PION og Susanne Møller, SIO Danmark: “Possibilities and Limitations in organizing of Sex Workers “</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1045-1100</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1100-1400</td>
<td><strong>Workshops with lunch (1200-1245) included</strong>&lt;br&gt;A) “Multicultural Health Work for Sex Workers”&lt;br&gt;Nurses Ann Kirstine Kirk and Radostina Angelova, Pro Sentret&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;B) “Empowerment – getting to yes”.&lt;br&gt;How to shape and share a Shelter for the Future…&lt;br&gt;Knut Isachsen and Dagfrid Fosen, Natthjemmet&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;C) “Outreach on the Internet ”&lt;br&gt;Nurse Camilla Johannessen, Pro Sentret&lt;br&gt;Social worker Morten Sortodden, PION: Male Sex Workers&lt;br&gt;Social worker Lena Hanssen, Nadheim: Female Sex Workers&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;D) “The Connection between Trafficking and Migration?”&lt;br&gt;Director Bjørg Norli, Pro Sentret&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;E) Workshop in Thai for Thai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200-1245</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1400-1500</td>
<td>Responses from the work shops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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And farewell
Introduction

The commercial sex marked is a constantly changing scene and prostitution is a highly politicised issue. Often our thoughts are guided by gut-feelings rather than actual knowledge based on experience and scientific investigations. Obviously there is no such thing as “the truth about prostitution”. There are too many interests invested. And the views of men and women in prostitution themselves are different.

In this scene the service providers for people selling sex in the Nordic Countries have – with some exceptions – met annually to exchange ideas, experiences, new knowledge and discussing the political situation. Not necessarily to agree on all matters, but to have a critical eye on our own practice.

At a political level there is – as participants at the conference pointed out – not one “Nordic model” when it comes to legislation. We may add that this is neither the case when it comes to service provision, although we all have our base in some idea of a “welfare state”. It is useful to highlight the diversities and openly discuss the differences in approach.

In 2012 the Network meeting took place in Oslo, arranged by Pro Sentret on May 31st and June 1st.

In order to inspire to further discussions and improving our work, we have chosen to make this compendium, containing the presentations and the discussions from the two days. In the annex we have also included presentations from some of the services (unfortunately they are not all in English) in order to facilitate further networking, exchange visits etc.

In most cases we present the presentations and power points as they were given by the speakers. The notes from discussions and some of the presentations are the responsibility of the two reporters. We apologise if we have missed important points or misunderstood any issues.

It is our hope that this paper can be useful in our future work. If there are points any of the participants want to add or correct, please tell us and we will do our best.

Pro Sentret, August 2012

Arne Randers-Pehrson and Turid Misje
May-Len Skilbrei is a researcher and Managing Director at FAFO Institute for Applied International Studies [www.fafo.no](http://www.fafo.no). Skilbrei has performed research on prostitution and human trafficking since the mid-1990’s and has written on both how prostitution and trafficking is experienced, organized, talked about and regulated.

Jeanett Bjønness is an anthropologist, educated in Århus. She has been working at Reden (The Nest) for 12 years. In 2011 she published the report: “I don’t say I want to be an astronaut, do I?” This summer she is finishing her Ph.d. on Danish women selling sexual services on the streets.

Sarah Warpe is a Norwegian criminologist with an interest for the various interest concerning women in prostitution. She has been active in the field both through her studies and her work experience the last 6 years. The presentation is based on her master thesis from the University of Oslo 2011.

Pye Jacobsson is founder of Rose Alliance [www.rosealliance.se](http://www.rosealliance.se), project manager at HIV-Sweden and sexwork expert consultant at Harm Reduction International [www.ihra.net](http://www.ihra.net)

Mogens Holm Sørensen is a consultant at Socialstyrelsen – a part of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration in Denmark [www.socialstyrelsen.dk](http://www.socialstyrelsen.dk) He is working in the team addressing prostitution and human trafficking issues. Mogens has worked with prostitution issues since 2003.

Laura Maria Augustin holds a Ph.D in cultural studies and sociology from UK. She studies undocumented migration, informal labour markets, trafficking and the sex industry. She has published several books and articles on these subjects. She is blogging and speaking publicly as the *Naked Anthropologist*, [www.lauraaugustin.com](http://www.lauraaugustin.com)

Olav Lægdene is Manager of Nadheim, Centre for women and men with experience of prostitution, Church City Mission, Oslo [www.bymisjon.no/virksomheter/nadheim](http://www.bymisjon.no/virksomheter/nadheim)

Maya Brenna Nielsen is head information officer at ROSA, Norway. ROSA is a service coordinating assistance and safe housing for victims of trafficking in Norway. [www/rosa-help.no](http://www/rosa-help.no) It is a part of the Governmental Plan of Action against Human Trafficking.

Susanne Møller is active as a sex worker in Denmark. She is also spokesperson for SIO – Sex workers Interest Organisation of Denmark, organizing 200 members. [www.s-i-o.dk](http://www.s-i-o.dk)

Astrid Renland is a criminologist. She has for many years been administrator of PION, Prostitutes Interest Organisation of Norway. [www.pion-norge.no](http://www.pion-norge.no)
As the first day is discussing different sides of service providing and politics, we include a famous poem by Bertolt Brecht that he wrote sometime between 1926 and 1933. It touches upon some of the dilemmas we face. An English translation is included; unfortunately we do not know the name of the translator.

Die Nachtlager

Ich höre, daß in New York
An der Ecke der 26.Straße und des Broadway
Während der Wintermonate jeden Abend ein Mann steht
Und den Obdachlosen, die sich ansammeln
Durch Bitten an Vorübergehende ein Nachtlager verschafft.

Die Welt wird dadurch nicht anders
Die Beziehungen zwischen den Menschen bessern sich nicht
Das Zeitalter der Ausbeutung wird dadurch nicht verkürzt
Aber einige Männer haben ein Nachtlager
Der Wind wird von ihnen eine Nacht lang abgehalten
Der ihnen zugedachte Schnee fällt auf die Straße.

Leg das Buch nicht nieder, der du das liesest, Mensch.

Einige Menschen haben ein Nachtlager
Der Wind wird von ihnen eine Nacht lang abgehalten
Der ihnen zugedachte Schnee fällt auf die Straße
Aber die Welt wird dadurch nicht anders
Die Beziehungen zwischen den Menschen bessern sich dadurch nicht
Das Zeitalter der Ausbeutung wird dadurch nicht verkürzt.

A bed for the night

I hear that in New York
At the corner of 26th street and Broadway
A man stands every evening during the winter months
And gets beds for the homeless there
By appealing to passers-by.

It won't change the world
It won't improve relations among men
It will not shorten the age of exploitation
But a few men have a bed for the night
For a night the wind is kept from them
The snow meant for them falls on the roadway.

Don't put down the book on reading this, man.

A few people have a bed for the night
For a night the wind is kept from them
The snow meant for them falls on the roadway
But it won't change the world
It won't improve relations among men
It will not shorten the age of exploitation.
Emotional politics

- the relation between Danish prostitution policy
  social institutions and women selling sex

By Jeanett Bjønness, Aarhus University.
etnojb@hum.au.dk
Content

- Introduction
- Focus and methods
- Theory and history of construction of ‘the prostitute’
- Positions and arguments in the current Danish public discourse on prostitution
- Implications of the discourse - consequences for the lives of women in prostitution
- Reflections and conclusions. From criminal to victim. A question of agency.
Focus and methods

- Report: I don’t say I want to become an astronaut, do I?
- The relation between discourse, social institutions and everyday life of women selling sexual services in the streets
- An exploration of current Danish discourse on prostitution
- Interviews with 30 women in drug addiction treatment, and experience with selling sexual services, and 30 counselors and policy makers working with this group in Odense, Århus and Copenhagen.
- I also draw on some of the interviews and fieldwork I made for my Ph.d. thesis in 2002-2005.
Main arguments

- Polarized discourse
- Othering of women selling sexual services
- Victimizing rhetoric
  ->
  - Social workers influenced by this rhetoric
    ->
    - Reduction of the women's possibilities to perform rationality and thus their ability to gain relevant recognition/capital in the eyes of their counselors
- The media and the social system in the last instance can be said to rob the women their status as ‘citizens’
Theory

- A social interactionist/constructivist perspective
- The theoretical concepts of Pierre Bourdieu and Erving Goffman
  - Focus on empirical contexts and relations, as opposed to essences.
  - The relativity of the concept of prostitution
  - The importance of social control in defining the phenomenon.
History – from offender to victim

• ‘The prostitute’ as the counter image of the ‘respectable woman’, constituting different kinds of threat: to morality, to public health, to marriage and the ‘family’, and to public order, has longstanding and deep historical roots, which affect current policies.

• Today the stated aims of prostitution policies are to facilitate their access to psychological help and to the labor market (Regeringens handleplan) and to protect women selling sexual services from their customers (www.reden.dk - criminalization).

• ‘Oppression paradigm’:
  - Prostitutes as individual victims
  - ‘Silences’ between women selling sexual services and social workers
  - The (re)production of women selling sexual services as muted actors in public discourse.
Summary

- Emotional discourse
- Lack of documented knowledge of the very different economic and social contexts within which women sell sexual services
- Strong thrust in the rational and choosing actor
- A ‘psychologization’ and ‘pathologization’ of ‘the prostitute’
- The assumption on the part of the public that women selling sexual services are radically different from, and far more vulnerable than, other women.
Positions in Danish discourse

- SIO
- Sex Pol
- Liberal parties
- Sex workers

- Media
- National Board of social services
- Researchers
- Initiative 8th of March
- Reden Left wing parties
- Sex workers

- Against criminalization
- Choice
- Actors

- Pro criminalization
- Violence
- Victims
NGO’s hostile rhetoric

• “Men buy women in pieces; Vagina, mouth, hand, anus. Each part has its own price.” (Politiken 22.09.02)
Sociale tiltag som vidensproducent

- Danish knowledge of prostitution come mainly from social projects, shelters and the police, focusing on the problematic aspects of prostitution, like negative health consequences.
- Servicestyrelsen (The board of social services) is implementing the policy of the Danish government
- Lack of:
  - critical reflections on the relation between theoretical assumptions, method and empirical data
  - initiatives to address ethical and socio-political aspects of prostitution
  - evidence based knowledge
- Alleged explosion of numbers of women selling sexual services in Denmark (report page 18-23)
- ‘Numbers constitute a central technique of power among the actors’ in the prostitution scene (Spanger 2011).
- The close and often not sufficiently reflected relation between help and knowledge-production in the work of The Board.
“When she (the film actor) names prostitutes as cunts(fisshul), she is spot on. She is condensing in one single word the perspective on women expressed by prostitution. Because cunts are what women are reduced to in the eyes of men buying sex. “Stigmatization” screams the Sexworkers’ Union immediately, and the chair woman acts like a haunted innocent victim on TV. She is right, though; Prostitutes are stigmatized. Not by feminists or others, wanting to confront the right to buy sex, but by the way the sex purchasers look upon women - Welcome to Barbary. But what kind of freedom are the hard core libertarians talking about? The freedom to be exploited and to be destroyed sexually for money? And the freedom of sex-buyers to maintain slavery and prostitution? There is hypocrisy, and then there is hypocrisy.” (Information, 22.2.2011, my translation)
Positions in the Danish discourse (2)

- “What kind of Victorian Puritanism and intolerance do these moralist middle class women represent? (Berlingske, 23.2.2011, my translation).”
Positions in the Danish discourse (3)

Reden international homepage:
“Regardless of the great efforts made by the SFI researchers to construct the ‘happy history’ about prostitution as quite normal, minimal-risk, work, the report makes clear, that prostitution is harmful and primarily is chosen as a career of economic reasons. And even though psychiatric harmful consequences, transgressive experiences, and the risk of violence and rape are characteristics of the backcloth of prostitutes, the SFI hasn’t bothered to explore this.” (Information, 2011b)

“They [the journalists] are so busy promoting the view that prostitution is an occupation, that they primarily treat the topic from the ultra liberalist assumption that the individual absolutely should have the freedom to do anything – also to destroy themselves.” (Information, 2011b)
Summing up main tendencies:

• The inherently oppressive character of prostitution is seen as self-evident, and do not require empirical documentation
• Prostitution is seen as a social problem
• Women selling sexual services as either ‘victims’ or ‘others’ seems self evident
• Attempts to argue for a more complex understanding of the phenomenon, as in the SFI-report, are often labeled irrational or just ignored
“All these ’trying-to-do-good-women’, they pity us. I admit that some of us have problems, but when generalizing in this way, it is as they forget that we are as individually different as anybody else. This really pisses me off!” (Interviewee nr. 63)
• “Prostitution? That is just a bad childhood and easy money.” (Interviewee nr. 11)

• “Nobody believed me, as I was not the ‘nice doll type’. I had a dress with a wide neck, and when I uncovered my shoulder, I thought it was nice...I didn’t realize the tools I was starting to use.” (Interviewee nr. 9)
Minimal viden om prostitution

- Most social workers in drug treatment centers know of the women’s backgrounds and their distrust of the social system.
- They have very limited knowledge about prostitution.
- They are often very uncomfortable and unsure about how to address the women’s experience of selling sexual services.
- Most choose not to address prostitution.

- “It takes thrust and cautiousness to ask about prostitution. It is so difficult, it may be because of the taboo... and the problem is; we have nothing to offer, we can talk, but they have nowhere to go to receive help.” (Addiction counselor nr. 2)
“Me and my colleagues haven’t experienced that the women want to talk about prostitution. I think they avoid it... Maybe it would be like opening an abscess, and the substance would pour out, and they will have a breakdown. They don’t need that. I have the notion that they just repress it and that they might be embarrassed. And maybe the social workers are afraid of addressing it.” (Addiction counselor nr. 13)
• “My God, they must be strong, to be able to cope with prostitution and life on the streets. I would die after a few days.” (Addiction counselor nr. 17)

• “I do not know so much about prostitution, and I do not know how transgressive it is for them if I address prostitution. Maybe it is also about me as a social worker; that I complicate things because I am afraid of transgressing her boundaries and thus endanger our relation?” (Addiction counselor nr. 4)
• “In the drug treatment centers there was a lot of fear of being transgressive. The addiction counselors were afraid that I would shatter if they asked me about prostitution.” (Interviewee nr. 34)

• “Have you been a prostitute? In respect for the client, we don’t ask that question. We do not want to ascribe something to them, which we cannot be sure of.” (Addiction counselor nr. 11)
“When I have told an addiction counselor that I have been engaged in prostitution, they have looked upon me, as if I was insane... I don’t think that they are ready to talk about that.” (Interviewee nr. 14)

“She [social worker] just condemned me. I felt that all I had been fighting for was lost; I was still seen the same way; a fucking junkie, who wouldn’t be able to take care of her child.” (Interviewee nr. 42)
“We were a lot of people around the table, and then the medical superintendent says; ‘we will follow you for three to five years, because we often see, that in a year or two, problems will arise’...It made me feel that I was carrying the burden of all prostitutes.” (Interviewee nr. 27)
“If you [the client] are to stay here [in drug-treatment], it is your own responsibility that you answer properly. I can understand your frustration, but your responsibility is to approach me and say; Karen, I am sorry. Do you have the time to talk to me?” (Addiction counselor nr. 5)
• “They [the counselors] want me to kneel, but I can’t do that, I can’t.” (Interviewee nr. 23)

• “I manage to act tame, but I cannot be trusted. I also manage being wild, but only to scare people.” (Interviewee nr. 6)
“Ok, if they want a drug addicted whore, they can have one!” (Interviewee nr. 44)

“It is as if we, women who ‘make money’, are seen as not belonging to the human race.” (Interviewee nr. 2)
Implications of the discourse

- Emotionality and lack of will to explore the ‘others’ point of view
- Strong expressions: barbary, hypocrisy, and puritanism
- Social workers and clients come to understand prostitution as extraordinary
- This presumption influences the relation between women selling sex and the social workers
Analysis 1: Reverse taboo

SW: Social Workers

- Media present women as victims
- SW expect prostitution to be an extraordinary experience
- In respect for the women SW do not talk about prostitution
- SW do not properly understand the women
- Presumption about vulnerability remain/reinforced
- ‘Othering’ of the women/selling sex is seen as extraordinary
Analysis(2) Non-communication about prostitution becomes an vicious circle

- Social workers’ stereotypical images
- Women treated as ‘generalized drug-users’ without rationality
- Reduced chance to present themselves as rational and responsible
- Development of pragmatic attitude in relations to the system
Conclusions - from criminal to victim – from subject to object

**Sum:**
- Confirmation of the impression of ‘otherness’
- Stereotypes of the ‘drug using prostitute’ (narkoluder) are reproduced and reinforced, no channels through which these women can make their stories and their suggestions for appropriate action heard
- A lack of knowledge of the context and situatedness of women selling sex on the streets
- A lack of knowledge of the sex workers own strategies and reasoning
- A lack of understanding of sex work as only one aspect of complex lives
- ‘Psycologization’ of the phenomenon; the assumption, that sex workers personalities are different than others
- Efforts to help, leads to a feeling of stigmatisation
  -> A fulfilment of the circle, that makes the prostitute the ultimate ‘other’, and in the last consequence, deprive of them their citizenship and humanity.
• Tak for i dag.
• Etnojb@hum.au.dk
How can we understand the relationship between the criminal justice approach and social work?

May-Len Skilbrei
Health Services and Needs in Prostitution, funded by the Research Council of Norway 2012-2015

Two sub-projects

- Health and social services in prostitution
- Assistance to victims of trafficking
Background

• Research on the consequences of policies in Norway
• Research on the consequences of policies in East and Southeast Europe
• Conversations with service providers
The goal of the project

- How can governmental and municipal institutions best meet the health and social needs of persons involved in prostitution, including victims of trafficking?
Two policy domains

- Social policy
  - Focus: Well-being
  - Institutions: Social services, health, education, housing, social security etc
  - «Empowering»?
  - General or targeted?

- Criminal justice policy
  - Focus: Protect from harm and instability
  - Institutions: Police, courts, prisons etc
  - «Repressive»?
  - General or targeted?
• The administration of criminal justice policy:
  – state-led
  – hierarchical, centralised
  – exerts direct control

• The administration of social policy:
  – State/municipality and NGO-led,
  – non-hierarchical, decentralised,
  – exerts indirect control
Where to look for these approaches?

• Broader normative commitments: on welfare, gender, punishment etc
• Discourses on prostitution
  – Trajectories and connections in public debate, on global/transnational, national and local levels
• Policy
  – Social policy/criminal justice policy
• Policy implementation
  – State and non-state
  – What is inside what is outside?
• Consequences
  – Intended/unintended
Consequences of regulation

• People are formed by what categories they are placed in and how they are regulated/managed as such.

• This means: regulation is not only a form of power that act upon people’s lives, but also power to change them.
How to analyse this?

• The value of delineating policy models, types or regimes?
  – How to identify similarities without loosing difference?

• In how much detail?
  – Loosing sight of patterns

• What is the proper context for prostitution policy?
National context

- Scandinavian welfare model (Sümer 2009)
  - Comprehensiveness
  - Level of institutionalism
  - Universalism
- Gender equality/gender norms
  - State feminism/woman-friendliness? (Hernes 1987; Esping-Andersen 2002)
- Degree of punitivism
- Immigration policies
  - More or less restrictive?
Local context

- Local politics and levels of welfare provisions
- Local concerns over prostitution in line or in contrast with the national problem definition
«Entanglement» (Newman and Yeates 2008)

• Social policy and criminal justice policy work with and against each other.

• Also social policies are aimed at maintaining social order and to naturalise and normalise social inequalities.
«Entanglement»

• Power difference in both policy domains
• Punishment in both policy domains
  – Social policy also holds definitions of “good conduct” and lack of compliance with these can lead to loss of benefits
• Both sets of policy regulate social behaviour, but also regulate each other
The consequences of such entanglement

- Specific traits of the Nordic context
  - “Hard” and “soft” measures merge: policing and rewarding “good conduct”
  - Silencing of critique
  - NGO’s start “seeing like a state”.
James C. Scott: Seeing like a state, 1998:

Certain forms of knowledge and control require a narrowing of vision. The great advantage of such tunnel vision is that it brings into sharp focus certain limited aspects of an otherwise far more complex and unwieldy reality. The very simplification, in turn, makes the phenomenon at the center of the field of vision more legible and hence more susceptible to careful measurements and calculation. Combined with similar observations, an overall, aggregate, synoptic view of a selective reality is achieved, making possible a high degree of schematic knowledge, control and manipulation.
"There is no such thing as a support service"

- Experiences from norwegian women involved with drugs and prostitution

Sarah Sangesland Warpe.
Master in Criminology.
What characterizes the women in my study?

- Norwegian women
- Sexworkers
- Drugaddicts
- Between 25 - 65 years of age
- Working/worked primarily on the streets
- Been in contact with various parts of the support system from an early age
Which role does the support system play in their lives?

The social support system:
- A protecting railing
The official support system
First contact with NAV

When I first sought help from NAV I was in great need of emergency aid. I had nothing, no money, no place to live or anything. But it came at a price - I have never felt so small and insignificant like when I approached that counter.
To become a client
"Everything goes by the rules. They say the rules are there to create trust and solid relations, but when you repeatedly try and try and try - and the help and trust fail to appear, you start to lose hope"
"Can you trust them to help you when you need it?"

"It all depends on being heard, and most of all believed"
Who´s working today?

"You can say that the work, help and support varies from day to day, person to person. The consequence is that you don´t know what to expect"
Lack of knowledge?
...or unwillingness to talk about prostitution?
Prostitution and prejudice

"They gave me “that look”, you know? That look that means they know"
The prostitution support services

NADHEIM
SENTER FOR KVINNER OG MENN
MED PROSTITUSJONSERFARING

NATTHJEMMET
AKUTT OVERNATTING FOR KVINNER
I RUS – OG PROSTITUSJONSMILJØ

Prosentret
How do they meet the women?

- Talk to people with no prejudice against you and what you do
- They stand closest to us
- Knowledge
- Safety and trust
- They meet us half-way
The official support system vs the prostitution services

• Different resources
• Different knowledge and understanding of means and objectives
• Acknowledgment
It is like carrying a backpack full of rocks. If you don’t empty the backpack now and then, it gets really heavy and therefore hard to carry along. We all have "baggage", and we all could need some help with it from time to time.
There is no such thing as a support system.
Sarah Sangesland Warpe, criminologist.

I was asked to give a speech about the women’s experiences with the social support system, a theme that I explored in my master thesis. In my work I focused on their experiences with the different support systems they are in contact with, but I also saw this in light of theories linked to the unequal power structures in the meetings and the system in general, the client categorization, stigmatization, strategies linked to the applied social work and so on. In this presentation I have chosen to highlight the women’s encounters with NAV, but also an short presentation of their meeting with the different prostitution initiatives here I Oslo. In the end I will say something about what’s distinguishes this two branches. In that respect - this presentation will also serve as a good example on how larger parts of the support system versus the more specialized parts – meet smaller and more vulnerable client groups.

This presentations title is a statement that in many ways summarizes the problems I will try to shed light on. The official support system did not exist to this woman. It was rather the strong forces represented by the prostitution initiatives that was the determining factor for her to get the help she was entitled to from NAV.

But first – What characterizes the women in my master thesis? Like I said, I wanted to explore how women with experiences from both sex work and drug addiction, experience the encounters with the support agencies. I talked to six women in the ages from approximately 25 – 65. The majority of the women in my master thesis is both sex workers and drug addicts, but the few with no drug experience, encountered much the same amount of difficulties in the meetings with NAV. The descriptions of the women’s life situations are characterized to be floating and chaotic, with an everlasting pursuit of money and drugs with prostitution and pushing as the main sources of income. Common for the women who had a drug addiction, is that this have been a part of their lives from a early age. And common for all the women - so had the prostitution. In short you can say that they experience an accumulation of problems, and because of this, the contact with the help agencies is something they know a great deal about.

What role does the social support systems play in their lives?
When I think about the social support system, I like to compare the systems and the people surrounding us, as a protecting railing. This is because the picture a railing represent, says
something about the society´s boundaries, its in-and outside. The railings upper most function is to prevent us from falling on the outside of the society “of the normal”, but also to prevent us from falling hard when we first fall. In this particular context we can say that the railings task is to prevent them the women falling into the drug- and prostitution scene, but in practice its often its other function primarily as harm reduction that is just as important.

Most of the women I have been in contact with, do not have a large social network of family and friends that can, in addition to the support services, contribute to a solid railing. So the help and support from the help agencies are crucial, and this also helps explain their dependency linked to getting help from the official support system.

With this in mind, this presentation will include statements from the women of both where the social support system failed and still fails to support them, and later where it succeeds.

Lets start with their first encounters with the support system.

**The official support system: NAV.**

NAV is the official welfare and work support system in Norway. According to them, their goal is to offer help in areas as work, different economic contribution, prevent poverty and unemployment. In the following, I will not try to offer you any solutions to the different areas of problems within NAV or how I think it can be better. But I hope this will create an awareness and room for further work, discussions and thoughts among you.

**NAV - First contact**

Almost all of the women remembered their first encounter with NAV, as if it was only yesterday. Why is it so?

“When I first sought help from NAV I was in great need of emergency aid.
I had nothing, no money, no place to live or anything. But, it came at a price - I have never felt so small and insignificant like when I approached that counter.”

The first contact with NAV is often directly linked to survival, and to making the ends meet. Their first meetings are characterized by feeling small and worthless, but also feelings of shame. Other research on peoples feeling about seeking help like this, reports of similar emotions occurring like defeat, shame and embarrassment.

My question is: Is this a good starting point in an already vulnerable situation?

Another issue the women talked about regarding their first encounters, was their experiences with
different types of help services in their youth. Several of them still asks the question “What if someone had seen me, and tried to help me already then?” This is important, especially since research tells us that prostitution is a widespread phenomenon among both young girls and boys in the drug scenes.

**To become a client**

Another factor that appeared several times was the feelings connected with the process of becoming a client. When you become a client, you also become a subject in the system and a subject to the system, and your every move and statement gets documented in rapports, journals and so on. An other aspect of this involves client categorization. In other words, the women’s individual characteristics and unique life situation gets lost in the general problem categorization. Meaning: The basis for the help is not necessarily adapted to the person, but rather pushed into the available programs and initiatives that already exist. In addition to this: The meeting is also characterized by contradicting elements – such as both help and control, care and discipline, the question of trust, the strict rules and the exercise of discretion. Lets see how the women thinks about the link between rules, control and trust.

**Rules, control and trust**

“Everything goes by the rules. They say the rules are there to create trust and solid relations, but when you repeatedly try and try and try... and the help and trust fail to appear, you start to loose hope.”

The issue of rules, control and trust in NAV was perhaps the question that created the most response and resentment among the women. The amount of rules and regulations, applications, incomprehensible information and the various employees they meet create confusion. The women have to earn the trust, but feels that their are already “pre-judged” from the moment they walked in the doors and approached the counter.

It is important to remember that it’s much frustration linked to their dependency on getting help, and that frustration and desperation sometimes get interpreted by the people working there as fury, anger. Some of the women are therefore labeled as “hard clients” that must be met by even more rules. This emphasize on rules is in an way linked to a strategy to create trust, but rather to create it, it damages the women's confidence that they can receive the help they need when they actually need it.
“Can you trust them to help you when you need it?”

As a consequence, the women answers no to this question. This indicates a low degree of trust to the system, while the meeting also is experienced as a struggle.

“If you want to get help, it all depends on being heard and most of all - believed. And when you experience that the social workers don’t believe you, its very painful. That’s not what you expect from the official help system “Especially when you have opened yourself and still not get the treatment and help you need.. I don’t know what to do. Its my way of reaching out, sharing my story, and when they still not respond to that, I give up”

Another factor which contribute to their difficulties, can be summed up in the question: “Who’s working today?”

Who’s working today?

“It all depends on who’s working that day. You can say that the work, help and support varies from day to day, person to person, and the consequence is that you don’t know what to expect. I don’t know how many social workers I have had in my time. It is a great advantage and of great value to have one person who knows my case and life history.”

The communication is difficult especially when you don’t get the chance to form an stable relationship to one person. Meaning that you potentially have to tell your story from the beginning each time you seek help, but also the risk that you end up with no help that day. The women consider the help as colored by coincidence and luck: Should this factors at all be present in a meeting like this?

As an extension to this, the women highlighted the social workers knowledge and willingness to talk about prostitution.

Lack of knowledge? Or an unwillingness to talk about prostitution?

“I don’t know whether I should take them seriously or not.. Or if I just should laugh at them. Why? They say that they have expertise, but it does not seem like they know what their doing at all!”

They perceive the social workers at NAV as having no knowledge or basis for talking about problems connected with this. This silence can be interpreted in many ways. Some of them can be discomfort, prejudice or an general unwillingness. Either way, the women do not feel that the social workers create enough room to talk about difficult areas of the women´s lives, and this sends them a
signal that prostitution is an unwanted topic. Which leads us to the next topic:

**Prostitution and prejudice.**

"They gave me “that look”, you know? That look that means they know"

The prejudice, or like this quote says, “the look” is everywhere; in the society in general, in the drug scenes and in this case – in the support system. One of the women said “*When you consider how badly you are treated as a drug addict, it’s an easy choice to hide the fact that you are also selling sex*”. When I asked her why, she replied: “*It’s not certain they have the same respect for you as for other people. You can’t expect anything else, and you start to feel like a looser.*”

As a consequence, this colors both the women’s expectations, their behavior, thoughts, the communication and the relationship between them and the social worker.

This was the main problems the women highlighted from their experiences with NAV.

In the introduction I also mentioned that I would speak about where the railing succeeds, and the railing the different prostitution initiatives represent, plays a big part of this.

**The Prostitution support services: Natthjemmet, Nadheim and Pro Sentret**

All of the women I have talked to, had or have contact with at least two or more of the three initiatives. I don’t have the time to talk about what the different places offer and what different parts they play in the women’s lives. I will rather use this time to say something about what distinguishes these support services from the official service like NAV a bit later. First:

**How do they meet the women?**

“*Its places you can talk to people with no prejudice against you and what you do. For me, the prostitution centers are places I can go to no matter what. I don’t have to seek help each time I go there, but all the time I am assured that I can get help if I want. And that is safety and trust. It’s the prostitution services that stand closest to us. They know the environment, and how it is to be out there, and our relations with the costumers and to the drugs. They meet us half-way.*”

Many of the women said they would not be alive today without the help from these places. But when I asked them if there was something the prostitution initiatives’s could do better, the women emphasized that they were not always good at addressing the issue of prostitution. They also used
time to talk about that they feel more and more overlooked by the growing focus on victims of trafficking and the newer groups visiting the centers.

“As in a period I felt like we got overlooked by everyone. I see that they have to help the women that’s coming here, of course! But we also live here, and need help. Especially the women that are also involved in drugs.”

**The official support services vs the prostitution services.**

As we see, the women’s experiences with the prostitution initiatives differs from their statements about NAV in matters of communication, knowledge, stable relations, trust and availability, and a meeting without prejudice and so on.

We must take into account that the various branches have significant different resources to carry out their work. One example is where NAV has money to distribute to them that qualifies for help, the prostitution services has counseling, care and support. In addition they also have an different knowledge about the group, and therefore a different understanding of the works means and objectives - and because of this, they meet their clients accordingly.

Nevertheless, an recurring theme and also one that, in the women’s opinion makes the differences between the branches stand out even stronger, is the feeling connected with acknowledgement.

Acknowledgement is connected with both knowledge, communication and a willingness to use time to get to know the client – a basis social workers at all time should strive to achieve. The strength of having one person that follows you up, acknowledge you, your struggles may potentially change everything.

This is something that is greatly illustrated by the next and last quote from one of the women: “It is like carrying a backpack full of rocks. If you don’t empty the backpack now and then, it gets really heavy and therefore hard to carry along. We all have "baggage", and we all could need some help with it from time to time».

Finally, I will also take this opportunity to shortly say why I believe this particular group is so important. It is a small group compared to other groups of sex workers today, but not less important. The impressions I have gained both from my master thesis, and from following the field the last six years, is that this group increasingly have been given lower priority both in terms of general attention, research initiatives and priorities on the field of social work. This presentation is an attempt to bring their voices back in focus, and to create an awareness about this particular group’s needs and challenges.
"EXIT-from what, why and how?"
Presentation by Pye Jacobsson at the Nordic Network conference, Oslo, 31.05.12
Notes from the presentation by Arne Randers-Pehrson and Turid Misje

Jacobsson points out that it is not always a big deal to leave prostitution. But, for some people it is. It is important to stress that interest organisations are not only for “the few lucky happy hookers” as critics often like to claim. Naturally, also sex workers who are poor, use drugs etc also want rights.

Jacobsson finds the term “exit” offensive because it is too narrowing. It is important to remember that many sex workers have a fluid life in the sense of going in and out of sex work, depending on what options are available. Next she asks the question: Exit from what? The term does not allow for feeling good about sex work. And exit for whom? The individual or the society? Each person have their own reasons for wanting to leave prostitution or not, and it is different for every person which possibilities they have if they wish to do so.

An important question we must ask ourselves is if exit programmes are based on a human rights perspective or on the political agenda of the moment. Another valid question is whether the Nordic model which criminalises purchase of sex work has helped sex workers? It might have helped some, because it takes away the responsibility from them. But, the focus on sex workers as “victims” has also lead to stigmatisation and perhaps making it more difficult for some to reach out for help.

The social- and health organisations aimed at helping sex workers now focus more on “exit” than before. And the problem is that you build your programmes based on rather research studies which are mainly done on those working on the streets, while most sex workers actually work indoors. So, some people do not want to be reached or rescued, or they do not want to be so by you!

**Pye's 7 DON'Ts (and suggestions on what to do instead)**

1. **Don’t think you know it all!** There is no education that can teach you to be an expert on telling people how to live. Rather recognize that each person you meet will teach you something new that will make you even more competent. That way every new person is a potential educator. After all, we are the experts. Recognize that!
2. **Don’t disqualify what people tell you.** Just because it doesn’t fit within your previous experiences or personal value doesn’t mean it can be explained by a “false consciousness”, “romanticizing prostitution” or be an expression of self-harm. Everybody has a unique story and it is not your job to change it into something that fits within a certain ideology or political approach. Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar. Believe what people tell you and they might tell you even more.
3. **Don’t go into rescue mode.** Yes, some people might live shitty lives according to your standards. But it’s not your job to rescue them, but to make sure they get the services that they have the RIGHT to and make sure they know what those are. When rescue mode kicks in it’s all emotions and gut-feelings and that’s fine when you deal with your own kids, but not appropriate when you work. Empathy is a lovely quality but there is a thin line between when it’s professional and when it’s an intrusion of a person’s privacy. Do you want your dentist to feel sorry for you because you’re getting divorced? Right, didn’t think so. Want to save the world? Join Greenpeace or Amnesty.
4. **Don’t believe in numbers!** There are many numbers out there, very often taken out of context. Don’t use random data without really knowing where they come from. They stigmatize sex workers and I hope that is not what we are after? In your own work collecting data on quality is more worth than quantity (I know the funders don’t always agree…). So, you met 300 sex workers last year, good for you. But was it good for them? The number really says nothing more than that your door is working. Try to find out how many of them were happy with the services you provided, that will also give you an insight into what you can do better as well as provide you with an added chance to let sex workers themselves have a say in what services they get.

5. **Don’t expect people to be grateful.** However you look at it all contacts with authorities and NGOs is potentially an invasion of a person’s privacy. Respect that and recognize that everybody is more or less comfortable with letting people have a glimpse of their life. Don’t push, back off and listen. Trust is a great thing that can only be given, cherish that, it’s a gift!

6. **Don’t invent new target groups.** We are a mobile, flexible groups that changes our ways to work all the time. The “where, when and how” is never constant and we might belong to your specific target group today but, POOOOF!, be somewhere else tomorrow. Provide good, solid harm reduction based services and throw in a bit of cultural sensitivity and multi-lingual information, plus legal advice, and you can spare yourself from changing your target group every year. And by the way, our family members are not a potential target group.

7. **Don’t forget your human rights.** Sex workers happen to have exactly the same rights as you. Stigma against sex workers is everywhere and service providers have a responsibility to ensure non-discriminatory treatment. Be critical enough to recognize that some laws and practices are in violation of sex workers human right, even in the Nordic countries. And if you want to give your job just that extra dimension, be brave enough to speak up when necessary. You might even make some new friends in the process 😊

Leaving prostitution

Interview survey with former prostitutes

Mogens Holm Sørensen
A joint venture! Or two parallel and simultaneously conducted surveys

- SFI – the national research center on welfare
- Interviews with 29 former prostitutes
- Socialstyrelsen
- Desk top study and knowledge from the social workers
Structure of the report

• Reasons for leaving prostitution
  – Factors that can lead to leaving prostitution
  – Positive experiences or factors that can withhold people in prostitution

• Experiences with social services
  – Good experiences
  – Bad experiences
  – What is missing/What is wanted

• After leaving prostitution
  – God experiences in prostitution
  – Bad experiences in prostitution
Reason to leave prostitution in general

- A variety of different reasons are found both in interview and literature.

- Indications of sudden decision making (in connection to periods of absence from prostitution).

- Sometimes decisions made coincidentally.
Reasons for leaving prostitution - specifically

- Changes in life-situations/sudden turning points
- Physical problems
- Violence or fear of violence
- The market is stressed and there are less customers
- Age
- Stigma
More reasons for leaving prostitution

- Single experiences on Limits being overruled by costumers

- Sudden unexpected reactions can appear ("a whole inside")
Withholding factors

• Money which sometimes also is (one of) the reason(s) to start in prostitution

• Relations to other prostitutes and the prostitution scene

• Confirmation & recognition

• Having success and being good at sex

• A way of thinking ones life
Good experiences with social services

• The interviewed have primarily positive experiences

• A good kontakt/relation to the social worker can be important

• Help from psychologists

• Activities more than once a week

• Network groups with other former prostitutes

• Having a social worker by the side at different meetings with authorities
Bad experiences with social institutions

- Hard to find through the social institutions
- Withholding to tell about the prostitution in anxiety for the reaction
- Institutions who look at prostitutes as victims
What is missing/what is wanted

• The first meeting open minded and without prejudice

• Possibilities for meeting other (x-)prostitutes in similar situation

• The services have to be visible but not confronting

• Housing facilities (crisis centres) to people in the process of leaving prostitution

• Anonymity

• Former prostitutes as employees in social services (!?)

• 24 hour services (!?)
After leaving prostitution

- Good experiences with prostitution
- Literature is low on the subject!
- Impact on how they are living with their partner
- Development in sexuality
- Having your own income being able to support yourself
- Withholding factors – repeated!
After leaving prostitution

- Bad experiences
- Hard to distinguish which problems come from prostitution
- Interviewees tell about psychological problems
- Psychological problems can appear as physical problems
- Social workers are focusing on problems with sexuality, close relations, own body & social isolation
- General problems with men
- Fear of recognition in other social contexts
Laura Augustin published the book “Sex at the Margins: Migration, Labour Markets and the Rescue Industry” in 2007. Since then the concept “rescue industry rings a bell with a lot of people. She grounds her theory in her own experiences as being a lifelong migrant.

In the 1990s Augustin worked for an NGO in the Dominican Republic, visiting families living on funds sent from female relatives selling sex in Europe. A goal for the organisation was to prevent girls leaving The Dominican Republic for Europe, and a scary film was shown to prevent this from happening. During the same period Augustin was at a conference arranged by sex workers and bar girls. At this conference a representative from the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) told these women that they were manipulated and had a false consciousness. This became a turning point in Augustin’s thinking. She also experienced through writing a proposal regarding a project intended to help Dominican migrants going to Spain that the only thing that got funding was counselling of so-called “victims” returning to Santo Domingo. It was not possible to get financial support for a rights based project for migrants in Spain.

Based on all these experiences Augustin developed the following research questions:
- Why do people who do not know anything about the topic have so many ideas about how people should live their lives?
- What is the problem with prostitution?
- All those “helping people”, what are they actually doing and why are they doing it?

The last question became the focus of Augustin’s research, and she did fieldwork in Madrid on and amongst “all kinds of helping people”. She experienced both then and later that many find such a focus somehow shocking, as it should be obvious that the helpers are “doing good”.

A general finding of her research was that the “Rescue Industry” is characterised by what can be termed colonialism, orientalism and romanticising. There is a thought that some countries are ahead in progress (European countries and North America), versus those who are behind (more or less the rest of the world). The former thus “know better” than the latter. These thoughts can be said to belong within an “exploitation paradigm”: If you think you know better it allows you to have control in a relationship. Following from this; if you have a clear way to think about a group, it allows your work with them to become easier. It is much more difficult to deal with the not-so-clear cases.

In relation to this, Augustin experiences that migration as a concept almost has disappeared from the trafficking discourse. The people she is talking about, the migrants, are now mostly called trafficked. Talking about migrants does not spark any interest; people want to hear about trafficking and child prostitution.

Further, Augustin finds that the Rescue idea itself is overdramatic, but this is where the money is: One rescues people, they go to locked shelters, often through the police, and are deported “home”. She claims that the rescue industry uses psychology and colonialism as weapons, and though this process takes self agency away from women.
Augustin’s conclusion is that what is going on now, the idea that “an equal woman is a protected woman” is a huge back step for women. Equally, to offer the idea that everyone should stay at home to avoid the possibility of getting into trouble is a big backward step for women.

You can get further information in Laura Augustins web page www.lauraaugustin.com or check out her book

*Sex at the Margins: Migration, Labour Markets and the Rescue Industry*

*Zed Books 2007*
POINTS FROM PLENARY DISCUSSION DAY 1:

Following May-Len Skilbrei’s presentation:
- There has been an increase in research on human trafficking and a decrease in research on prostitution as such the later years, in the Nordic countries. Also, the research on prostitution mainly focuses on effects of laws regulating prostitution.
- There has during the later years also been an increased state intervention in the area of social work. Punitive measures influence social policy in the Nordic countries, including the area of prostitution.

Following Jeanette Bjønness’ presentation:
- The production of knowledge focuses on numbers used for social control; we participate in creating a huge marked for social control.

Following Sarah Warpe’s presentation:
- There are challenges related to getting funds. Service providers have to relate to what the political focus is at the moment. At this point in time, money goes to work with victim of trafficking. Sex workers using drugs lose in this battle, even though they are the ones using the support system most.

Following Pye Jacobsson’s presentation:
- There has been an expansion of the help/rescue industry, especially after human trafficking became an issue.
- How many social services does a sex worker need? We stand the risk of and are already in the process of getting professional clients and professional informants.

Plenary discussion 31.05.12:
- Is there a need for special services for people in prostitution? Why are they not just included in the general services? It is not written in stone that experience with prostitution should be treated as something very specific. So the question is: are we [the service providers] needed? Or does our mere existence contribute to creating stigma, special categories?
- The answer to the above question is yes and no. One does perhaps not need any special help to leave prostitution. But, sex workers hesitate to contact for example regular lawyers and doctors because of the stigma they are subjected to. So, we are needed because of the stigma, but we keep up the stigma by being here.
- In the Nordic countries we are not open to immigration and for people wanting to create a better life, anymore. We are colonialists in many ways, and have double standards. We need to talk about rights, as people end up in Europe without any possibilities. As long as people end up in as unregistered migrants on the streets of Europe, we need the rescue industry.
- No one wants to talk about migration policy, but we need to.
- Sex workers do in principle not need special services. However we have an advocacy role; often we just ensure that sex workers get their services, without conditions. We must promote rights and dignity, because of the way “others” provide services. In this
we must build alliances with sex workers. We have an identity as service providers, but we should also be advocates. For example, in Finland we have now been “fighting” the Helsinki police who are creating an anti-trafficking atmosphere in the sense of sending sex workers out of the country or stopping them from entering.

- It does not make sense to have special services.
- I agree, but we have expertise in demanding rights, we have trained ourselves in fighting for rights.
- We need to address the issue of racism in relation to migration.
- The service providers are needed, although we might create stigma, to compensate for laws regulating prostitution.
- This discussion is very much related to the Scandinavian tradition and the rescue industry; we believe that everyone wants to be rescued. Why do we not give the power back to the sex sellers? Be more political? Sometimes I feel as if I am a hostage of the government. I like to think that I contribute to bringing people into society, while my mere presence maybe actually keeps them outside?
- It is scary to see how controlled people feel by the stigma, for example related to being scared of the child protection services. Another example is the cooperation between the police and hotels, which Albertine in Stavanger reported for interference with the right to privacy. We need to speak louder about how sex workers are harassed.
- All this has al lot to do with rhetoric. We talk about prostitutes as if they are all the same, while we should be much ore specific. There might actually be very little in common between different groups of prostitutes. We must talk more about the fact that people are coming from different social positions. People make decisions in very specific contexts. We must talk about the contexts.
- People who sell sex are not one entity, but we seem to like universal solutions in Norway. There are so many people who would not get anything without specialised services, but ye, we might be contributing to stigma. We should be more political! But politicians only refer to sex workers as one thing. And what are we going to do while we are waiting for the perfect world? An important question is, do women and men who sell sex want out services?
- I do not understand this discussion. If there were no specialised services there would have been no one to pick me up! And we are so happy to have a house where we can meet. As long as the NAV [the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service] is so shitty we need specialised services.
- Denmark and Norway are not the same. It is a problem if help providers have very political agendas and narrow views.
- It is very interesting that we need services to guide people through services. The political governing of the services is strong; funds to for example harm reduction are now being cut.
- We are actually not talking about special services for sex workers but about basic services that should be available to everyone. There are unsafe service systems in our societies, and as service providers we should focus on these systems. We are too obeying; we are obeying official opinions because we are afraid of losing funding. We must be braver!
- In Denmark we cannot even agree on terminology, we have now established a working group trying to find a common term for “sex workers”, prostiutes”, “men and women in prostitution”. And, I cannot see how we could have done without specialised services.
- We need specialised services the way the system works now, but for the future we should aim higher. Marginalised groups should not be discriminated against.
- I see a potential conflict between trying to oppose one victim category, victims of trafficking, while we now might create another, “victims of the system”.
- We do not have good statistics on migration. Most migrants do not know about services from the state, or may not want to know about them. Some express the feeling that “everything was ok until I asked the state for help and became part of the system”.
- There is no agreement on concepts in Norway either. Help organisations have mattered a lot to a lot of people, not just individually but also when it comes to changing perceptions. The emergence of Social Work goes together with empowerment, but it is important to remember that social work is a child of its time. But, where do we stand today? Are we in the forefront or the back seat?
- We are talking about many things as it is the same, which makes it blurry. For example, “the Nordic model” only goes for Norway and Sweden, not Finland and Sweden. As for the discussion regarding numbers, in my reality numbers means money.
- I do not agree with the last argument. Numbers do not have to mean money, we can debate against it. And, why do people want numbers? To increase the control? One can also ask the question, is it good or bad if a service provider have “huge” numbers?
Nordic Network Conference
30.th of Mai – June 1.st. 2012
ROSA and Nadheim

- Who are we?
- What is our mandate?
- How do we achieve our goals?
- Our perspective on the Norwegian law against buying sex - before and after it was implemented
Who are we?

Nadheim

- Nadheim: Established in 1981, and is a part of Church City Mission in Oslo
- Focus on outreach work, provide low threshold social service, and run a shelter for victims of trafficking
- Different approaches to the law

ROSA

- ROSA is measure nr.15 in the government's plan of action against human trafficking 2011-2014
- ROSA’s mandate is to identify VOT, offer a safe place to stay, provide legal assistance, medical attention, life support, follow up and social activities
- Our organization, that runs ROSA, The Secretariat of the Shelter Movement - is in favor of the law to prohibit buying sex
The Law prohibiting the Purchase of Sexual Services:

- **Predicted consequences**
- **Consequences we feared →**
  - police harassing the sellers
  - the police’ has lost interest in chasing the buyer
- **Unpredicted consequences →**
  - NGO’s and municipal service providers divided in their work against prostitution and trafficking
  - hotels and pub owners have started to black list women in prostitution
  - vigilantism methods
Consequences of the law

What we predicted and hoped for:

- An increased focus on the sex buyer: Establishing of KAST
- A change in the public opinion
- A reduction of the sex market, outdoor and indoor
- Prevent Human Trafficking
- More difficulties for those who arrange, prepare and take out profit of prostitution
- Scare of new sex buyers
- Several new exit programs and assistance for those who want out of prostitution
Have the predicted consequences come to life?

- **Is the sex market reduced?**
  - There is a lower activity in the street prostitution, but how much lower?
  - Is the lower activity directly related to the implementation of the law?
  - Disagreements on facts about the indoor activity and street activity

- **Is there a reduction in sex buyers?** Police in Oslo stated that so far in 2012; 19 men has been charged for buying sex or attempting to buy sex. Is this a reduction or merely a picture on how police prioritize this law?

- Can we see a change in the public opinion towards prostitution, as in less stigmatization?

- Do we see fewer cases of human trafficking? Again; how to measure and how to compare to the situation before the law?

- **Is the state exit and support programs helping people out of prostitution?**
  - There has been given some extra money annually from the ministries to small NGO activity programs
  - Very little help offered the biggest group, the non-Norwegian women in the streets
Consequences

- Is there more focus on health issues as the politicians promised before the law was realized?
- Have the sex buyers become more violent after the law? Difficult to compare before and after.
- Do we experience an increase in sex sellers asking for help to leave prostitution after the law was effected?
- Do sex sellers experience increased sympathy in the NAV system, at the police and in general? Or does immigration policies and aggressive sex sellers in the streets have the opposite effect?
- Is it possible to measure a change in the public opinion regarding prostitution in general after only 2 years?
Consequences

- Because of the law, all debates on prostitution is directed to the Ministry of Justice but not the Ministry of Health. What is the focus?
- Unfortunately there has been an increased negative focus on women from “visible” nationalities (non-white)
- Conflicts and disagreements among the Help Services
- We experience that more help is required from the help services at the same time as there is a cut back in public finances
- The role of the civil society - ?????
- The government has increased the focus on returning foreign women to their home countries
Different Police Departments

- There is no specific educational training in the topic of prostitution and trafficking at the Police Academy.
- It is a good thing that there are special units working in this field sorted under department of organized crime (= handling crime related to drugs, prostitution, weapons, and organized crime).
- It is very unfortunate that immigration police is working in this field since their main priority is handling immigration crime.
- It is unfortunate that ordinary public police = handling all kinds of reported crime, car theft, burglary,
Police methods used to enforce the law

- Police use the media as a method to prevent sex buyers
- Disturbing the marked: Stop and check strategies of the sellers, handling out fines for violation of the immigration law, fining the buyers
- Establishing the STOP unit in Oslo, and EXIT in Bergen, and SEUT in Østfold
- Operation Husløs (= homeless)
- More use of other types of law enforcement, such as immigration laws, solicitation laws and laws against loitering
Now

- Is it possible to conclude on the short term and the long term consequences of the law, after only two years? **No**
- Other factors that may be relevant when evaluating the consequences of the Norwegian law:
  - national-, regional- and international immigration and asylum policies
  - Europe’s financial crisis
  - Unemployment rates
  - Other countries laws on prostitution
Status May 15.th. 2012

- Police in Oslo at department of organized crime tells that in the period January 1.st. - May 15.th, 19 men has been charged for attempt to buy sex or bought sex
- 1 woman in Oslo has been fined for not given information about her address
Last words:
Thank you

- **Nadheim**
  - Olav Lægdene → 22 05 28 80

- **ROSA**
  - Maya Brenna Nielsen → 22 33 11 60
Spaces and voices: Possibilities and limitations for sex workers' organizations

By Astrid Renland, PION

Although sex workers are regulated, controlled, tolerated or prohibited in more or less repressive manner both by national laws, political and cultural conditions, have the last four decades showed an amazing activity when it comes to political organization. Today there are sex workers' organizations in almost every country around the world advocating for civil and political rights as well as for economic and trade unions rights.

Collective actions

The sixties are often referred to as the starting point for self-organization among sex workers. Sex workers participated in the sixties counterculture and social revolution and were along with housewives, lesbians, hippies, gays and other fighting social taboos, sexism and racism.

However, the first organization of sex workers in Europe was already in place in 1919's and it was the sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld (1868-1935) which, in cooperation with Berlin's sex workers in 1919 created the sex worker council “Hilfsbund der Prostituierten Berliner” - the Support Association of Berlin Prostitutes. In addition to fight for their rights the association included insurance fund for sex worker in need for economical support.

Magnus Hirschfeld wrote the following about the organizing among Berliner sex workers:

"When works committees were being formed throughout Germany during the Revolution, some prostitutes also stepped out of their hiding places into the public to fight for their natural human rights."(...) "A number of prostitutes, some gentlemen, and myself were voted onto the prostitutes' council. I accepted the position in order to support the struggle for their human rights." (Magnus Hirschfeld 1930)

Subcultures, networks and organizations

There are different forms of self-organization and networks and subcultures should also be understood as ways for informal organization. Laura Agustín showed in her presentation the important of networks for migrants in the process of migration. "The Lost Sisterhood Prostitution in America 1900 - 1918 ", by Ruth Rosen, describes how the subculture served as a helper and protector for sex workers working in urban areas. Belonging to subcultures also plays an important role for female drug users when it comes to organizing work, support and protection, a topic very easily overlooked because in general researchers and social providers have been focusing on women’s marginal position within the community of drug users.

Turning back to the sixties: In 1972 formed Margo St. James, the American organization COYOTE - Call of your old tired ethics. The forerunner of COYOTE was the organization WHO - Whores, Housewives and Others.

In France sex workers with support from the feminist’s movement occupied a church in Lyon and organized a mass demonstration against violence from police and customers. The protest
spread and sex workers in several cities in France and England, occupied churches and was supported by feminists groups.

In England sex workers in cooperation with feminists established the English Collective of Prostitutes. Swedish sex workers established the Sexual Political Front to unite sex workers and feminism. In Norway feminists at least pointed out that housewives and whores had something in common: The economic dependence on men.

There has been held several national, regional and international sex worker conferences around the world. Representatives from regional and international sex worker networks have and are still actively participating as lobbyists, pressures groups and consultants on issues related to the regulation of sex work and other topic such as rights, sexual health and sexual identity at international bodies like the UN, WHO, ILO and HRI (Harm reduction international). Sex workers were for example actively lobbying at UN level against the radical feminists and the Bush administration's abolitionist line and repressive anti-trafficking policy in the political preparations of the Palermo Protocol.

Considering the active political participation, it is strange that countries such as Norway who are concerned about equalities and rights could choose to adopt a policy which in practice means the political exclusion of sex workers' rights and that both the government and women’ movement have reduce sex workers to passive victims in need of protection through criminal laws.

Society and culture

How organizations manage their work must also be considered in light of the political, social and cultural structure they work within. The most political and active organizations are found in countries with poorly developed or non-existing social welfare system combined with repressive regulation of prostitution. An example of this is sex workers' organizations in countries such as India, Thailand and several countries in Africa which often is based on a solid and broad grassroots approach and political activism compare to organization in the Western world. However, there is a huge different among sex workers organization in the West ranging from unionizing workers to support collectives.

PIION is in many ways a true child of the harm reduction approach established during the age of Hiv-epidemic as well as a product of social and cultural conditions which frames the organizations managing of our works. In addition to offering health and legal aid PIION works as political pressure groups on civil and political rights, topics such as legalizing, labour rights and trade union haven’t had a strong voice within the communities of sex workers in Norway.

Although many still consider PIION controversial and suspect compare to the other Nordic sex workers organizations PIION is as a part of the establishment.

Still, the Women Movement considers sex workers as enemy and there are no academic feminist groups or other academic research groups which are expressing support for sex workers' rights in Norway. It is interesting considering that many academic disciplines makes a significant critical contribution to the public debate of drug policy and other issues related to marginalized groups. However, PIION has support from many individuals among researchers as well as societal and political actors. During the last four years there has been established a
very good political cooperation and partnership with LBT organizations, drug-users- and Hiv-organizations and activists.

PION also has a well established cooperation with the social services directed towards prostitution, and is at least partially recognized by the Norwegian authorities and the organization has during more than 20 years of activity received public funding for offering health services and legal assistance among sex workers. I use the term partially because it’s reason to question what position the organization has at government level: Norway is the land of interest organizations and associations of all kinds of topic, and most of them has the role as user-expert and consultant in policy making. PION has therefor status as a consultative body for the government on matters relating to prostitution, sexual health and other related themes.

Tolerated but...

The most visible sign of sex workers' organizations limitations is the lake of power when it comes to influence public policy in contemporary development towards a more repressive regulation and crime control due the link between human trafficking and prostitution. It's hard to imagine that any other organized groups in the society would be ignored and to that extent made invisible and the member/user of the organization reduced to wretched victims who are unable to speak for themselves, as sex workers experienced in the preparation of the ban of purchasing sex. On the other hand illustrates criminalization and repressive regulation as means to combat human trafficking that prostitution is a phenomenon that can be given different meanings in space and time suited political needs and interests related to governing and control far beyond the question of regulating commercial sex. Current prostitution policy has hardly anything to do with prostitution politics: On the contrary central keywords are organized crime, weak states, migration, borders, control etc. etc.

It might therefore be more correct to say that PION is facing accept and tolerance which is a part of the political tendency to claim dignity to marginalized group of the population rather than understand the recognizing of the organization as expression of acceptance for sex workers as a group of the population in right to have political power. The changes in political approach to prostitution in recent years illustrate this point because although the Norwegian authority emphasizes participation and involvement from the civil society and communities, policy making is still heavily based on top-down perspectives.

Support

PION is not a member organization as Rose Alliance in Sweden and SIO in Denmark. Sex workers contact us when they are in need for health information or health kits such as condoms and lube, legal help and support or they want the organization to represent them in complains against tax authorities, law enforcement etc. etc.

Compared to the other Nordic countries sex workers in Norway has not been demanding labour rights or that sex work should be recognized as work. It has been very difficult to get sex workers to “get out of the closet” and stay up for their rights or be political activist in public which is understandable. Sex workers in Norway are heavily controlled by social stigma and most of them are in need to protect their children, family or them self from being social excluded from friends and families. Those who have been or are a public name have
also paying a price and are facing sanctions from ex-partners, family and/or public services. This doesn’t mean that sex workers are not active working for bettering their conditions but those who are active preferred to have an invisible or anonym role as member of the board of PION or using other alternatives platforms such as forums at internet and so on.

However, the frustration and anger among sex workers is increasing. They are charged for taxes without getting any rights and they are exposed and experiencing as both means and goal for the law enforcement their right to privacy and civil rights heavily harmed.

The future so bright...

Since 2009 there has been increased focus on crime, crime control and excite programs at the expense of Hiv-prevention work, sexual health, social services and civil rights. Financial support are decreasing and despite the fact that both UNAIDS and WHO highlights sex workers as vulnerable groups for Hiv and recommends removing of punitive laws and practices that block effective responses the focus on health has more or less vanished at national level. Criminalization also affect the possibilities to reach other groups of sex workers such as male and transgender sex workers which also it’s a part of transnational and cross border prostitution.

On the other hand there a growing organized activism among Norwegian sex workers which are requiring rights not only duty for their tax contributions to the state. Punitive laws, regulation and practices might create a new chapter in sex workers activism in Norway.
About SIO

“Nothing about us – without us”

This is the headline for the Danish sex workers’ organisation – SIO (in Danish: Sexarbejdernes Interesseorganisation; Sex workers’ Interest Organisation). We demand worker rights for sex workers, and we demand to be heard in political matters concerning us. This is in correspondence with the resolution from 2007 presented by the European Council regarding the rights of sex workers. Read it here.

We demand that every sex worker should be treated with respect and dignity, regardless of nationality and gender. Migrant sexworkers deserve the same rights to work and live in Denmark as do the Danish sex workers. We therefore urge the Danish authorities to respect international conventions and resolutions on sex work, including those meant to protect victims of trafficking within the sex industry. Unfortunately, they rarely do.

A response to the risk of criminalisation

SIO was founded in the spring of 2008, mainly as a response to the general political ambition to criminalise our profession. The establishment of SIO was a reaction to several discussions among Danish politicians regarding the possibility to criminalize men for buying sexual favors from professional sexworkers. One of the arguments for prohibiting sex trade has been that all migrant sexworkers are working as slaves with no free will and no earnings of their own because migrant women are being kidnapped in their native country or tricked into the sextrade. Danish sexworkers know this is not true, we know that many women travel to Denmark to make good money selling sex to support themselves and their families.

Moreover, sex work in Denmark is officially not regarded as a profession, but as a social problem. As sex workers we find this view illogical and degrading. However, we do believe that the struggle for sex workers’ rights must begin with securing rights and good working conditions for those who are in dire need of it – meaning the most fragile among us sex workers. Therefore we devote a lot of energy to raising awareness about migrant sex workers, and sex workers who work on the streets.

Present day situation

Earlier this year, the tax authorities in Denmark published a brochure regarding tax rules for sex workers. This was a very good idea. The rules are complicated, to say the least, and we
are exposed to controls all the time. There is hardly a trade in Denmark more thoroughly checked by tax authorities than sex work.

However, after the brochure was printed, the tax authorities changed their minds. Now they would not distribute it during their controls after all. They explained to the press, that they thought the picture on the front cover might sadden us. The picture showed a pair of legs, seen from behind, in long white boots. Granted -The picture was a little silly, but the pictures we posted on our websites are not exactly family photos either.

We suspect, that the real reason was something quite different: The taxation of sex workers is politically controversial. For one thing, by taxing sex workers the government essentially does the very same thing, that it punishes our drivers and landlords for, with sentences up to four years in prison: The government makes money on peoples selling of sexual services – or fornication, as it is called in Danish law.

Another thing: The tax authorities do not always understand the rules themselves. In one case a woman known from Danish high society was sentences to several years in prison for running brothels. Prior to that, she had received and followed advice from the tax authorities to make sure her business was legitimate. The persons, who had given this advice, had to lie in court, not to spoil the police’s case or to bring themselves in trouble.

Thus, today the tax authorities are very reluctant to give any advice or guidance to sex workers – especially in writing.

The brochure, printed in ten thousand copies, wasn’t just sent to waste, though. It was handed out in part to a shelter for Danish drug users and sex workers on the streets in Copenhagen, in part to a government organization, who visits and helps sex workers on brothels in Jutland.

The shelter – called “The Nest” – is also one of the main lobbyists for at criminalization of sex work. There is, however, literally only one Danish sex worker on the streets of Copenhagen today. To my knowledge, no one controls her tax payments, and it would not make any sense if anyone did either.

Contrary to “The Nest”, the organization in Jutland – called Pro-Vest – has a fairly good reputation among sex workers. But Pro-Vest never deal with tax issues, and they said flatly, that they would not hand out the brochure.

What would have made sense for the tax authorities would have been to send the brochure to SIO. We have 200 members, our network expands far beyond our formal members, and we are very much occupied with tax issues.

So, why did the tax authorities not send the brochure to us?

Sure, we advocate for a change in the law. But so does “The Nest” – just in the opposite direction.

But contrary to “The Nest”, we don’t just question the current law. We also question the very foundation of it. We contradict the claim, that sex work is a problem, which should not exist in an ideal world.
Also, contrary to “The Nest”, we are very critical to the authorities. In the case of the tax authorities, we know they brake the law – and for that matter internationally recognized human rights – when they conduct controls without a court order, though detection of punishable offenses is an official goal for them. We say this loud and clear in public, every time we get the chance.

Of course, this is inconvenient for the government and for the authorities. They must, however, realize that if they want to reach sex workers, then there is no other way than through us – the organization of sex workers. As it is now, government and authorities have secured their own convenience – but also, they have secured no practical results at all will occur.

I know that this business about the brochure is just one small detail. It is, however, an example of the primary difficulty which sex worker organizations face. In most countries, and certainly in the Nordic countries, there is a practice of cooperating with trade unions, business associations and so on. The exception is sex workers organizations.

This, in turn, also has a negative impact on us, the organizations. With little or no corporation with authorities, we are almost entirely a political organizations. Thus, we only really flourish when the politically debate on sex work is intense.

For SIO the issue is this: We want to make a difference – also in the practical, everyday life. At any time the government wants the only effective partner possible to improve life for sex workers, we are ready to cooperate – in a sensible and pragmatic way.

All it requires is that the politicians accept the fair notion of equality. They must accept sex workers as holders of rights, just like people in all other trades. And consequently, they must cooperate with sex workers organizations in just the same way, they cooperate with other trade unions.

Whereas these thoughts probably will seem foreign to them – they see us as opponents – they should consider the option. It is often said, that debates on sex work are polarized. In my view, this is not entirely true. But certainly, in the long run, we will all benefit from corporation. In any case, for as far as the well-being of sex workers is the true goal for government and authorities.

There is another point, one has to realize when looking at sex worker organizations.

Most of us are quite small. To my knowledge, SIO is with our 200 members currently one of the larger sex worker organizations in Europe. Thus we are often accused of not representing the greater majority of sex workers.

But it all depends on how many sex workers, who are actually out there. A few years ago, the official number in Denmark was 6000. This, however, turned out to be a serious miscalculation on the part of the authorities. The official number is now just over 3000.

Even this number is over a full year. Some of them only work for a part of the year. This means, that at any given point in time, there will be fewer active sex workers than 3000. Many are only selling sexual services for a short while, and only part time. They will never come to think of sex work as their main trade. Furthermore, many are migrants, who will soon leave again, and thus have only slight interests in participating in the debates, or to join
an organization.

Summing up: Counting only currently active, national sex workers, who think of sex work as their main trade, and who identify with it, we are not talking about thousands. We are talking hundreds. Maybe only a few hundreds.

Also for us in SIO, it took a while to realize this point. You should not expect large sex worker organizations with many members – simply because there are not many sex workers.

In a sense, all this fuzz is about a fairly small group of people in society. For sex worker organizations as well as for governments we complicate things for ourselves, if we do not accept this fact – and the full impact of it.
POINTS FROM PLENARY DISCUSSION DAY 2:

Following Olav Lægdene and Maya Brenna Nielsen’s presentation:
- I do not think the law will solve everything, and but I do agree with the underlying reasons for introducing it. Also, there is a lot of violence against selling sex in Oslo now.
- In Sweden, the police now have a good knowledge about victims of trafficking and how they are traumatised, and they approach them in a good manner.
- It is hard to establish a cause – effect relationship. It is difficult to get clear answers regarding the effect of the law, because the goals of the law were not clear from the outset. In Norway, the debate around the law very much centred around trafficking, the issue of human rights has not really been explored.
- The purpose of the law is really quite clear, it is to fight trafficking. I also think it is quite clear that sex workers’ situation now is worse. There is now more control over sex workers, more structural violence. The police is using sex workers as a means to fight organised crime.
- It is too easy to say that the situation has gotten worse, because this is difficult to measure.
- It is not only the criminalisation of clients that create this climate, but the debate in itself opened up for bringing old, not very good laws, back and it brought the issue of prostitution into the judicial area.
- The police are on the streets checking the women, they are not going after the pimps.
- The Swedish police are handling victims of trafficking better than are the Norwegian police, but migrant sex workers are not treated well.

Following Astrid Renland and Susanne Møller’s presentation:
- How come sex workers’ organisations always are disqualified with the argument of us not being representative? If you do not speak for all sex workers, your arguments are not acknowledged and the issue of different opinions within this group is not taken seriously. However, even if we are not taken seriously in the Nordic countries we are so in other countries. For example, an umbrella organisation for sex workers has been on an advisory board for UNAIDS.
- How come sex workers are excluded from all the “big words” such as inclusion, equality, involvement, citizenship? Our social security systems at the same time somehow protect the “insiders” from the “outsiders”. It is interesting to note that sex workers’ organisations are strongest in countries we like to think of as being less developed, such as India and Thailand. In our part of the world they are marginalised. In Finland a sex workers’ organisation shut itself down because it did not feel representative.
- How about including the right not to sell sex? The right to alternatives?
- Yes of course, a lot of members in such organisations hate their jobs but still want their rights. And who want to fight prostitution. The picture is very complex.
- Men and women selling sex have many opinions with regards to prostitution. It might therefore be difficult for all to be in one organisation, and to agree on things.
- In Nadheim’s client council we totally disagree on many issues, but we have also managed to agree on many issues such as fighting harassment especially from the police. So, it is possible to be in the same organisation even if one disagrees on some issues.
- Now is the climate for making a bigger Sex Workers’ organisation, because so many feel pressured.
- If there is an anticipation of agreeing on everything, how can an organisation represent all sex workers?
Multicultural Health Work for Sex Workers

Presentation of people in the group. What do we work with on an everyday basis.

Statistics from the Pro Sentret:

In total 724 people came to the health clinic in the Pro Sentret in 2011, 135 of these were Norwegian and 589 where from abroad.

The biggest group of people in the health clinic was Nigerians with 339 people. Legal rights differ but most of them have some kind of resident paper in Spain, Italy, Greece or Portugal. Primarily Spain or Italy. Very few of the women have passports from Europe. Few are married to Norwegian men and have legal rights in Norway, others have had children with Norwegian men and have rights here because of that. Some of the babies being born are girls and they have got asylum in Norway because of the risk of being “cut” if they return to Nigeria.

Second biggest group is Thai women. We meet them mostly in their massage studios, few of them come to the clinic. The nurse who does outreach work to the massage studios do STD testing, offer injections for Hep A and B and so on. If the women need help from a doctor they have to come to the clinic.

Romanian people is also a big group with 37 individuals in 2011. Often this is the most difficult group to help. For one language is a big problem for many of the women we meet. Many do not speak English or just a little bit, many are heavily organised, some use occasional drugs, many have STD’s are pregnant and have complicated life situations.

Other big groups are Bulgarians (we have a nurse with Bulgarian background which is a big advantage), Estonia, Lithuania and smaller populations from Latin America, surrounding countries to Nigeria and other European countries.

Problems to discuss

**Contraceptives**, how do we get especially the Nigerian women to use prevention? Many have “boyfriends” with whom they have sex without protection and becomes pregnant? Other issues?

**Abortions**, who pays? what kind of rights does the women have?

**Other kind of physical diseases**, What do we do for instance when we find lumps in breasts? Cronical suffering and so on? Refer them to hospitals where we now they will get big bills? Refer them to the doctors in the countries where they have residency?

**STD’s.** How widespread? How to prevent?

**Any experience with peer to peer education?**

**The rom population from Bulgaria and mostly Romania**, how do we help them? Use of people who speak their language? This is the group where we feel that we have a long way to go. Often when they come to us they have been pregnant for some time. Syphilis infections and so on. Language. Don’t show up for appointments and so on.
How to talk about sickness and disease in a language the people will understand? Any examples

Ju-ju, difficult to get the women to talk about this phenomena? How does it interfere with our work.

Different angles to health perspective? Different ways of describing sickness (for instance eating/biting in my tummy, like a worm biting me from the inside). Different ways to see a period (some of the women can be scared that if they do not see their period when using hormonal contraceptives that the blood is building up inside them).

Customers forcing women to have oral sex without condoms? Sexual intercourse? Because there are many women who sell sex and not as many customers as there once were? At least in Norway?
Workshop 2 – "Empowerment – getting to yes"

This workshop was conducted by two of the women using “Natthjemmet”, Marianne and Dagfrid.

Background
Natthjemmet is a night shelter owned by the NGO Kirkens Bymisjon (Church City Mission). It is a shelter for female sex workers opening late evening and closing in the morning. Most of the users are Norwegian drug users (a majority is i.v. drug users).

Up to recently all daily work was done by “professionals” (that is trained social workers or health personnel) and volunteers. Now all daily practical work and nightly talks are done by sex workers who have been given this responsibility. That is making food, doing the cleaning, doing the beds, greeting people and taking care of them, social talks, giving information etc. One has been given the role of a “householder”. In practice there will be one employee + one sex worker + volunteers working each night.

This change is brought forward by a decrease in funding, but it is basically a long time wish for giving more responsibility to those who use the service.

Changes in thinking about giving and receiving help.
It is a change in ideology as well: from the power imbalance between service providers and service receiver, thus a new level of equality (not entirely, because we still have different roles). But, most important: it is to acknowledge the expertise, knowledge and ability of the sex workers. Usually they don’t have a CV or a formal education, but they possess an insight in the daily lives of sex workers, having a competence based in the realities of life on the streets. Also, when you get the responsibility of certain tasks you have to get out of the passive position of “receiver of services”.

For the “service provider” it is a step out of the role as a helper (having the upper hand) – giving up control in many areas (giving away the keys to the house is just one example).

The right to fail
Of course everyone is “sticking out their neck” in these changes – going in a new direction. One of the subjects discussed was the value of “having a right to fail”. In many ways this is not recognised in social workers view on their own work – they are expected to be experts = infallible. These changes are based on trying and failing – there is no blueprint for success. Thus it is also a boost for the self esteem of each involved, developing the repertoire of actions.

Expected outcomes
Nothing is outlined as outcomes to be measured, but here are some points:
- Positive changes in each self esteem
- More common understanding of the issues
- More equality and recognition of the differences in each persons expertise
- Mutual respect
- A more non – judgemental approach
- Better practical assistance
• More generosity, accepting also that we all face some bad days

Some practical issues:
The sex workers involved in the management of Natthjemmet do not take part in conflicts, backbiting or slander. Conflicts will be addressed by the employees. We expect that the changes also will result in practical changes, for example expanding opening hours. We also expect that this will enhance all users sense of ownership and responsibility towards Natthjemmet – not only those directly involved. It is a goal to make the shelter more homely.

This is only a first step to empowerment – we do not know what the future brings about. That's why this Workshop is called: Getting to yes.
The concept of human trafficking

- Difficult to encapsulate human trafficking in a single definition

- The consensus view of human trafficking has been challenged, but without much luck
Cont.

• The current view of human trafficking is one of modern slavery, where poor women and children in particular are exploited by cynical, multi-criminal traffickers, in a serious form of global and transnational organized crime.

• The Palermo Protocol

• Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings
BAD GUY

WORTHY VICTIM
Does it work?

• It has proven to be difficult to put an end to the bad guys’ villany.
• The victims don’t want to go back home.
• Migration is intentional and part of a bigger plan for their lives which involves achieving a better life for themselves and their families by obtaining a share of the economic and social wealth that the rest of us enjoy.
So…

Could it be the case that Western European countries’ strict immigration policies are actually making people more vulnerable and facilitating human trafficking?
What now?

• We have to challenge the consensus view of human trafficking as an criminal justice issue and realize that the phenomenon is largely embedded in the global process of international migration

• Radical change in migration policies
• Legal migration options
• Reduction of border restrictions and bureaucratic barriers to mobility
• Basic rights for migrants
HOW?
How we understand a phenomenon affects how we view the various players involved, and above all, what we as a society believe is the best way of dealing with the problem.

There is a longstanding international discussion on how human trafficking should be defined and what the term means in relation to the various affected parties.

Parts of the discussion centres on how to interpret human trafficking as a phenomenon and on what the basic conditions are, that allows and facilitates human trafficking.

Human trafficking can be seen as:
- Human rights issue
- Migration/immigration issue
- Criminal offence
- Organized crime
- National security issue
- Gender issue
- And probably many more and all of those above
It has however been impossible to shake the current view of human trafficking as modern day slavery, where poor women and children in particular are exploited by cynical, multi-criminal traffickers, in a serious form of global and transnational organised crime.

The modern source of this interpretation is to be found in Palermo Protocol and to a certain extent in the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

It is important to keep in mind that neither of these instruments are human rights documents, designed to protect and enhance the rights of victims.

To a large extent they focus on combating crime and emphasises measures such as border controls and international cooperation in order to identify and punish traffickers.

Admittedly the documents contains provisions that encourage signatories to protect the victims of human trafficking, the council of Europe convention more so than the Palermo protocol, but still they are few and far between and not very binding.
Slide 3

By ratifying the Palermo protocol and basing Norwegian penal law on human trafficking on that document, Norwegian has decided to view trafficking in persons as entirely a criminal justice issue.

This has helped to cement the dichotomy of the problem into the evil trafficker and the worthy victim, as well as to take human trafficking out of its wider social context, by conferring all of the blame on the criminals.

This view has also played a key role in shaping Norway’s work on combating human trafficking both in Norway and internationally, as well as the protection and assistance provided to victims

All rights that are granted to trafficking victims are based on the assumption that the victim will cut ties with the traffickers, as well as accept help and make use of the services offered by the authorities.

This reflects the wish and expectation that the victim will report the offence and provide information to the police about any traffickers.

In the current framework, it can safely be said that the legal status of being a victim of human trafficking was not primarily created to protect victims, but rather to make it easier to identify and punish traffickers.

So far the Norwegian authorities have been unwilling, like many others, to discuss trafficking in persons in the context of a wider migration and immigration discourse.
Thus, as a main rule victims of trafficking shall be returned to their home countries.

Which is sort of a logical conclusion if you view human trafficking merely as a criminal justice problem and focus exclusively on the criminals as causing human trafficking and on the victims as being just that - victims.
For the vast majority of the victims the answer is to be found in the reason why they ended up being trafficked.

Norwegian research in the field and Pro Centre’s experience show that many of the women who come to Norway have a shared motive for leaving their home countries:

- Poverty
- Family obligations and parental responsibilities
- Living in a dangerous society in social and economic turmoil
- Few opportunities and few rights

Migration becomes the solution to these women’s problems and desire to fulfil their potential.

So very few of the women who are trafficked leave their home countries against their own will.

On the contrary, their migration is part of a bigger plan for their lives which involves achieving a better life for themselves and their families by obtaining a share of the economic and social wealth that the rest of us enjoy.

They have high expectations of succeeding, and there is a lot of pressure on them to send money home. It confers honour to come back home with lots of money, whereas as failure to do so brings shame.

It is therefore virtually out of the question for these women to return to their countries empty-handed.

So for the majority of the women we meet, it is not about being a victim but being able to provide for your family and make a better life for yourself and your loved ones.
These women have huge responsibilities that stretch far beyond themselves. Returning as a victim of human trafficking does not contribute to fulfilling these responsibilities

The unwillingness of the victims to return has some negative effects:

• It decreases their credibility
• The police is fed up… as it is difficult and costly to investigate trafficking cases, few cases reach court, and the perpetrators are not put away for very long, Thus the police focus on other things
• Harassment from police, border control, custom, bar and restaurants, hotels, ordinary people – as they do not fulfil our expectation of what constitute a real victim
The restrictive immigration policies and strict border controls implemented by Norway and other Western European countries help to create a market for human smugglers and traffickers.

The fewer avenues there are for legal migration, the more dependent would-be migrants are on help with organising their journeys from their home countries to their desired destinations. This process leaves the migrants very vulnerable to exploitation.

It is our experience that the vast majority of the women we meet have fallen victims to traffickers at some point in their migration process. It might be in the very beginning, someone addressing them at home in the village promising them to help with realizing their wish to migrate.

It might be when their own resources are spent and they have stranded somewhere in the middle of their journey.

And it might be when they have reached their destination, only to find out that the country is not filled with milk and honey!

There are people preying on vulnerable persons at every point in the migration process.
The 2009 Human Development Report focused on the important role played by national and international migration in increasing human development. The report demonstrates how migration can not only lead to economic development, but also to democratic and social progress in both the host country and country of origin.

In view of this win-win situation, the report’s authors argue in favour of a radical change of direction in migration policy throughout the world, including a reduction in border restrictions and bureaucratic barriers to mobility, basic rights for migrants and a greater focus on integration.

When the report was launched, Norway, which that year topped the Human Development Index ranking, was challenged to provide a model for others to follow, by simplifying migration in order to reap long-term rewards.

There is little evidence that the Norwegian authorities, or other European countries for that matter, intend to respond to that challenge. For the majority of the women who are trafficked, and who do not come from EU/EEA countries, there is few, if any, ways to obtain legal work.

Only when the authorities are willing to include human trafficking in a broader discourse on immigration and migration, based around reducing border restrictions and bureaucratic barriers to mobility, will we be taking real steps towards combating human trafficking by changing some of the underlying premises that allow this business to thrive.
Some points from the discussions in the group as they were presented in the plenary session:
Notes by Turid Misje

- It was a good workshop discussing complex issues.
- It is difficult to work practically with the trafficking concept as social- and health workers. There are so few “boxes” to work with. When putting people into the victim “box” to help them access the few rights there are, do we at the same time keep up the stigma? We should start from the ground challenging definitions coming from the top.
- Social- and health organisations need to challenge anti-trafficking policy, including prostitution and immigration policy. The immigration policies in European countries need radical change.
- How can service providers be more political? Now we often merely put out fires. How can we stand together when it come to achieving funding? And how can we create space for including “the victims”, the migrants in this work? It is difficult to work with “empowering” when people have so few rights.
- Western countries hesitate to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, which was signed in 1990.
Final words

Feedbacks were overall positive (yes, you guys are really polite!).

Participants especially enjoyed the **workshops**. The empowerment workshop was just one example: both for the emotional atmosphere and also because it challenged the traditional service provider role – and we all want to hear where you stand next year.

Another positive feedback was the **respectful tone**. We acknowledge that we have different views, positions and approaches, and we are ready to discuss that in a non-judgemental way.

The meeting demonstrated the **diversity** in the field.

Some participants pointed out that it is not easy for everybody to follow or participate in discussions in **English**, a language that – at the best – is second language to most of us. However the plenum should be in English, maybe we can use Scandinavian in some workshops?

The **presentations in plenum** were appreciated as they were fresh, challenging and interesting. We want those new ideas.

Ideas for the next meeting:

- More about new methods regarding outreach, online, mobile phones, conversation approaches, use of language etc
- Some presentation of “Health and safety guidelines for sex work” – a harm reduction approach
- Changing paradigms
- Challenging trafficking discourse
- Keep up the tradition of having workshops conducted by sex workers
- Empowerment workshop continued
- More on Sex Workers organisations
- Take care to encourage participants that rarely speaks in conferences
- Label the food clearly, if it is vegan, vegetarian, sea-food, non gluten…

Unfortunately many had to leave early because of the possibility of an Airport strike. All the Danes left, but it is suggested that the **next meeting** will be in Denmark. Copenhagen, Århus Vejle or somewhere else? - it is up to you. We look forward to meet again in 2013.
BERGEN CITY MISSION

Bergen City Mission has three social services focusing on individuals with experience from selling sex; a shelter, a café and a project for victims of human trafficking. Both the shelter and the café are mainly aimed for persons operating in street prostitution. At the moment there are no services reaching out for women and men selling sex on the indoor market in Bergen. These persons are welcome to use the services, but the experience is that they seldom make contact on their own. Of the ones we know, several have immediate health issues and are in need of treatment. An outreach service is necessary to provide health articles and social advice to the groups operating in this part of the prostitution market.

OMSORGSBASEN FOR KVINNER (shelter for women in prostitution)
Omsorgsbasen for women is a shelter where women with no place to stay, or in need for extra care one night, are welcome to sleep over. During the year, Omsorgsbasen is open every night, with its eight beds. Two of these beds are reserved for emergency situations.

Women, who do not want to spend the night at Omsorgsbasen, are welcome to visit the place just for a cup of hot drinks, food, to wash their clothes or to talk to some of the staff.

Qualified staff provides social advice and simple health treatment such as cleaning wounds etc. One of the nurses at the City Mission Center is available at Omsorgsbasen twice a week. Condoms, lubricants and hygiene articles are offered to all the guests at Omsorgsbasen. At daytime the staff focus on assisting women making contact to other health- and social services, or to provide advice or practical help when needed.

Omsorgsbasen is mostly visited by Norwegian women who are in need of various services due to addiction to drugs. Therefore, syringes and needles are also provided at Omsorgsbasen. During the last years some of the young women at Omsorgsbasen have had multiple issues concerning addiction, physical and psychiatric symptoms. Some of them are seen as destructive drug users and are difficult to help concerning housing, treatment etc. In 2011, Omsorgsbasen had 2512 visits in total, sleepovers and drop-in.

Omsorgsbasen is located in the city center. During the summer Omsorgsbasen will move into a new house nearby the City Mission Center.

NYKIRKEN KVINNEKAFÈ (café for women in prostitution)
Every Friday night, for the last 13 years, Bergen City Mission has run a café for women in prostitution. The café is located in the cellar of Nykirken, a very old church placed in the middle of the former area for street prostitution. During the last years the women have been staying in the streets closer to the city center than before. For this reason, some tells us the café is too far away for visiting during their working-night. The outreach work is therefore very important to provide services and keep contact with the women.
In Nykirken café the women get free food and drinks, condoms, lubricants and articles for personal hygiene. After closing time, the staff at Nykirken café do outreach work in the area for street prostitution. The main goal is to provide health prevention products to the women.

Once a month, a pastor from the International Church in Bergen provides services for women in the church at midnight. It is mostly Nigerian women who participate in the services, and each time around 10 African women sings, light candles, pray and listen to the pastor, before they go back to the street.

During the last years there have been approximately 7 women visiting the café every Friday, and about 15 women in the streets. In 2011, 59 different women visited the café. 75 % of them were from Nigeria, 10% from Norway, 10% from Eastern Europe and 5 % from South America. In 2011 the staff in Nykirken registered some very young women offering sexual services from the street. We assumed they were under 18 years old, but the police could not do anything due to idpapers confirming that they were over 18.

**PROSJEKT FRI (Project Free)**

Project Free is a service for women and men who are possible or verified victims of human trafficking/ forced prostitution. The main goal of this project is to empower every person to help themselves. Therefore the service is adjusted to the need of the individual. The project provides practical help and advice concerning trafficking/ court case, asylum case, health issues, contact with police, lawyers, social services etc.

Persons are brought to the project by outreach services on the field of prostitution or by the police. It is a challenge that we tend to rely on the police in regards of identifying victims of trafficking. Also when the police is working on other cases, women in prostitution are to a lesser extent in focus and identified as possible victims of trafficking.

Project Free has registered that many of the women receiving health assistance have newly arrived from Nigeria. It seems that Norway is the first country they have come to, or they have spent just short time in transit in another European country.

Some victims of trafficking, who have been in a trial, are given limited permit to stay. It is our experience that these women experience a lot of stress, and lack of rights and opportunities after the trafficking case is finished. For some of the women, the need of assistance in some degree continues for years.

Women who have been granted refund (as a victim of violence) in court after being caught by the customs/police at the airport in Norway and identified as victims of trafficking, will not get their money as the refund is bound to crimes happened in Norway. Even if the women are under control of the trafficker throughout the journey and all the way until they are caught by customs/police in airport, the crime is understood as committed abroad. This implies that women who are expecting a refund after a judgement in court, experience that they do not get any money.

So far, it is women who have used the services provided by Project Free.
KRISTIANSAND KOMMUNE
ÅRSMELDING 2011. PROSTITUSJONSTILTAKE

BAKGRUNN

MÅLSETTING
Bedre livssituasjonen til prostituerede ved helsehjelp og sosialfaglig oppfølging.

ORGANISERING
Prostituksenprosjektet ble et fast tiltak fra 2010 med to ansatte en av dem i 20% stilling, den andre i 30% stilling. Feltsykepleier fra Samfunnsmedisinsk enhet og oppfølgingskurator fra SOFOT. Prostitusjonstiltaket jobber fast en dag/kveld i uken etter avtale med den enkelte prostituerede.

ARBEIDSFORM
Prostitusjonstiltaket startet opp registrering av prostitusjonsvirksomheten på internett i januar 2011. Det er registrert fra to forskjellige nettsider en gang i uken. Vi har sosial oppfølging og helsehjelp til prostituerte som har bosatt seg i kommunen og til omreisende.

Det har i 2011 vært henvendelser fra politiet, Pro-senteret i Oslo og Bergen, Statlig mottak, og flyktningehelsetjenesten. Prostituerede har selv formidlet kontakt med andre som har hatt behov for vår tjeneste. På denne måten har vi frem til i dag fått kontakt med prostituerte og personer som har vært utsatt for menneskehandel.

Prostitusjonstiltaket er representert i TOT, tverretatelig operativt team sammen med UDI, politiet avdeling mot organisert kriminalitet, SOFOT og Buf-etat.

I 2011 har vi hatt erfaringsutveksling med serviceytelsen og kompetansesenteret for prostitusjon og menneskehandel i Århus. Vi har også besøkt Sub Rosa og bymisjonen i Trondheim.

ØKONOMI
Det er frittat 20% stilling fra Feltsykepleien og 30% stilling fra SOFOT, utgifter til tiltakets drift blir delt mellom de to enhetene.

Det ble innvilget kr. 50.000 fra Justisdepartementet til kompetanseheving og nettverk samlinger for stillingene. Og ulike aktiviteter for målgruppen.
AKTIVITET/ERFARING
Tall fra Pro-senteret i Oslo viser at det i 2010 var registrert 252 prostituerde i Kristiansand. I 2011 har det økt til 390, dette er en økning på 53,3%.
Våre egne internettregistreringer viser at det er et snitt på 23 prostituerde som tilbyr sine tjenester i Kristiansand hver dag. De fleste er kvinner fra Russland.
I tillegg kommer prostituerde fra rusmiljøet og kvinner fra Thailand som ikke averterer.


Prostitusjonstiltaket har samarbeidet med Politiet i Agder, Statlig mottak, SMSO, Flyktninghelsetjenesten, Flyktningtjenesten, Pro Senteret i Oslo og andre prostitusjonstiltak i Norge.

Prostitusjons tiltaket har hatt kontakt med kvinner fra: Nigeria (7), Russland (11) østeuropa (1), og flere fra rusmiljøet.

Deres behov for helse og sosialfaglig oppfølgelse har vært mange og svært ulike.

Helse
Fulgt til lege/legevakt
Testing for seksuelt overførbare infeksjoner
Fulgt til sykehuset.

Vi fokuserer på smitteforebyggende arbeid ved å dele ut kondomer, glidekrem og ved å gi veiledning og informasjon om sikrere sex og prevensjonsbruk.

Smittsomme sykdommer som enkelte av kvinnene vi var i kontakt med i 2011 har:
HIV
Syfilis
Hepatitt C
Clamydia

Sosial oppfølgning
Det er gjort avtaler og fulgt til:
Utlendingspolitiet
Flyktningtjenesten
Flyktninghelsetjenesten
Skattekontoret
NAV
Statlig mottak
UDI
Politiet, avdeling organisert kriminalitet.

Det er gitt undervisning til studenter ved folkehelseinstitutiet på UIA, SOFOT, helsesøstre i Kristiansand kommune og ansatte ved alternative skoler.

Liv Bente sunde. Feltsykepleien. Irene Sande. SOFOT
Counseling- and support team
sexual services
City of Malmoe
Sweden
Counseling- and support team sexual services

**Selling sexual services (FAST)**

**FAST**
- Outreach work online and on the streets
- Counseling for groups and individuals by phone, in our centre and by chat
- Support individuals in contact with other authorities

**Demand on sexual services (KAST)**

**KAST**
- Counseling for groups, couples and individuals by phone, in our centre and by chat
- Courses and groups for relatives

**Human trafficking for sexual purposes**
Nadheim
Centre for women and men with experience of prostitution
Church City Mission, Oslo

Nadheim was established in 1981, and is a part of the Church City Mission in Oslo. We are working to provide low threshold social services to men and women with experience of prostitution. We do a lot of outreach work, and in 2011 we were in contact with approximately 900 persons. We also provide assistance, shelter and counselling for victims of human trafficking. In 2011 we gave assistance to 86 victims of trafficking. Nadheim also run a shelter for victims of trafficking, called Lauras House.

Nadheim, and the Church City Mission, had, and still have, different approaches to the law. Nadheim also have a Client Council, and also this council have different opinions about the law.

To simplify: Those who supported the law at Nadheim did so because of they hoped the law would lead to a reduction in the sex marked. They hoped that fewer men would buy sexual services. Nadheim meet a lot of persons in prostitution who look for alternatives income, and don’t want to sell sex. And we have contact with a lot of persons who have left prostitution, but have a lot of experiences of the harm the prostitution has done to them.

Those who were against the law was frightening the consequences of the law to those the law supposedly was ment to protect and help.

At Nadheim we live well together with having different approaches to the law, both staff and members of Nadheims council. And we overcame our differences and reached an agreement, when we chose to look at the consequences of the law.

Olav Lægdene
manager
When human beings become a commodity

Oslo Red Cross has two different projects for victims of human trafficking. The goal for both of the projects is to create stability and security in a chaotic everyday, and strengthen their confidence and sense of achievement. We also focus on building social networks.

Sophia – Red Cross study help

Sophia gives female victims of trafficking a breathing space through social networking and study help. Our experience is that the women grow both on their personal level and regarding their school results by participating regularly in the project. Still, the most important development is in the women’s belief in themselves and in their increased confidence.

The activity takes place every Thursday between 5 pm and 8 pm. We make dinner and study together, and our volunteers help the women with their study technique. Sophia also arranges social happenings for volunteers and participants.

Sophia got its name from the goddess of wisdom. The Greek word sophia means wisdom.

Aurora – Red Cross social networking

Victims of trafficking are often isolated and lonely. Aurora offers victims of trafficking their own contact person in form of a volunteer who can be both an activity partner and a support person. The volunteer will also act as a link to activities of relevance for the participant.

The name Aurora means dawn or beginning.

Several of the women in Sophia and Aurora are single parents. Our volunteers help with child care and activities for the children when needed.
PION - Prostitutes' organization in Norway was established in 1990, and a right organization, political voice and we work to safeguard and promote sex workers interests with a focus on health, rights, safety and protection. We doing HIV- and STI-prevention work and we prove legal advice and assistance. The organization consists of a board which includes sex workers and has the formal responsibility for the organization, employees and the journal Albertine.

PION has five employees including outreach work among men and transgender people, two outreach workers directed to massage parlors and indoor marked, lawyer and two volunteers. Everybody is working part time such as 25, 30 and 50 percent.

During 2001 there has been a massive increase in the number of inquiries from both individuals and other measures in the field when it comes to legal aid project. The increase in the number of requests must be viewed in light of changes in the political approach to prostitution that seriously has affected sex workers in a negative direction. Sex workers have after our opinion both the means and the target for the police enforcement of the Penal Code § 202A - the ban on buying sex, and § 202 - the so-called pimping section. The police claim that it is part of crime prevention strategies against organized crime and trafficking, the latter is regulated under the provisions of Penal Code § 224.

The requests from sex workers applies to violations of both rights and privacy which includes random fines and expulsion from Norway, police control without search warrant; unacceptable behavior during the searches; unacceptable treatment and harassing of sex workers entering the country; harming of privacy and confidentiality by the police; cooperation between police and private businesses such as hotels; the police encouraging land lords to neglect the Rent Act and taking the law into their one’s hand where the consequences are that sex workers lose both residential – or premises, and deposits which often are three months’ rent and NOK 30 000 or more.

For sex workers who work in smaller towns, discretion is a problem. Police relation to confidentiality has been criticized, and it is without doubt an extra burden to be exposed for inspection and search by police when the officers at the same time claim to know your relatives. The police automatically reporting to the child welfare system is offending and questionable, the child welfare system are often very conservative especially outside of Oslo.

Violation of rights, the lack of legal protection and discrimination against sex workers is a
serious problem that has been significantly worse during last the years. There is also a great frustration among sex workers related the lack of rights and legal protection and the double standard of the political approach to sex work in particular that selling sex is legal the income is regarded taxable while they are at the same time treated criminal as well as their business which is regulated in the penal code section 202 that prohibits rental to prostitution and advertising.

It is important to address the structural and symbolic violence committed by the authorities should as a part of the law enforcement.

Although we have no evidence for saying that criminalization has led to more and more serious forms of exploitation of sex workers, there is no doubt that someone make a really good business by renting out apartments and rooms for sex workers. On the other hand there are a lot of sex workers who shares working premises and the cost such as rent and electricity.

Sex workers regard this as a collegial action and a way to prevent others to be exposed to violence and exploitation. The problem is that law enforcement does not distinguish between sex worker’s fellowship and exploitative pimps and sex workers are brought to court charged for pimping.

The strategy are by the police being defined as important crime prevention work, and it should be addressed that harassing sex workers are the police's main strategy to combat international organized crime and preventing human trafficking. The police have a long tradition of chasing drug addicts and it seems like they have expanded the war on drug users to the war on sex workers.

On the other hand, the situation has contributed to more resistance and legal consciousness among sex workers. Perhaps we see the same trend as in Denmark and Sweden when it comes to organization among sex workers, and in the future the streets would be filled with angry sex workers of all genders and sexual identities claiming their rights. It would be a lovely sight!
EVA – a Red Cross project in Bergen:

Offers immigrant women in difficult life situations their own activity partner and guide to Norwegian society

- Individual follow-up
- Personal guide to the Norwegian society & rights
- Need-based and flexible solutions
- Basic principle: Humanity
- Encouraging independence
- Empowering – not being a representative

The volunteer is expected to:
- listen and be supportive without becoming the main person in the woman’s life
- be a person who encourages an honest and open dialogue
- be a positive addition to the woman’s life without feeling responsible for her life quality
- be able to refer the woman to a suitable professional agency when asked by the woman or be able to suggest this course of action if there is a clear need.
- comply with professional privacy standards
- act as a representative for the Red Cross and uphold their principles
- notify the project manager or coordinator if something in the relation is not working

It is expected that both parties will:
- participate in a trial period of two months
- cover their own expenses and not borrow money from each other
- respect the rule of no home visits

The following points should be agreed upon at the first meeting:
- How often do you wish to meet? The minimum is twice a month
- How to introduce each other if meeting friends and acquaintances
- What are the expectations of both parties for the relation?
**Pro Vest – Denmark**

Pro Vest is a NGO which generally works under The Danish Plan to Combat Human Trafficking. We are three full time social workers and one part time health care worker who all perform outreach work within the prostitution environments in the southern part of Denmark. We also give assistance to foreign women, men and transgender, who are in the custody of the police, and we contribute to identify victims of trafficking, both in the field of prostitution and forced labour, as victims of trafficking.

Pro Vest started as a workplace in 2001 with contact to Danish sex workers. In cooperation with the women we took the first steps to establish a network among the sex workers and contributed to publish a small magazine ‘The Red Thread’, where the women could share experiences and ideas for improvement of their situation.

In 2003 Pro Vest got share in some of the funds, which were allocated in connection with the first Danish Plan to Combat Trafficking in Women and we began to contact migrant sex workers. The foreign women demanded among other things access to consult a doctor. In 2005 we got the opportunity to establish a health care clinic. The women can still here once a week be examined free and anonymous by a doctor.

In 2005 we also had to drop our contact to the Danish sex workers, as this work was taken over by a nationwide Centre of Competence. Since then we have exclusive worked with migrant sex workers including potential victims of trafficking.

We have during all the years ongoing developed our work on the basis of the knowledge we have acquired about the women’s needs for support. It turned out that one stationary health care clinic was not sufficient, because the transport to the health care clinic was too long for some of the women. They therefore demanded to be visited by a health care worker, who could examine and advise the women where they resided. After examining lots of different possibilities to finance a mobile health care project we got the funds in 2010 from The Danish Anti-Trafficking Centre to employ a nurse.

Pro Vest’s outreach social and health care work is supplemented by contact to the target group in our Drop-in Centre, where we among other things offer help to registration as sex workers, produce accounts, which the authorities can accept, and introduction to the rules of taxes and VAT. In the Drop-in Centre there is also access to free second hand cloth.

The Thai women have always been the largest part of our target group. During the years we have also gained contact to many Thais outside the prostitution environment and have become an insight into a world of women, who have never been integrated into the Danish community. They speak and understand very little Danish. Lots of the women are divorced and often also swindled in connection with the divorce. They are therefore often indebted. They have no actual income as they very reluctantly take contact to the public sector and ask for help. Many of them are into old age and ask themselves what they are doing in Denmark far away from children, grandchildren and everything else which means something to them. They dream about returning to Thailand, but dare hardly give it a thought, as they can not imaging how to achieve it.
Based on this we have as the newest with funds from the Social and Integration Ministry launched a repatriation offer Saeng Tien. The Danish repatriation offer is, compared to those from the other EU-countries, a good offer, which gives a real possibility to manage in the home country. In the Saeng Tien project the Thai women and men are informed about their possibilities of repatriation and on this background they can decide if they want to receive the offer. And if they decide for repatriation we assist in the process of application.

Our next action will be opening our health care clinic for potential victims of forced labour, and we predict that it will be a great challenge to get this target group familiar with the possibility.

Vibeke Nielsen

Project Manager
Prostitutionsgruppen är en del av socialtjänsten i Göteborgs Stad. Prostitutionsgruppen riktar sig till personer som har erfarenhet av att ta emot ersättning för sexuella tjänster och personer utsatta för människohandel för sexuella ändamål.


Prostitutionsgruppen har fyra huvuduppdrag:

• Erbjuda klienter råd, stöd och samtalsbehandling samt hjälpa till att länka till andra samhällsresurser
• Arbeta uppsökande i gatumiljö, på internet och på andra aktuella arenor
• Inhämta och sprida kunskap om prostitution
• Arbeta med människohandel för sexuella ändamål

Kontaktuppgifter

E-post: prostitutionsgruppen@socialresurs.goteborg.se
Telefon: +4631-367 93 31 / 32 / 33
Besöksadress: Södra Allégatan 1, 413 01 Göteborg
Postadress: Box 6131, 400 60 Göteborg
Läs mer på: www.goteborg.se/prostitutionsgruppen

Välkommen!
**Pro-tukipiste: Recent developments in Finland**

*General overview*

During the past year the atmosphere in Finland has been characterized by tightened police control on the streets and in bars in Helsinki city centre. Police has been active in checking the documents and giving fines to (mainly) migrant women who have been suspected to sell sexual services in public places. According to the people working in the streets, there has been an apparent change in the attitudes towards hostility against migrant sex workers.

It seems that some sort of saturation point has been reached: for the first time in Pro-tukipiste’s history, a group of migrant sex workers have turned to Pro-tukipiste staffs’ assistance in concrete advocacy work. At the request of our clients Pro-tukipiste reported the police’s ill-treatment to the Counselor of Justice. Pro-tukipiste’s has raised public debate of the control measures since last autumn and the visibility to Pro-tukipiste’s standpoints has been quite good. The matter was recently discussed for example in the national television channels’ evening news and morning broadcast. The police has also contacted Pro-tukipiste and suggested one-to-one discussions on the situation.

*Service provision*

In the services of Pro-tukipiste, Nigerian and Romanian sex workers have recently been more visible. Many of our service users with African background are trying to get other jobs in Finland to make a living. Placement in the formal labor market is, however, difficult. This is partly due to the work permit discretion which limits the possibilities of the third country nationals to access the formal labor market. Many of our clients seem to move between the Nordic countries. In Pro-tukipiste health care services, clients have mentioned for example Norwegian Pro Sentret, where they have received some services (e.g. vaccinations, tests etc.) and are asking us if we provide the same type of services. Also Denmark and Sweden has been mentioned in our services. These experiences bring up the question if some sort of explicit "pan-Nordic signposting" could be something what could be developed in the context of the Nordic Network?

*Service provision in the web*

Pro-tukipiste’s work in the Internet has found its target group and is now well-established. During chat conversations, sex work is nowadays more often raised up. There are other social and health organizations working on the same sites, offering more general expertise on safer sex and health issues. This may have reduced the need for conversation on general health issues with Pro-tukipiste staff.

The contacts in the Internet environment have especially been with young Finnish women, some of which have gradually also moved to other Pro-tukipiste services. These young women have told that Pro-tukipiste’s services are talked about and evaluated in the sex workers’ own web discussion forums. Message from the sex workers using our services is that Pro-tukipiste’s reputation is good in these discussions, which has encouraged some of the sex workers come to the service centers for additional services. Still most of the people who agree and want to be in contact with employees in Internet, will in no case enter the other Pro-tukipiste services. Peer review and discussion that takes place in the web should be taken into account when planning service export to the Internet environment. Service providers should take care that services provided and the used language and terms are appropriate according to the people who the services are meant for.

Pro-tukipiste has advertised the support services with web banners in the sites where sex workers and their clients interact since the beginning of year 2012. Banners that are in Finnish, English, Thai and Russian languages have increased dramatically the number of visitors on Pro-tukipiste website. Compared to year
2011, the amount of individual visitors has tripled on a monthly basis.

Work with Thai population

Pro-tukipiste’s Saphaan staff that meets Thai people working in massage parlors, has received calls from Thai people living in Sweden. Also Thai sex workers living in Helsinki have spoken to Saphaan employees of their Swedish friends and acquaintances. In these discussions the concern of the situation in Sweden and the Swedish law has been present. Thai sex workers have been asking whether “Swedish model” is going to be put in force in Finland, and whether that would lead to same kind of developments as in Sweden, where sex workers are working in private apartments instead of massage parlors. Couple of Thai people calling from Sweden has been directed to Malmö’s services. Pro-tukipiste’s workers and clients are interested to hear of the developments on the work done with and for Thai sex workers in other Nordic countries.

In Saphaan work the most discussed subjects have been violence and the safety of work. More than intimate partner violence, there has been talk of sex buyer’s increased misbehavior. There has been robberies done to the massage parlors by men of foreign origin and many of the massage places have closed their doors to foreign-looking persons. Safer sex issues seem of interest to the Thai service users even more. Advice and information about safer sex work is asked more often than before.

Trafficking in human beings

In public debate for example the tightened control of street prostitution is legitimised often as an anti-trafficking measure – no matter what the result of such measure in reality is. In the same time there appears to be weak positive signals in the air when it comes to the criminal investigation and judicial proceedings related with the cases of trafficking in human beings (THB). Exploitation cases are investigated more frequently within the THB-frame and the first work-related trafficking cases have been convicted in the court of law. In the field of national action against trafficking in human beings there are several ongoing processes aimed at reforming the regulatory/legal framework in Finland. In these processes also NGO perspective is taken into account.

The Ministry of Justice’s working group of experts will discuss and reform for example the status of the plaintiff in the juridical proceedings concerning criminal acts such as pandering/pimping and trafficking in human beings for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Pro-tukipiste is the only NGO representative in the working group. The group started to work in the beginning of 2012.

The Ministry of Interior has also established a working group to develop the legislation and policies concerning the identification and assistance for victims of trafficking and the transmission of information among the authorities and other parties involved in the processes concerning the assistance for victims of trafficking. A separate law concerning trafficking in human beings is planned to replace the acts and provisions concerning the assistance of victims in the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum seekers and in the Aliens Act. Pro-tukipiste and other two Finnish NGO’s are represented in the working group.
EVA offers immigrant women in difficult life situations their own activity partner and guide to Norwegian society.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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All Red Cross staff and volunteers have signed confidentiality declarations.

Do you sometimes feel lost or alone in Norway?
Would you like someone to assist you with your rights and possibilities in Norway? Or someone to just talk to and spend time with?

As a participant in EVA, you will get your own contact person who can be both an activity partner and a guide to the Norwegian society for you. It is up to you what you want to do together with your contact person. Some examples can be:

- To gather information on your rights and possibilities in Norway
- To practice your Norwegian
- To go to cafés, the cinema, the gym or simply for a walk

The activities in EVA is based on your needs, and you and your contact person will focus on what is most important for you. Your contact person will be a female volunteer. She is not getting paid to participate in EVA; her motivation is to contribute to making life easier for another woman.

COMMON ACTIVITIES
In addition to the individual pairing, EVA also offers common activities such as computer classes, job seeking courses, self defense classes and various workshops and field trips.

Project EVA is targeted towards the needs of our participants, and both the individual and common activities will be based on this.

EVA – a support in your everyday life...
The Prostitution unit in Stockholm

For people regardless of sex or sexual identity who;

- has an experience of prostituting or similar acts
- is being trafficked
- has an experience of buying sexual services

- You can be anonymous
- All our services are free of charge
- We have professional secrecy
- We do not exercise any official authority

The different parts of the Unit;
- Therapy, counseling
- Support, advice, practical help
- Outreach work
  - the street
  - the internet
- Human trafficking
- KAST – buyers of sexual services
- Midwife
- Gynaecologist, general practitioner and psychiatrist

The Prostitution unit in Stockholm is a part of the social welfare services in the City of Stockholm that operate within the framework of the county’s municipal administrations.

The political aim in the City of Stockholm is to decrease prostitution and human trafficking. In order to do so, the unit turn to both the selling and buying part in prostitution. The units’ clients (both buyers and sellers) come of their own accord; the unit do not exercise any official authority (unlike most social services in Stockholm).

You don’t have to be “prostitution free” when you contact the unit, or even have the intention to quit prostituting.

The unit does not have a special program or method. The help the clients ask for can be as diverse as “I need a place to sleep” or “I need therapy to process my traumatic experiences from prostitution”. Many times the unit becomes the link between the client and the rest of society with its different authorities.
**The method**
Even though the unit doesn’t have a special program or method there are four words that are very important in the everyday work with the clients – *Time, Attitude, posture – towards the clients, Flexibility and Co-operation.*

*Attitude, posture – towards the clients* – Prostitution is full of shame and the person prostituting carries most of that shame. It’s fundamental not to increase the clients’ shame and guilt, why the unit never judges or moralizes.

*Time* – it takes time to change your life. And it’s ok if it does. No matter what part of the unit the client is in contact with - the midwife, a therapist, a social welfare officer – patience is crucial.

*Flexibility* – since the unit doesn’t have a special program, it’s important to be flexible to be able to give the clients the best service possible.

Part of this is knowing what other resources within our society that can be of help. Which is why…

*Co-operation* – with other authorities in society is very important. Examples of other authorities are the police, The Migration board, the unemployment office, NGO’s etc.

**The clients**
The clients that come to the unit do not solely come from street prostitution, they also come from the indoor prostitution. Over the last 10 years the unit has met, and meet, people from all the different kinds of prostitution.

**KAST**
The part of the unit directed to the buyers is for the purpose of trying to get them to stop buying sexual services. The service currently consists of telephone counselling (toll free, anonymous) and the ability to meet someone for advice or therapy. Outreach work in the street is conducted to encourage men to enter into a dialogue about buying sex with the goal of eventually changing their behaviour. It is important to point out that also the buyers come on their own accord, since the unit doesn’t exercise any official authority.
The Marita foundation: Marita Women

The Marita Foundation is a diaconal foundation, established in 1984, with the aim of preventing youth drug abuse and addiction. Since drug use and prostitution are related issues in Norway, people in street prostitution have also been a major consideration.

Marita Women started in 2008 because of the wave of foreign sex sellers emerging on the street market in Oslo, and facing the new law against buying sexual services in Norway. This new group faced a set of distinct challenges and struggled with race and cultural differences that set them apart.

Marita Women Outreach
Marita Women does street outreach once a week from 9 pm to 12 am. We give out coffee and share information about sex workers rights and available services within the prostitution network. We maintain that there is hope for those who seek a way out of prostitution and for those dreaming of a life change. The main groups we meet are those from Eastern Europe and Nigeria.

Marita Women’s Night Café
The Night Café was started because many Nigerian women begin work after midnight and they do not always have the same access to services and information available through outreach work. Since 2010, the Marita Café has opened once a week from 12 am – 3 am especially for sex sellers.

The café is a safe and welcoming environment and has allowed us to build solid relationships with the women who voluntarily visit us each week. We believe there is obvious need for this type of service as the women continue to ask us to open more nights a week. In 2011, the average visit in the café was 50 guests a night. Those that visit the café are able to rest from the street, have warm cups of coffee, get information about network services, have meaningful conversations about their lives and receive encouragement.

As a Christian foundation, we are uniquely aware of the importance of meeting the needs of people working in prostitution holistically, which includes a faith-based perspective. Because so many Nigerian women are coming from Christian regions, they are able to find strength and hope for their future through a shared belief in God.

Issues and challenges from the perspective of street prostitution:
- The impact of the law in Norway against buying sexual services (since 1st of January 2009)
- As a result of the financial crisis in Southern Europe, Norway and the Nordic countries must discuss the migration and poverty problematic. New measures must be developed to meet the needs of the increasing number of people in street prostitution.
- Women’s fears and frustration in periods over unfair treatment such as being thrown out of apartments they live in because of “pimping laws” and disputes over contract abruptions (autumn 2011)
- Awareness rising about how to meet foreign sex sellers with a holistic approach including religious and faith-based approach.

Maritastiftelsen – Marita Women
E-mail: women@marita.no / Tel: +47 47 46 65 62
**Project “New Career”: work experience program**

The work experience program, established in 2010, is part of the project “New Career” whose goal is to get those who have been involved in prostitution and are motivated for life change to experience alternative employment, in Norway or another country of residence if returning. Marita Women provides work experience with extended follow-up in the “Marita Second-hand Shop”.

We offer work opportunity for sex sellers who have experienced human trafficking and who have been granted temporarily stay in Norway, also known as a reflection period. While reflecting about their situation, circumstances and future, the participants can work within a safe and stable environment. The program is funded by The Royal Norwegian Ministry of Justice, and is run in collaboration with Oslopiloten/Nav Grünerløkka (Nav Socialservices) and others.

**Issues and challenges in helping victims of human trafficking:**

- A reflection period is more valuable when the quality time for reflection is balanced with content of activities or work experience. This will avoid isolation, fear of the future, build self-confidence and give experience and job references for a different career path in the future.
- Stronger collaboration within the network to fight trafficking and prosecute offenders
- Develop benchmarks for participants and programs during the period of reflection with consistent evaluation throughout the period of reflection
- Clearly outlined rights and requirements for trafficked persons
- Clearly identified responsibility in the network of different actors for helping those trafficked
- Funding of programs
Utekontakten in Bergen

**Who we are:** We are social workers employed by the municipality of Bergen. We conduct outreach work amongst young people from the age of 13-25. In addition, we also provide help for men and women who might be exposed to human trafficking. We carry out our work in the city centre of Bergen – in typical places where young people are, like the streets, parks and shopping malls. We are present in the centre of Bergen six days and evenings a week.

**Prostitution:** People who may have been exposed to human trafficking, for example through forced prostitution, can be found in various locations in Bergen. Through outreach social work, Utekontakten in Bergen offers practical assistance and counselling to potential victims of human trafficking. The counselling particularly focuses on legal rights and further referral to national support and healthcare services, hereunder sexual healthcare and disease control. In addition, Utekontakten in Bergen also focuses on prevention in connection with the selling and exchange of sexual services.

The main groups of street sexworkers in Bergen consist of women from Nigeria, Eastern Europe (mainly Romania) and few from Norway.

**TOT:** To secure assistance and protection to victims of human trafficking, a cross-disciplinary operation team has been established in partnership with the police and the Municipality of Bergen (TOT). The cross-disciplinary team is coordinated by Utekontakten in Bergen.
Prostitusjonsmarked og tiltak i Trondheim pr. 1.juni 2012.

v/ Berit Johanne Hoaas, prosjektkoordinator for arbeid mot menneskehandel og prostitusjon i Trondheim kommune

**Prostitusjonsmarkedet i Trondheim**

Prostitusjonen i Trondheim har tradisjonelt vært mindre synlig enn i andre norske byer. Etter at kriminaliseringsloven ble vedtatt, ble virksomheten mindre tilgjengelig. Det ble en økning av såkalte outcalls, dvs at de prostituerede drar hjem til kunder i stedet for at prostitusjonen foregår på hoteller eller i leiligheter.


Så langt er det ingen anmeldelser i forhold til hallikvirksomhet i 2012. Det foreligger 50 anmeldte sexkjøp fordelt på 23 personer.


Det har over lengre tid vært et antall på opptil 20 russiske prostituerede som har hatt tilhold i Trondheim. I den senere tid har man også sett en økning fra andre østeuropeiske land (Romania og Bulgaria).

I den senere tid har det blitt avdekket nye arenaer for prostitusjonsvirksomhet i byen. Det er avdekket et betydelig omfang av rekruttering av kunder på restuaranter og barer. Det er også avdekket at sentrumsnære solstudioer er hyppig benyttede arenaer for prostitusjon.

**Ungdom**

Resultatet av ungdomsundersøkelsen i Trondheim gjennomført 2005 til 2009 viser en nedgang i prosentandel ungdommer som har utført seksuelle tjenester mot betaling. Dette kan være et resultat av målrettet forebyggende arbeid, selv om det ikke er gjort nærmere analyse av resultatene. I oppfølgingen av ungdomsundersøkelsen har det vært arrangert mobiliseringskonferanser hvor skoler og ungdom selv var involvert. Videre oppfølging er overlatt den enkelte skole.

**Ungpro ved Kirkens bymisjon**

Ung Pro tiltaket ved OBU, Kirkens bymisjon i Trondheim arbeider på oppdrag for Trondheim kommune. Ung Pro arbeider med kompetanseutvikling, forebygging, tiltaksutvikling og oppfølging av
ungdom. De er for tiden involvert i prosjektarbeidet seksuell helse og trakkasering som retter seg mot 21 videregående skoler i Sør-Trøndelag.

Det henvises ca 25 – 35 saker hvert år til Ungpro. I tillegg er det en økning i henvendelser hvor samarbeidspartnere ringer for å drøfte saker anonymt. Til nå har oppfølgingen hovedsakelig vært gitt til jenter, men med noen unntak også gutter. Ungdommenes erfaringer kan dreie seg om seksuell utnyttelse eller seksuell utprøving som de unge har et ambivalent forhold til, noe er seksuelle overgrep eller voldteknere.

OBU/ Ung Pro driver gruppetilbud for jenter og gutter hvor fokus er forebygging av rekruttering av rus og prostituerings.

**Subrosa kvinner og menn**


**Arbeid mot menneskehandel og prostituerings**

Arbeidet mot menneskehandel og prostituerings i Trondheim kommune har sitt utgangspunkt i kommunens egen tiltaksplan mot menneskehandel og prostituerings (vedtatt i 2007) og regjeringsens handlingsplaner mot menneskehandel. Arbeidet har vært koordinert av en prosjektkoordinator siden januar 2009. Prosjektkoordinator har siden hun begynte deltatt i Koordineringsenheten for menneskehandels prosjektgruppe og har kontinuerlig videreformidlet informasjon og kunnskap om det nasjonale arbeidet mot menneskehandel lokalt. Det har vært arrangert en rekke seminarer hvor det har vært bred deltakelse fra helse- og sosiale tjenester (statlige og kommunale), barnevern, politi, UDI, frivillige organisasjoner med mer.

Målgruppe for prostitueringsforebyggende innsats er Trondheims befolkning generelt og utsatte sårbare grupper spesielt. Et uttalt satsingsområde i 2011 var å gi god og relevant informasjon til nyankomne flyktninger og sårbare grupper innen innvandringsbefolkningen om menneskehandel og prostituerings i Trondheim. Dette er implementert blant annet ved et samarbeid med HERO(asylmottak) og Senter for voksenopplæring.

Prosjektkoordinator følger selv opp enkeltaksaker eller bistår i saker hvor utgangspunktet kan være voldutsatte og mistanke om utnyttelse til prostituerings. Det er et fokus på å utvikle gode rutiner for ivaretakelse av mulige ofre for menneskehandel fra identifisering til beskyttelse innen det kommunale hjelpeapparatet og i et samarbeid med politiet. Dette innebærer bl.a. å implementere tverretatlig operativt team (TOT) som en hensiktsmessig arbeidsform i menneskehandelsaker i Trondheim.