

THE SWEDISH MODEL

An excuse to avoid harm reduction

Pye Jakobsson

The law against purchasing sexual services

A person who in exchange for payment obtains a casual sexual service is sentenced to a fine or up to six months imprisonment.

”However it is more controversial that the parliament recommend the member states to formulate a pronounced policy that would mean that the member states should respect the prostitutes right to freely choose to work as prostitutes and to let them be heard in all matters that concern them. That is a foreign point of view, a standpoint that is very hard to combine with the view on prostitution that I think one should have.”

Beatrice Ask, October 2007

Between lie and reality

Needs and wishes among sexworkers in Sweden and Finland



”It’s complicated and difficult to a have a good contact with health care providers, because it feels like you have to lie in order to be treated with respect.” *Petra*

"I've been told by therapists that all my problems depend on sexwork, it's not true and it makes me angry. Once a therapist started crying, during group therapy, when I talked about my problems. I thought to myself, I can do this better on my own." *Sara*

”When I was working I think that I would have checked myself for STD’s more often if I didn’t have to go to a regular clinic. All the questions from the nurses and their failure to respect rules of anonymity just made me irritated. I needed to prepare myself mentally before going there, and sometimes I just didn’t go.”

Johan

"I'm in a treatment for alcohol abuse. According to my therapist my problem with alcohol comes from "wiggling around a pole", and there the discussion ends and she can't be bothered to inquire further." *Fia*

"I was a single mom and the father of the child didn't pay child support, so I asked the social services for financial help, something they normally provide in a situation like this. They refused to help me if I didn't stop working which I thought was absurd, so I refused. I ended up loosing my appartement and then my child was placed in foster care." *Elise*

"It's absurd that you have to lie in order to pay taxes. Once I got so frustrated when I couldn't get any real answers that I started screaming: What's wrong with you, don't you want my money." *Liza*

”A lot of people stay in the industry for too long as they feel they have no other options, it’s like you are branded for life. No one will employ you, they probably think you’re on drugs or will turn their business into a brothel.” *Mira*

What should people now about sexworkers that they normally don't?

"We don't always have problems because of sexwork, but we get problems because of all prejudices. We have to lie when we ask for help, other people don't have to do that, only that is enough to make you depressed. We get treated differently, without respect and have to fight double as hard as everybody else and then society tries to blame our problems on our profession, it's ridiculous!" *Felicia*



Only
RIGHTS can
stop the
WRONGS