INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF SEX WORKERS IN EUROPE I C R S E

Przettut

11

BULLETIN January 2006



рното: Quentin Deltour, Espace P...

Congratuations!

More than two months have already passed since that fantastic weekend in October when were were all together in Brussels. For some, the memories will already be fading, but I am certain that most of you still occasionally smile, remembering some moment we shared together. The conference was a monumental event!

On October 17, 2005 we made a public presentation to the European Parliament of three key tools — documents endorsed by 120 sex workers and 80 allies from 30 European countries — which will lay the foundation for the future of sex workers' rights in Europe.

On behalf of the Conference Organizing Committee, I want to express a heart-felt "Thank-you" to all of you who dedicated your time and attention, who shared your concerns and experiences, and who trusted in a greater common goal, and ratified these three important statements regarding the important issues facing sex workers in Europe today. May you all enjoy a happy, healthy and prosperous 2006!

~ Petra Timmerman

The Final Report

This I.C.R.S.E. Bulletin is to update you on the documentation from the conference we have compiled so far, and the status of the documents that are still to

I•C•R•S•E Bulletin

January 2006

Organizing Committee: Petra Timmerman, Jesper Bryngemark, Ruth Morgan Thomas, Marieke van Doorninck, Pye Jakobson, Giulia Garofalo, Anita Mangala, Laura Agustín, Marjan Sax, Marianne Jonker, Marjan Wijers, Licia Brussa, Anna Konakova, Marie Louise Janssen, and Vladimir Mogylnyi

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Cover photo: Andrew Sorfleet

GET US YOUR STUFF!

All submissions for the Final Report must be in by February 14, 2006! come. The publication date for the English version of the Final Report has been set for March 15, 2006. This Final Report will contain:

- Sex Workers in Europe Manifesto
- The Declaration of the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe
- Recommendations of the European Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labour Rights and Migration — Brussels, 2005
- abstracts and presentations from the conference
- Press coverage of the conference and demonstration
- Photos of the conference and demonstration
- Your personal stories about the conference, party or demonstration

In the meantime, you can check our website for regular updates and new documents at: http://www.sexworkeurope.org

To request printed copies of any of the conference documents, e-mail us, or call: tel: +31 20 693 1300.

Or you can write to us at:

• I.C.R.S.E. P.O. Box 51319 1007 EH Amsterdam the Netherlands

We need your abstracts!

We are asking all conference participants who gave presentations during the conference to send us their abstracts for the Final Report. We don't need your entire presentation, just a short description or blurb will do and anything you would like us to say about you. You may send your complete presentation if you wish, and we can write the abstract for you. Send your abstract or presentation by e-mail to: info@sexworkeurope.org, or mail it to our postal address.

Have we got photos?

You can view 120 photos of the demonstration! Espace P... in Brussels (http://www.espacep.be) has created an Internet slideshow at:

 "Manifestation 15 octobre 2005" http://www.flickr.com/photos/prostitution/ sets/1161372/

Maj from Copenhagen has also created a slideshow of the demonstration consisting of 69 photos. You can find it at:

• "Sex workers in EU Parliament + demonstration" http://www.flickr.com/photos/sexworkersmanifestation/sets/1228584/

Stay tuned for more photos from our official conference photographer, Jean Francois. Some images are now available on his website at: http://www.les-putes.com/conference.html

2.

We want your photos too!

Send us your great photos from the conference and we'll include in the conference Final Report. To submit your photos for publication you can either mail them to our postal address, or e-mail them to info@sexworkeurope.org.

Like to tell stories?

The I.C.R.S.E. is looking for your personal stories about the any aspect of the conference, including the party and the demonstration, to publish in our Final Report of the conference. Stories can be submitted in any language. Stories may be edited for length. Submit your story by e-mail to info@sexworkeurope.org

Or you can mail your stories to:

• I.C.R.S.E. P.O. Box 51319 1007 EH Amsterdam the Netherlands

Network of Sex Workers and Allies in Europe

The I.C.R.S.E. held a session on networking during the conference, and collected contact information from those of you who expressed interest in a network for sex workers and their allies in Europe. This network should not be confused with the I.C.R.S.E. This new network will be created and directed by those of you who participate and belong. To facilitate this, we have created an e-mail listserve sex workers and their allies can use to establish and develop this new network. All conference participants who provided us with an e-mail address will receive an invitation to join. For more information, or to subscribe to the Network of Sex Workers and Allies in Europe listserve, e-mail Petra Timmerman at: info@sexworkeurope.org

Press conference live

You can listen to the European Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labour Rights and Migration Press Conference on the European Paliament Website! The live press conference was held at 1 p.m., Monday, October 17, 2005 in the Brussels Press Conference room (by Monica Frassoni, Verts/ALE, IT). Visit: http://www.europarl.eu.int/eplive/expert/ all_ebsplan_week/42-2005/default_en.htm

Translations

The I.C.R.S.E. has established translation teams and translations of the *Manifesto*, *Declaration* and *Recommendations* are now underway. In addition to English, these key conference documents will be available in French, German, Russian and Spanish. If you would

like to be involved in the translation process, and can volunteer your time, please contact the translation team by e-mail at: info@sexworkeurope.org

Session recordings

Conference session recordings are now in MP3! The digital audio files are available on our website and on CD. Visit: To order a CD, e-mail info@sexworkeurope. org or send your order by mail.

Sex Workers' Manifesto

The Sex Workers in Europe Manifesto was endorsed by 120 sex workers from 26 countries at the European Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labour and Migration in Brussels, Belgium. This Manifesto lists sex workers' demands for changes that are necessary in order to create a more equitable society in which sex workers, their rights, and their labour are acknowledged and valued.

On October 17, 2005, the *Sex Workers in Europe Manifesto* was presented to the European Parliament in Brussels. Ten sex workers stood up and each read aloud a statement selected from the document.

10 Manifesto highlights

- 1. We condemn the hypocrisy within our societies where our services are used but our profession or businesses are made illegal. This legislation results in abuse and lack of control over our work and lives.
- We demand our right as human beings to use our bodies in any way we do not find harmful; including the right to establish consensual sexual relations, no matter the gender or ethnicity of our partners; regardless of whether they are paying or not.
- 3. We demand our voices are heard, listened to and respected. Our experiences are diverse, but all are valid, and we condemn those who steal our voice and say that we do not have the capacity to make decisions or articulate our needs.
- We demand our governments decriminalise sex work and end legislation that discriminates against us and stigmatises us. We demand the right to report abuses against us without risking prosecution.

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- 5. We assert our right to be free from arbitrary interference with our privacy and family and to marry and/or found a family.
- 6. The labelling of us by social services and courts as unfit parents and the removal of our children, simply because we provide sexual services, is unjustifiable and unacceptable. Such stigmatisation removes our ability to seek support and assistance if we need it in relation to parenting or abusive relationships for fear of losing our children. We demand an end to such discrimination.
- 7. Registration and mandatory sexual health and HIV testing are a violation of sex workers human rights and reinforce the stigmatisation of sex workers as a threat to public health and promotes the stere-otypical view that only they can transmit infections to clients. We demand an end to registration and mandatory testing.
- 8. The lack of possibilities to migrate put our integrity and health in danger. We demand that sex workers be free to travel within and across countries and to migrate, without discrimination based on our work.
- 9. We demand our governments prohibit the confiscation of condoms and other safe sex products from sex workers and sex work establishments.
- 10. To improve our working conditions it is important that we have opportunities to self organise and advocate for our rights. We call upon trade unions to support us in our self organisation and in our struggle for fair working conditions.

To download a copy of the entire *Sex Workers in Europe Manifesto*, visit our website at: http://www.sexworkeurope.org/manifesto.htm

Declaration of Rights

The Declaration of Rights of Sex Workers in Europe was endorsed by 120 sex workers and 80 of their allies from 30 countries at the European Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labour and Migration, Brussels.

Over the last several years, legislation designed to combat organised crime and promote public health has proliferated at local, national and international levels.



These new laws infringe on sex workers' fundamental rights and freedoms, even though principles and policies set out by both UNAIDS and the World Health Organisation state that laws which restrict sex workers and violate their rights undermine public health. Such laws also contradict the European Parliament's *Resolution on Violence Against Women*, which calls for decriminalisation prostitution, and protection of prostitutes' civil rights, health and safety, and independence.

Legislation throughout Europe has been focussed on restricting international migration, rather than ensuring rights and freedoms for migrant workers. As a result, migrants working in every sector of labour are increasingly subjected to more abuse and exploitation. To date, Bosnia and Turkey are the only European countries that have signed the *United Nations International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families*, enacted in 2003.

Sex worker organisations across Europe have collected a substantial volume of documented and anecdotal evidence of the discrimination sex workers face with regard to health and social care, housing, employment, education, administrative law and criminal justice. Based on this evidence, this declaration outlines the civil rights and labour rights sex workers should be entitled to, according to various international conventions and treaties.

A full version of *The Declaration of Rights of Sex Workers in Europe* is available on our website at: http://www.sexworkeurope.org/declaration.htm

Recommendations for sex work

Endorsed by 120 sex workers and 80 allies from 30 countries, *Recommendations of the European Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labour and Migration — Brussels, 2005* lays out key steps toward ensuring sex workers' human rights and labour rights, and protecting sex workers from violence, exploitation and trafficking.

As part of the European Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labour and Migration, workshops where sex workers and their allies could share their experiences, knowledge and expertise were organized to map out and analyse the differing situations faced by sex workers throughout Europe. Through the course of these workshops, participants formulated a long list of recommendations.

These recommendations have been compiled to assist sex workers and their advocates throughout Europe lobby for sex workers' rights. A summary of these recommendations as well as the complete version of the

document are available on our website at: http://www.sexworkeurope.org/recommendations.htm

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Look who's in the news!

News about the European Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labour and Migration and our sex workers' demonstration was picked up by several newswire services. Here is a list of the press coverage we've accumulated so far, and there could be more. If you've got a news clip that we've missed, please send it along. You can e-mail it to: info@sexworkeurope.org.

- BBC News (http://news.bbc.co.uk) report, by Matthew Charles, live from Brussels, October 17, 2005. This video clip is available on the Internet in both .wmv (for Windows Media Viewer) and .rm (for Real-Player) formats. To download, visit: http://deid.net/ScotPEP/
- "European sex workers called for their profession to be recognized as work," *Reuters* (http://today. reuters.com), October 17, 2005.

"You shouldn't hide yourselves, you shouldn't be ashamed," she said. "All societies should accept and give (the same) sort of statute to this profession as to any other."

- "La prostitution en question," Le Soir, Bruxelles (http://www.lesoir.be), October 17, 2005.
 "Elle exige également que les travailleurs du sexe obtiennent les mêmes droits que les autres travailleurs en ce qui concerne l'accès à la sécurité sociale, aux soins de santé et aux allocations sociales."
- "Sex workers meet in Brussels to demand labor rights," *News From Russia* (http://newsfromrussia. com), October 18, 2005.

"Meeting under the auspices of Italian deputy Vittorio Emanuele Agnoletto, some 120 sex workers from 23 countries held a conference to exchange personal experiences from the street and major issues concerning prostitution, including the public image of the profession and working conditions."

- "Sex workers demand labor rights," Associated Press (http://www.ap.org), October 17, 2005. "'I believe this declaration is important not only for sexual workers, but it also could become very important for the European civil society. If they're recognized as workers, they can pay taxes and have the same duties and same rights as everyone else,' Agnoletto said."
- "Les filles de joie dans la rue," La Dernière Heure (http://www.dhnet.be), October 18, 2005. "Les slogans sont durs, les mots clairement pas mâchés. 'Ni coupables, fières d'être p... !' La petite centaine de prostituées venues des quatre coins d'Europe n'ont pas bloqué la circulation pendant des heures, leur message a néanmoins été très distinctement entendu."
- "Rights: Sex workers ask to be seen as workers," Inter Press Service (http://www.ipsterraviva.net), October 18, 2005, by Stefania Bianchi. "Camille Cabral, representing French sex workers, said it was time to end the stigma associated with



FOTO: AP

Prostituees eisen in Brussel erkenning voor beroep

Sp!ts (http://spitsnet.nl) dinsdag, 18 oktober 2005

Een Franse prostituee poseert tijdens een bezoek aan het Europarlement in Brussel met de Europese vlag. Zo'n 120 prostituees uit 23 lidstaten hebben gisteren in het Europarlement een einde geëist aan de beperkingen die sommige lidstaten opleggen aan hun beroepsgroep. De prostituees, die zichzelf 'sekswerkers nosmen', willen dezelfde rechten, bijvocrbeeld wat betreft sociale zekerheid, als 'gewone' weknemers binnen de EU.

Volgens organisator Ruth Morgan Thomas worden in Europa steeds meer wetten doorgevoerd die prostituees en de seksindustrie in het algemeen benadelen. De wetgeving ten aanzien van prostitutie varieert van lidstaat tot lidstaat.

the sex industry. 'You shouldn't hide yourselves, you shouldn't be ashamed,' she said. 'All societies should accept and give (the same) sort of statute to this profession as to any other.'"

• "SexarbeiterInnen-Konferenz darf nicht ohne Echo verhallen: Menschenrechte müssen auf nationaler Ebene sichergestellt werden!," *Frauensolidarität* (http://www.frauensolidaritaet.org), October 25, 2005.

""Die Stimmen von über 200 SexarbeiterInnen und ihren UnterstützerInnen dürfen nicht ungehört bleiben", fordert Cristina Boidi, Koordinatorin des Vereins LEFÖ, nach der 3-tägigen Konferenz von Sexarbeiterinnen vergangene Woche in Brüssel."

• "Sex workers ask EU to respect their 'rights'," Cybercast News Service (http://www.CNSNews. com), October 28, 2005, by Eva Cahen. "According to the group, sex workers are often excluded from the application of human right and labor laws in many countries, merely because government policies 'aim to make sex work invisible.' The group also complains that prostitution is not recognized as legal labor."



About the I.C.R.S.E.

International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe is a registered foundation in the Netherlands. Our main goals are:

- to bring sex workers and their allies together on an international level:
- to further the social acceptance and respect for sex workers;
- to guarantee sex workers' civil rights;
- to organise the support of sex-worker allies.

I.C.R.S.E. works to further these goals by:

- building international networks of sex workers and their allies to improve or abolish oppressive laws;
- promoting communication and information-sharing over the Internet and on paper;
- organizing conferences, study groups and meetings.

As well, I.C.R.S.E. aims to end the sexual stigma faced by women, gays and lesbians and transgendered people, and promote self-determination for women in general.

To request printed copies of conference documents, you can reach us by e-mail: info@sexworkeurope.org; telephone: +31 20 693 1300; Or write to us at:

 I.C.R.S.E.
 P.O. Box 51319
 1007 EH Amsterdam the Netherlands

Built by members!

Currently, the I.C.R.S.E. is maintained by an Organizing Committee (like a steering committee) who — with direction from you — will create a new Network of Sex Workers and Allies in Europe utilizing an e-mail listserve to start. To join the I.C.R.S.E. contact us today!

Stay informed about the struggle for sex workers' rights in Europe!

Read about the European Conference on Sex Work, Download essential documents for sex worker advocacy. Join the Network of Sex Workers and Allies in Europe. Visit the official website of the I.C.R.S.E. at: http://www.sexworkeurope.org

We can also accept communications in many languages.

- Wij kunnen communicaties in vele talen accepteren.
- Comunichiamo in molte lingue.
- On communique en plusieures langues.
- Wir können Anfragen in vielen Sprachen bearbeiten.
- Több nyelven is kommunikálhatnak velünk.
- Vi kan kommunicera på flera språk.
- Comunicamos en muchos idiomas.

рното: A. Sorfleet

