In Canada, two cases have been making their way through courts in Ontario and in British Columbia, challenging provisions of the Criminal Code that deal with sex work. While sex worker activists who promote the human rights of sex workers argue for the complete removal of prostitution laws that criminalize sex workers (known as decriminalization), others propose alternative models of criminalization.

Known as the “Swedish” or “Nordic” model of regulating sex work, this model has been proposed as an alternative to the current regime of criminalization. This model — adopted in Sweden, Norway and Iceland — criminalizes the purchase of sexual services, most indoor sex work and promoting and “living on the avails of” sex work.

Given the strong prospect that at least some of the challenged provisions of the Criminal Code may soon no longer form part of Canadian law, it is important to consider the impact of the Swedish model on sex workers and whether it is a constitutional — and therefore legal — alternative, or if it merely replaces one unconstitutional set of laws with another.

What is the “Swedish” or “Nordic” model?

In 1999, the Swedish government passed the law Prohibiting the Purchase of Sexual Services (Sex Purchase Act). This law, now part of Sweden’s Penal Code, punishes those who purchase sex with a fine or imprisonment for up to one year. The stated objective of the law is to “end demand” for prostitution because sex workers are deemed to be “victims” and sex work is considered to cause serious harm to individuals and to society as a whole.

Sweden’s Penal Code also punishes those who “promote” sex work or “improperly financially exploit” someone’s engagement in sex work with imprisonment of up to four years (or up to eight years if the crime is “gross,” i.e., involving large-scale exploitation). In effect, the "Swedish" or "Nordic" model:
this provision punishes:

1. those who “promote” sex work — including sex workers themselves — by permitting individuals to use their premises for sex work; and
2. sex workers working collectively, who are all deemed to be financially “exploiting” one another.³

Impacts of the Swedish model

Despite its stated intentions, the Swedish model is not effective at reducing prostitution. While the number of sex workers working on the street appeared to decline following the passage of the law, sex workers have merely moved indoors, online and to neighbouring countries.

As a result of this law, most sex workers who work indoors are criminalized, and they are unable to work or live with others, including their partners, since it is illegal to share in any income derived from sex work.³ Sex workers are also forced to lie in order to rent premises or are pressured to pay exorbitant rent because of the risk of criminal prosecution.³ More broadly, sex workers are unable to access social security benefits that are available to all other workers in legal labour activities.⁴

Also reported are the following:

INCREASED RISKS OF AND EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE

Street sex workers have reported increased risks of and experiences of violence. Regular clients have avoided them for fear of police harassment and arrest, instead turning to the internet and to indoor venues. There are fewer clients on strolls, and those that remain are more likely to be drunk or violent and to request unprotected sex.

DECREASED NEGOTIATING POWER FOR SAFER SEX PRACTICES

There is greater competition for clients and lower prices for services. This means that sex workers accept clients they would have otherwise refused and there is more pressure on them to see clients who insist on unsafe sex practices. When safer sex practices are being negotiated, both clients and sex workers must do so rapidly and often with unclear communication and in more secluded locales, to avoid lingering for fear of arrest for purchasing sex.

SAFETY NETWORKS AND WARNING SYSTEMS AMONG SEX WORKERS ARE THREATENED

Since police surveillance has driven sex workers to more isolated locations, informal support networks among sex workers have weakened and it has become more difficult for sex workers to warn each other about abusive or violent aggressors posing as clients.

CLIENTS ARE MORE RELUCTANT TO REPORT VIOLENCE THEY WITNESS AGAINST SEX WORKERS

Clients who would have previously reported violence, coercion or other abuse towards a sex worker are now more reluctant to go to the police for fear of their own arrest.

AGGRESSIVE POLICING

Sex workers who work on the street in Sweden have reported aggressive policing, police harassment, police persecution and overall mistrust of police.

STRONG LEGAL INCENTIVES TO AVOID CONDOM USE

Police have confiscated belongings to use as evidence against clients, providing sex workers with a strong incentive to avoid carrying condoms.

INCREASED DISCRIMINATION FROM HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS

Sex workers report an increase in discrimination from health service providers and from the general population. Rampant stigma around sex work and fear of discrimination prevents sex workers from talking about their sex work experiences when testing for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections and when accessing health services for their overall health.

INCREASED DIFFICULTIES IN ACCESSING AND MAINTAINING HOUSING

Sex workers frequently face difficulties accessing and maintaining housing as a result of discrimination and associated stigma. Sex workers’ increased mobility and displacement to hidden venues also impede their access to and ability to maintain housing.

INADEQUATE SOCIAL SERVICES

In Sweden, most social service providers oppose condom provision as it is perceived to render them complicit in prostitution-related offences. After the passage of the Swedish model, HIV prevention projects aimed at clients of sex workers also ceased.

ERASURE OF MALE AND TRANS SEX WORKERS

Government evaluations of the law often ignore its impact on male and trans sex workers, so very little is known about their risks of and experiences of violence, access to health care, sexual behaviour and sexual health.
Comparison of the laws regarding sex work in Canada and in Sweden

The Swedish model is very similar to the current legislative model for sex work in Canada. Canada already has core elements of a Nordic model in place, including parallel provisions which have been demonstrated (and accepted in court) to have detrimental effects. The following chart compares key laws governing sex work in Canada and in Sweden, illustrating that the legislative frameworks in each country are more similar than they are different.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keeping a bawdy house</td>
<td>Illegal, including for sex workers who work out of their own homes</td>
<td>Illegal, unless the sex worker owns the space that she or he uses for sex work and works alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. 210 of the Criminal Code makes it an offence to keep, be found in, own, or be a landlord, lessor, tenant, occupier, agent or otherwise have charge or control of any place that is used regularly for the purpose of prostitution.</td>
<td>Ch. 6, s. 12 of the Penal Code makes it an offence for a person to grant the right to use his or her premises to another when it is “wholly or to a substantial extent used for casual sexual relations in return for payment” because that person is “considered to have promoted the activity ….”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procuring, working collectively, and living on the avails of prostitution</td>
<td>Illegal</td>
<td>Illegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. 212 of the Criminal Code makes it an offence to procure a person to become a prostitute and to live wholly or in part on the avails of prostitution, including for sex workers who live wholly or in part on the avails of another sex worker’s prostitution.</td>
<td>Ch. 6, s. 12 of the Penal Code makes it an offence to promote or improperly financially exploit “a person’s engagement in casual sexual relations in return for payment.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling sexual services</td>
<td>Technically legal — as long as it happens in a private place</td>
<td>Legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If any related communication happens in public (e.g., a conversation or an ad in the paper or online), s. 213(1)(c) of the Criminal Code has been violated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying sexual services</td>
<td>Technically legal — as long as it happens in a private place</td>
<td>Illegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If any related communication happens in public, s. 213(1)(c) of the Criminal Code has been violated.</td>
<td>Ch. 6, s. 12 of the Penal Code makes it an offence for a person to obtain “a casual sexual relation in return for payment.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would the Swedish model be considered constitutional in Canada?

Comparing the Swedish model with Canada’s approach to sex work illustrates their similarities, including the fact that the Swedish model would not make any headway in addressing violence against sex workers and the violation of sex workers’ rights. Many of the reasons underpinning the Ontario courts’ invalidation of the challenged provisions in Canada’s Criminal Code would seem to apply under a Swedish model (see footnote 1 for a more detailed description of the cases). The table below compares the documented impact of key provisions of the Swedish model with the closest analogy in Canadian law, and assesses whether a hypothetical Swedish model would withstand constitutional scrutiny in Canada. The analysis is largely based on the Ontario courts’ findings in the Bedford case, many of which could be applied to the Swedish model.
### Canada’s approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Sweden’s approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Prohibition on keeping a common bawdy house</td>
<td><strong>VIOLATES RIGHT TO SECURITY OF THE PERSON</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In the Bedford case, the Ontario Court of Appeal found that the prohibition on “common bawdy-houses” limited sex workers’ security of the person.</strong></td>
<td>In Sweden, sex workers are forced to lie in order to rent premises, pressured to pay exorbitant rent and banned from hotels and other venues after police inform management of sex work on their property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The court said:</td>
<td>The limited exception in Sweden’s Penal Code for sex workers working <em>alone out of property they own</em> does not assist those sex workers who wish to work collectively or who do not own the property in which they work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The bawdy-house provisions prevent prostitutes from taking the basic safety precaution of moving indoors to locations under their control, which the application judge held is the safest way to sell sex. In this way, as the application judge found, the provisions dramatically impact on prostitutes’ security of the person.”</td>
<td>As in Canada, criminalizing indoor work undermines sex workers’ safety because it inhibits the screening of clients, who may not wish to disclose any identifying information for fear of criminal liability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prohibition on procuring, working collectively, and living on the avails of prostitution</td>
<td><strong>VIOLATES RIGHT TO SECURITY OF THE PERSON</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In the Bedford case, the Ontario Court of Appeal held that criminalizing activities that force sex workers to work in isolation materially contribute to a deprivation of their security of the person.</strong></td>
<td>Swedish law criminalizes those who “improperly financially exploit” sex workers, but makes no distinction between relationships that involve exploitation and those that do not. As a result, sex workers work in isolation and cannot work together, recommend customers to each other, advertise, or work from property they rent or where they cohabit with a partner, since that partner is likely to share part of any income derived from sex work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The court said that the prohibition on “living on the avails” of prostitution prevents sex workers from hiring staff who could keep them safe, and it could conversely increase the likelihood that sex workers would be exploited by “forcing them to seek protection from those who are willing to risk a charge under this provision.”</td>
<td>By preventing sex workers from working for or with or employing third parties, the prohibition denies sex workers control over their working conditions, limits their options on how they work and ultimately makes their work less safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Prohibition on buying sexual services</td>
<td><strong>VIOLATES RIGHT TO SECURITY OF THE PERSON</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The purchase of sex is not in itself illegal in Canada, but laws targeting clients have dangerous implications for sex workers. In Montréal, police sweeps targeting clients have led to dramatic increases in violence experienced by street sex workers, whose regular clients turn to sex workers working indoors where the risk of criminalization is lower. Street sex workers have less choice of clients as a result, are unable to assess if someone is a client or an aggressor, and are pressured to accept clients whom they would otherwise reject.</strong></td>
<td>When clients are criminalized by the prohibition on buying sex, sex workers face threats of violence and poor health because they are prevented from screening their clients, who are exposed to police scrutiny for such communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It also recognized that the provision violates sex workers’ security of the person by preventing them from screening potential customers for fear of arrest.</td>
<td>Since the passage of the Sex Purchase Act, sex workers who work on the street have less time and power to negotiate safer sex or to assess potential danger. They have also been displaced to more isolated locations. The provision renders sex workers more susceptible to violence by preventing them from taking basic safety precautions while they work.</td>
</tr>
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Sex Work Law Reform in Canada: Considering problems with the Nordic model
Rights and Reason: The Way Forward

In Canada and in Sweden, both approaches for regulating sex work violate sex workers’ security of the person (Section 7 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms). The Swedish model is harmful for sex workers because it denies them control over their working conditions and impedes their ability to practise their profession safely and without risk to their bodily integrity. This was recognized by the Global Commission on HIV and the Law, which released a report in 2012 denouncing the Swedish model. In the report, the Global Commission found that “[s]ince its enactment in 1999, the law has not improved — indeed, it has worsened — the lives of sex workers” and noted that “the sex trade may now be more violent.” There is also increasing evidence in Canada of the vicious consequences of client sweeps on sex workers, a foreseeable consequence should the Swedish model be applied in Canada.

Both approaches also entrench and exacerbate stigma against sex workers and constrain their access to legal recourse by institutionalizing an adversarial relationship between sex workers and the police. Sex workers who report a violent experience risk incriminating not only themselves but their employer, colleagues and clients, leading to a loss of work, income and potentially child custody. Reporting a violent incident may also mean that police harass and target a sex worker and the men she is in personal relationships with for arrest, because they assume that those men are her clients. Sex workers are consequently dissuaded from reporting violence against them, creating a climate of impunity which fosters and fuels further violence. This is especially true for sex workers who work on the street, and who already face horrific violence, stigma and disproportionate criminalization. Introducing the Swedish model in Canada would force sex workers on the street to continue to work in isolation in order to avoid their clients’ arrest.

The dangerous and potentially fatal consequences of criminalizing the purchase of sex outweigh any questionable benefits that might arise. The courts and Parliament owe a responsibility to sex workers to ensure that one deadly — and unconstitutional — regime is not replaced with another. Rather than imposing the Swedish model on sex workers in Canada, Parliament should meaningfully consult with sex workers about the best ways to protect their human rights and promote secure working conditions, which necessarily includes the repeal of the prostitution-related offences of the Criminal Code. This approach is a far more effective way of addressing exploitation in the sex industry than one already proven not to work.

Recommendations

- Parliament should repeal the section of the Criminal Code that makes it an offence to communicate in a public place for the purposes of prostitution (section 213).
- Parliament should repeal the bawdy-house sections of the Criminal Code (sections 210 and 211).
- Parliament should repeal the subsections of the procuring sections of the Criminal Code that relate to bawdy-houses (subsection 212(1)(b), (c), (e), and (f)) and to procuring more generally (subsection 212(1)(a), (d) and (h)).
- Parliament should repeal the section of the Criminal Code that makes it an offence to live on the avails of prostitution (subsection 212(1)(j)).
- Parliament should repeal the reverse-onus subsection of the Criminal Code as it applies to living on the avails of prostitution (subsection 212(3)).

References

1 In Ontario (Bedford v. Canada, 2010 ONSC 4264), the Superior Court of Justice struck down three provisions of the Criminal Code in 2010 which make it illegal for anyone to keep a common bawdy-house (s. 210); live on the avails of prostitution (s. 212(1)(j)); and communicate for the purpose of prostitution in public (s. 213(1)(c)). The Court held that these provisions infringe sex workers’ rights to liberty, security of the person and freedom of expression pursuant to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Two years later, the Ontario Court of Appeal partially upheld this ruling (Canada (Attorney General) v. Bedford, 2012 ONCA 186) by invalidating the prohibition on common bawdy-houses; qualifying the prohibition on living on the avails of prostitution by limiting it to “circumstances of exploitation”; and maintaining the prohibition on communicating in a public place for purposes of prostitution. In British Columbia (B.C.), an organization of sex workers (SWUAV) and a former sex worker (Sheri Kiselbach) are challenging the constitutionality of Criminal Code provisions dealing with sex work. The case was dismissed at trial because the judge held that the group did not have “public interest standing” to bring the case to court. However, B.C.’s Court of Appeal overturned this decision and in 2012, the Supreme Court of Canada
affirmed the group’s right to challenge those laws (Canada (Attorney General) v. Downtown Eastside Sex Workers United Against Violence Society, 2012 SCC 45).


3 Penal Code of Sweden (Law 1998:393), Ch. 6, Section 8, accessible at www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/15/14/61/e97ee975.pdf.


7 This chart is adapted from one developed by Katrina Pacey, Litigation Director at Pivot Legal Society.


9 Bedford v. Canada (Attorney General), 2012 ONCA 186 at para 244.

10 Émilie Laliberté, Executive Director of Stella, personal communication, August 1, 2012.

11 Frédérique Chabot, POWER Board of Directors, personal communication, August 2, 2012.

12 This decision is being challenged before the Supreme Court of Canada in 2013.

13 The Global Commission on HIV and the Law was tasked with analyzing the interaction among the legal environment, human rights and HIV, and with making recommendations for rights-based law and policy in the context of HIV. See Global Commission on HIV and the Law, Risks, Rights, and Health, July 2012, p. 38.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Jenn Clamen for reviewing and providing input on this policy brief; and to Pye Jakobsson for reviewing the documented impacts of the Swedish model in a longer essay on which this policy brief is based.
BRIEFING PAPER

#02 The criminalisation of clients: a summary
The criminalisation of clients: a summary

The criminalisation of sex workers’ clients is often claimed to be part of a new legal framework to eradicate sex work and trafficking by ‘ending demand’. In 1999, Sweden criminalised sex workers’ clients and maintained the criminalisation of third parties such as brothel-owners, managers, security and support staff. The individual selling of sex remained legal. This model is frequently referred to as the ‘Swedish’, ‘Nordic’ or ‘End Demand’ model. There is great pressure in many countries to advance such legal and policy measures. The damaging consequences of this model on sex workers’ health, rights and living conditions are rarely discussed.

Impact on sex workers of ‘end demand’ laws

The premise of criminalising buying sex is that clients’ demand for sex is responsible for women entering and remaining in sex work. While male and transgender sex workers are overlooked in this analysis, female sex workers are frequently conflated with children or ‘pimps’ and traffickers in what are often anti-migrant narratives. Female sex workers are construed as victims with no agency – and as harmful to all women, family and the nation at large. The resulting agenda is summed up by Pye Jakobsson, a Swedish sex worker: “We want to save you. And if you don’t appreciate it, we will punish you.”

In many countries, legal measures aiming to eliminate sex work have been implemented for well over a century. Though their theoretical framework and justification is different than in Sweden, sex workers’ experiences of the criminalisation of clients in these different contexts add to the growing body of data about the lived consequences of such measures. Laws advanced to end demand impact upon sex workers in the following ways:

1 This is the case in Sweden where sex workers were not criminalised before the criminalisation of clients. Clients are criminalised under the Swedish Penal Code Chapter 11 (previously under the Sex Purchase Act, 1999). Laws requiring a landlord to terminate the lease of a tenant (or others) uses the premises for sex work include: Penal Code chapter 6 s.12.1; Land Code 12 s. 42.1.9; Condominium Act 7 s. 28.8. Brothelkeepers and procurers are criminalised under the Penal Code chapter 12 s. 12. In S. Dodillet & P. Östergren (2011), The Swedish Sex Purchase Act: Claimed Success and Documented Effects, paper presented at Decriminalizing Prostitution and Beyond: Practical Experience and Challenges International Conference, The Hague.


3 See D. Hughes (2004), The Demand: Where Sex Trafficking Begins, presentation at the US Embassy of the Holy See, Rome. Hughes, affiliated with Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) states that: “The exploiters, including traffickers, pimps, brothel owners, organized crime members, and corrupt officials make-up what is known as the sex industry.”


5 Kulick, op. cit.

6 HCLU (2010), Interview with Pye Jakobsson, SWAN, Retrieved from www.swannet.org/node/1512
Increased repression of sex workers

Most countries that have introduced legislation criminalising clients have maintained or increased the criminalisation sex workers.

For example,

- This is true of South Korea, South Africa and Lithuania. In Illinois (US), the ‘end demand’ coalition successfully lobbied for legislation that both criminalises clients and elevates the selling of sex to a felony offence, punishable by imprisonment up to a year.

- Even in countries where selling sex is decriminalised, sex workers can be criminalised under laws against brothel keeping and profiting from prostitution if they work together indoors and pay each other for rent or any part of the expenses.

- In some countries, sex workers are disproportionately targeted for arrest under unrelated laws. For example, in Sweden and Norway, though selling sex is not illegal, significant numbers of sex workers are arrested and deported for illegal immigration.

- The policing of clients on the street subjects sex workers to invasive searches, surveillance and high levels of harassment in their homes and work places.

Increased violence and discrimination

- Police surveillance patrols aimed at locating clients drive sex workers on the street into less public areas where they are more vulnerable to violence. Since client criminalisation, sex workers on the streets in Sweden have reported greater competition, declining prices and harsher conditions.

- Fewer clients on the street can force sex workers to accept aggressive or drunken clients. Violence against sex workers has increased following anti-client measures.

- Since exposing oneself as a sex worker to police often leads to harassment, sex workers seldom report incidents of violence or coercion. Norwegian police report that the Swedish model has made it harder to gather evidence – from sex workers and clients – against people who have coerced or exploited sex workers.

- Sex workers in Sweden who took part in a government sponsored study reported a significant increase in stigma and discrimination after the passing of anti-client measures.
### Decreased access to health and social services

- Due to fewer clients as a result of client criminalisation, many street-based sex workers compensate for loss of earnings by not using condoms.\(^{18}\) Indoor venues, such as massage parlours refuse to keep condoms on the premises since they can be used as evidence of sex work.\(^{19}\)
- Increased mobility and the displacement of sex workers to hidden venues impedes provision of health and services to sex workers. In Korea and Sweden, health authorities have expressed concern about the negative outcomes of laws on sex workers’ health and safety.\(^{20}\)

There is strong evidence to suggest that peer-driven and rights-based programmes aimed at sex workers are the most effective HIV prevention strategy.\(^{21}\) A framework that equates sex work with violence against women prevents state support for such programmes and excludes specific health and social services for male and transgender sex workers.

### Decreased access to housing and shelter

- Laws against buying sex, profiting from sex work or renting space for sex work render landlords and hotel owners liable if they rent rooms to sex workers. In many countries, police order landlords to evict suspected sex workers without notice. This compromises sex workers’ access to safe housing, which is crucial to preventing violence and protecting their health.\(^{22}\)

In sum, there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that legal measures criminalising clients, brothel-owners, managers and support staff within the sex industry eliminate or significantly reduce sex work. The available evidence suggests instead that such measures increase repression, violence and discrimination against sex workers. This diminishes sex workers’ access to health care, housing and social services. The criminalisation of clients is not a human rights-based response to sex work.
The Swedish Model of criminalising sex work since 1999 - Briefing Paper

What has changed and what has stayed the same since the Swedish Government criminalised sex work over a decade ago?

Australian Sex Workers Association

Rose Alliance

This briefing paper resulted from a visit by Pye Jakobsson, sex worker representative, Rose Alliance, (Sweden) to Scarlet Alliance, National Office, Redfern, 10th June 2011

Sweden sees itself as the perfect society and decided over a decade ago that they no longer tolerated sex work, drug taking or HIV transmission. They criminalised everything associated with the behaviours of sex workers and drug users, and the non-disclosure of HIV status. In addition to the laws against the possession and sale of drugs, it is also a criminal offence to take drugs or have them in your system, as a result the jailing of people who take drugs is common. Sex workers in Sweden face systemic and extreme social marginalisation, and people living with HIV fear arrest and jail.

The following are outcomes of the zero tolerance policies in Sweden:

- There is only one needle and syringe program in Sweden, run by the Swedish Drug User Union. It has to operate in a grey area of the law. Doctors are not allowed to prescribe injecting equipment to people who are suspected of using drugs.

- The Government funded condom distribution programmes in Sweden only target men who have sex with men. Local councils are meant to distribute condoms to sex workers, but in reality it only happens in the City of Malmo.

- Sweden has the highest rate of HIV-related convictions per capita in the world (as measured by UNAIDS). This means Sweden jails more people living with HIV than any other country in the world.

- There is no anonymous STI testing for sex workers in Sweden.

- Health care is meant to be universal in Sweden; however sex workers are treated very differently to other people.

- Sweden’s pimping laws target everyone. Even the son of a sex worker has been charged with pimping because he was not paying rent to his mother.

- Sex workers choose to work alone in order to avoid the pimping laws. This marginalises sex workers from their families, friends and colleagues.

- The anti-client laws are used maliciously against sex workers. For example ex-partners, neighbours and others who may wish to harass a sex worker will use the laws to do so.

- The estimated number of clients in Sweden is the same now as it was prior to the criminalisation of behaviours related to sex work.

- The estimated number of sex workers in Sweden is the same now as it was prior to the criminalisation of behaviours related to sex work.

- There is a claim that street based sex work numbers dropped in Sweden after the introduction of the laws in 1999.
- However it coincided with the rise in the use of social networking to contact clients, something popular among street based sex workers in the cold country of Sweden.

- Sex workers have lost their children as a result of the law. They are seen as unfit to be parents if they do not repent and leave sex work.

- Newspapers won’t take advertisements from sex workers.

- Locally run sex worker advertising websites in Sweden have been closed down.

- A locally run website owner has gone to jail for two years simply for running a website for sex workers.

- A Thai sex worker working with a visiting friend was charged for 1.5 years in prison for pimping.

- Isolated sex workers don’t come forward to services.

- Social work services for sex workers are contingent on sex workers breaking down and saying that they dislike their work, they don’t want to do sex work, and they are willing to enter therapy to stop doing sex work.

- When sex workers do not denounce their profession they are seen as having mental health issues. They are viewed as mentally unstable because they view sex work as a job that does not victimise them.

- The laws view sex work as a 100% victimising profession.

- The law sends a message that no sex worker can ever choose to do sex work.

- Sex workers have been fired from the health sector (ie from being nurses or public health officials), from the education sector (ie fired from being teachers) and from the police force.

- Police resources are spent on following clients to sex workers homes, staking out such homes, and waiting for the “event” to take place so that the client can be charged.

- Police call landlords and urge them to evict the sex worker or else the landlord will be charged with pimping.

- Police tell neighbours about them having a sex worker in their building.

- Police see sex workers as undesirable criminals, and sex workers are the target of heavy surveillance.

- Human trafficking is actually impossible to identify in Sweden, because it is seen as the same as sex work.

- There is a massive amount of stigma and discrimination affecting sex workers lives as a result of the laws, the policies, the pervasive idea that no sex workers could actually want to do sex work, and the treatment of those who do want to do sex work as having a “false consciousness.”

- There have been no beneficial outcomes for sex workers, drug users or people living with HIV as a result of the Swedish approaches to any of these populations.

**Sex workers in Sweden oppose the laws that have criminalised their workplaces. Sex workers in Australia oppose such laws being implemented in Australia.**