



# STRATEGIC PLAN

for 2016-2019



## ICRSE'S Vision

ICRSE's vision is of a world where sex work is recognised as work; where all sex workers are respected and their rights are upheld; and where gender, racial, social and economic equality and freedom of movement are a reality enabling individuals to start, continue or leave sex work safely, and free from violence and coercion.

## ICRSE'S Mission

ICRSE is a network of sex worker organisations and their allies that work together to support the development of national and international law, policy and practice, which respects and upholds the human and labour rights of sex workers throughout Europe and Central Asia.

### ICRSE's Core Values:

- Recognise sex work as work
- Support sex worker self-determination and self-organising
- Oppose the criminalisation of sex work



## Contents

5	I. Executive Summary
6	1. Background
6	1.1 Overall Political Context
8	1.2 Specific Context
11	1.3 Sex Workers and Sex Workers' Organisations
12	2. About the International Committee on the Rights of Sex workers in Europe (ICRSE)
12	2.1 History
14	2.2 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)
16	3. ICRSE Vision, Mission and Values
16	3.1 ICRSE's Vision
16	3.2 The ICRSE Mission
17	3.3 ICRSE Core Values
17	4. Strategic Directions, Goals and Objectives
23	5. Annual Planning and Revisions of the Strategic Plan
23	6. Funding and Human Resources
24	Acknowledgements
25	References



## Dear Friends, Colleagues, Supporters,

On behalf of the ICRSE Board and Secretariat, we are pleased to present the 2016-2019 ICRSE Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan lays the vision, aims and objectives of the International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe (ICRSE), following an in-depth, participatory consultation with key partners, including ICRSE members, Executive Committee, Secretariat and external stakeholders, including donors and partner organisations.

The Strategic Plan builds on the achievements of ICRSE in the first ten years of its existence, whilst following up and contributing to the goals laid out in the 2011-2014 Strategic Plan. Importantly, this Strategic Plan reflects the ambition of our members, staff, and partners to strengthen the network as the regional platform for advocating for the health, human and labour rights of all sex workers in Europe and Central Asia and reaffirms our commitment to ensuring that the voices and experiences of sex workers lead reform.

The Strategic Plan was fundamentally produced in partnership with sex workers in our region. Please accept our gratitude for being part of the ICRSE's efforts over the past ten years and for your contribution to this Strategic Plan. As those who founded ICRSE declared, "Sex workers' rights are human rights", and we will continue to fight alongside our allies until this truth becomes a reality for all sex workers throughout Europe and Central Asia.

In solidarity,  
P.G. Macioti  
Anastacia Ryan  
Co-Convenors of the ICRSE Board



## I. Executive Summary

As we marked the 10th anniversary of ICRSE in 2015, the reasons for its establishment and existence were more vivid than ever. Sex workers in the European and Central Asian region continue to face severe human rights abuses in the context of increased criminalisation and repression. This Strategic Plan fundamentally aims to address these challenges at regional level through engagement with European policy-making processes and importantly through supporting organisations at country level to mobilise and support national-level advocacy and activism.

ICRSE was formed by sex workers and continues as a sex worker-led network, a principle that shapes the networks' goals and informs all activities undertaken.

This document outlines a robust capacity-building process of ICRSE that would support the organisation in implementing its mission and achieving the strategic goals and objectives specified in this Strategic Plan. Focus is also given to the development of ICRSE's organisational structure and governance processes, aimed at securing the transparency and sustainability of the network.

For the upcoming four-year period ICRSE set the following Strategic Goals:

**Strategic Goal 1:** ICRSE is a respected partner in the European political arena and national legislatures and effectively advocates for the human and labour rights of sex workers.

**Strategic Goal 2:** A cohesive and vibrant sex worker-led movement in Europe which vocally advocates for the human and labour rights of sex workers.

**Strategic Goal 3:** ICRSE is a strong and sustainable network that provides expertise and guidance in the fight for sex workers' rights throughout Europe.



## 1. Background

### 1.1 Overall Political Context

The elections for the European Parliament in 2014 were a staggering success for the far-right parties from across Europe<sup>1</sup>. As a result, they represent a turning point in European politics that already have significant impact within the national politics of EU member countries as well. Although in significant decline, the mainstream political groups (the centre-right European People's Party, centre-left Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, and Alliance of Liberals and Democrats in Europe) are still the largest political groups in the EU Parliament and are forming a solid majority<sup>2</sup>. Nevertheless, it is expected that the results of these elections are going to lead to even more conservative policies, not only at the EU level but in the member states as well. In the EU Parliament this is due to the obvious rise of the far-right parties, whereas on the level of member states this is due to centre-right parties aiming at attracting the electorate of far-right parties in their respective national elections; the rhetoric and politics are becoming even more conservative.

Similar negative trends can be observed in the rest of Europe. Human rights work is under serious threat in several Eastern European and Central Asian countries, where civil society spaces are shrinking rapidly. In Russia, a foreign agent law was introduced that requires non-profit organisations that receive foreign donations and engage in 'political activity' to register as foreign agents. Similarly, crackdowns on civil society and arbitrary refusals of assemblies mirror increasing governmental control over the right to freedom of speech and assembly in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Belarus.

Furthermore, following the propaganda law introduced in Russia in 2013 that prohibits the 'propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations among minors', there have been several legislative attempts to restrict freedom of expression, association and assembly of LGBTI groups in several countries in Central Asia.



These political developments together with the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and the Middle East, resulting in constantly increasing migration from those countries towards the EU, have significantly increased xenophobia and racist and anti-migration sentiments as well as led to more repressive policies and practices in EU member states.

Nevertheless, even in this political environment, credible advocacy groups manage to push through their agendas and affect positive changes for their constituents. The example of the Roadmap against Homophobia and Discrimination on Grounds of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, also known as the Lunacek Report<sup>3</sup> passed by the EU Parliament, motivates rights-based groups to further enhance their efforts for the benefit of their constituents and target groups.

A lot of efforts are invested in local and national-based advocacy. However, political trends on the international level are heavily impacting both national debates and national policy-making processes.

The global financial crisis from 2008 resulted in many countries falling into recession and prompted many governments to implement a range of welfare reforms and austerity policies. In many countries, the relationship between work and poverty has changed, with work no longer guaranteeing an exit from poverty. Also, employment patterns have changed considerably over the past decade. Full-time, stable employment contracts represent less than one in four jobs. Meanwhile, precarious employment is characterised by work that is unstable, unprotected and increasingly unable to sustain individuals and families. Reports from both OECD<sup>4</sup> and ILO<sup>5</sup> are advocating for measures to fight inequalities. The OECD report shows that today non-standard work (comprising temporary, part-time and self-employment) represents one third of employment in OECD countries. Poverty rates are higher among temporary and self-employed workers and an increased number of workers only have access to low-quality jobs. Moreover, the burdens of increasing economic competition are unevenly distributed and a disproportionate burden is being shouldered by an increasing number of poor and disenfranchised women, resulting in the



“feminization of poverty”<sup>6</sup>. Surveys show that up to three quarters of temporary positions in the UK are filled by women and part-time jobs are typically low-paid, with fewer prospects for promotion or access to training.

## 1.2 Specific Context

Sex workers in Europe face widespread stigmatisation and criminalisation, including the criminalisation of third parties and penalisation of their clients. This is accompanied by very limited recognition of their human rights, including health and labour rights. Recognition of sex work as work and respect for sex workers’ fundamental rights varies from country to country, but there is an increased tendency to criminalise the different aspects of sex work, including clients and third parties directly or indirectly involved in sex work.

### The Conflation of Sex Work and Trafficking

The conflation of sex work and trafficking remains a serious issue for all sex workers, but particularly migrant sex workers who are often targeted with anti-migration laws, policies and practices of detention and deportation. This conflation leaves migrant sex workers and those who have been trafficked for the purposes of sex work fearful of state attention, isolated, vulnerable to violence and without vital services and protection. A more aggressive anti-trafficking stance has seen several countries such as the UK and France adopt a more punitive approach towards sex work, including raids on brothels, apartments and outdoor working places in the name of anti-trafficking rescues. These processes have led to the detention and/or deportation of many migrant sex workers.

### Criminalisation of Clients

Known as ‘End demand’ or the ‘Swedish Model’, the criminalisation of clients in Europe was first implemented in Sweden in 1999 with the stated goal to reduce prostitution (understood as violence against women) and



trafficking (defined as a criminal activity and violation of human rights). Many countries have since then considered, passed and sometimes rejected similar bills.

In 2005, Lithuania penalised clients whilst retaining penalisation of sex workers. In 2009, Norway criminalised the purchase of sex whilst retaining other laws that directly affect sex workers, such as strict pimping laws. 'Operation Homeless' in Norway threatened landlords with pimping charges if they did not evict suspected sex workers from their accommodation.

In France, a law was voted for by the National Assembly in 2014 before being put on hold by the Senate. The Senate Special Committee removed the amendment on criminalisation of clients after a massive outcry from sex workers' and 100 other organisations.

Northern Ireland was the first country in the UK to pass a similar law in October 2014 despite academic research denouncing it. The criminalisation of clients became effective in June 2015. A Bill proposal in Scotland did not receive cross-party support and was not debated (2013), whilst an amendment to the Modern Slavery Bill in the UK Parliament that proposed the criminalisation of clients to reduce trafficking was rejected.

The European Parliament voted in February 2014 in favour of a non-binding resolution on prostitution and sexual exploitation ('Report on sexual exploitation and prostitution and its impact on gender equality', proposed by MEP Mary Honeyball) that encouraged member states to criminalise the clients of sex workers.

### **Sex Worker Criminalisation, Repression and Intersectional Stigma**

Whilst the criminalisation of clients as a legal framework has not readily been taken up in all European countries, the legacy of this type of approach can be seen in the general increase in criminalisation of sex workers. This criminalisation can be seen through the implementation of mu-



municipal by-laws and/or police practices that arbitrarily target sex workers. Additionally, in numerous countries of the region, selling sexual services is directly penalised in accordance with criminal law (e.g. in Albania) or administrative code (e.g. in Lithuania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Slovenia). These repressive legal frameworks render sex workers particularly isolated and unsafe. Left without control over their working conditions, criminalised sex workers are thus exposed too often to violence and harassment by both state and non-state actors.

Even in those European countries where sex work is legalised or regulated, sex workers are targeted by restrictive zoning ordinances or – as in Austria, Greece, Hungary, and Latvia – must undergo mandatory health checks, which represent a human rights violation and a form of punishment. In Germany and the Netherlands, both pioneers in adopting more liberal (but regulatory) prostitution laws, debates on rolling back those laws are frequently affected by prejudices and extreme stigma towards sex workers as ‘vectors of disease’ in need of regulation and control. In Tajikistan, HIV testing enforced by the police during raids echoes a similar human rights violation to those in Macedonia in 2008 and in Greece in 2011.

Intersecting laws that criminalise certain behaviours, for example same-sex relationships and drug use, also affect sex workers across Europe and Central Asia. Restrictive regulations framing drug use as a criminal offence rather than as a public health issue (as is the case in Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine), or penalising same-sex relationships (through criminal laws, as in Northern Cyprus, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, or laws prohibiting ‘promotion of homosexuality’ introduced recently in Moldova and Russia) negatively affect the living and working conditions of sex workers who use drugs and cisgender male and transgender sex workers. Through this intersection of laws, these communities of sex workers face high levels of state harassment and prosecution.



### 1.3 Sex workers and sex worker organisations

The levels and extent of criminalisation and stigma towards sex workers across Europe and Central Asia make sex worker organising difficult for many reasons. These factors often lead to a diminished self-belief among sex workers as political actors able to affect change. Despite this, sex workers, individually and collectively, continue in the face of repression to advocate for their rights at community, national and regional level.

Sex worker organisations have, for a long time, developed across the region and undoubtedly affected change at the policy and practice levels. Furthermore, some sex worker academics have utilised their platforms to speak out about human rights violations against sex workers and encouraged others to research sex work from a non-moralistic stance in order to build evidence that mitigates harm to sex workers.

Sex workers and their organisations have also been pushing for meaningful involvement in all forums of debate and discussion that affect their lives, and this principle has gained momentum particularly in the field of research and health programming.

Sex workers continue to develop strategic alliances with other rights-based groups and movements both at national and regional levels. As significant outcomes, severe rights violations and other abuses experienced by sex workers have been widely discussed and criticised by some of the best-known international human rights organisations, including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

Sex worker-led organisations, where they exist at national level, range from informal groups to well-established legal entities and, with exceptions, they too often carry out their work with very little funding. As each national context presents different issues for sex worker advocacy, it is vital that the regional network is a strong and representative force in amplifying the voices, experiences and advocacy work of the many sex workers and their organisations throughout Europe and Central Asia.



## 2. About the International Committee on the Rights of Sex workers in Europe (ICRSE)

### 2.1 History

The International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe (ICRSE) was founded in Amsterdam in 2004 with the initial purpose to organise the Brussels Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labour and Migration. The conference took place in October 2005 in Brussels with the participation of 120 sex workers and 80 allies from 30 European countries, and resulted in the development of the Declaration on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe and the ICRSE Manifesto and Demands. These documents have served ever since as key advocacy tools for the European and global sex workers' movement.

ICRSE now operates as a regional network for sex workers' rights in Western, Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia and the membership is currently comprised of 80 organisations in 29 countries, as well as 150 individuals. Member organisations include sex worker-led organisations, service providers, LGBT rights organisations, and harm reduction organisations. Individuals include mainly sex workers, human rights activists, and academics.

Sex worker-led organisations hold voting rights to elect members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee, as regulated by the statutes, is responsible for the organisation and management of ICRSE. The majority in the Executive Committee is comprised of sex workers (current and former) and has a variety of policy, programmatic and technical expertise. As elected representatives of the network, the Executive Committee holds responsibility for the strategic decision making within ICRSE and is tasked with overseeing the implementation of the network's strategic goals and objectives (developed in a participative manner with inclusion of the wider membership). The work of the executive committee is on a voluntary basis.



The operational issues and the day-to-day management of ICRSE are conducted by the Secretariat. For the previous period there were only three part-time employees at the Secretariat; however, from the second quarter of 2015, following the award of a grant from a new donor, the Secretariat personnel has increased to six members. In addition, the level of engagement for the key positions has increased as well.

The change in the key personnel and establishment of several internal procedures that have strengthened the transparency and legitimacy of ICRSE, together with the intensified focus on strategic development of the network and its portfolio, led to steady growth after a period of stagnancy.

In 2011, ICRSE developed its Strategy for the period 2011-2014. Later, in 2012, the website [www.sexworkeurope.org](http://www.sexworkeurope.org) was created and email communication through the mailing list has further enabled activists, organisations and academics to share information and intelligence about local and regional policy developments related to sex work, and to coordinate reactions to these developments and human rights abuses throughout Europe.

In July 2013, ICRSE coordinated a day of action to protest the murders of Dora and Jasmine, sex workers who were murdered in Turkey and Sweden. In less than a week, sex workers and allies organised events in 36 cities on four continents, and 22 organisations issued statements of condemnation.

In the period of January–February 2014, ICRSE obtained the signatures of 96 academics and researchers as well as 560 organisations critical of the Honeyball resolution in the European Parliament. This mobilisation significantly raised the profile of the network in the EU policy-making arena and amongst its membership and partner organisations.

ICRSE's activities also focus on providing member organisations and allies with various advocacy tools on issues relevant to sex worker communities



in Europe. These include “Hands Off Our Clients! Advocacy and Activism Toolkit against the Criminalisation of Clients”, published in 2013, a community report mapping the main forms of structural violence and institutional oppression experienced by sex workers in the region, published in 2015, and most recently the briefing paper “Underserved. Overpoliced. Invisibilised. LGBT Sex Workers Do Matter”, which initiates a series of advocacy documents focusing on the intersection of the sex workers’ rights struggle and other rights as social struggles, such as those by members of LGBTI communities, migrants, workers, or women.

## 2.2 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)

The process for development of this strategic plan included an assessment of current internal strengths and weaknesses of ICRSE as well as the external opportunities and threats as seen by member organisations and other key stakeholders. An outline from the process is presented below:

### Strengths

- Organisation by sex workers and for sex workers
- Networking and information sharing
- Representative presence of sex worker organisations and allies
- Diverse membership
- Pan-European nature of ICRSE
- Dedicated and professional personnel
- Recognised amongst decision-making bodies and rights-based groups



## Weaknesses

- Significant lack of financial resources
- Lack of sufficient human resources
- Limited reach amongst more marginalised sex workers, in particular migrants and sex workers who do not speak English
- Limited capacities for advocacy at the EU level
- Geographical coverage (from Iceland to Kyrgyzstan)
- Insufficient face-to-face meetings between members
- Limited media coverage of actions and initiatives
- Different levels of ownership and commitment amongst different members

## Opportunities

- Potential for rapid advocacy (especially on regional level)
- EU funding mechanisms
- Close collaboration, partnership and division of labour with SWAN (Sex Workers' Rights Advocacy Network)
- Developing watchdog capacities
- Empowerment of members for national and local-level advocacy
- Community mobilisation on regional level (and support for member organisations on national and local levels)

## Threats

- Financial sustainability of the network
- Political trends across Europe:
  - Criminalisation of sex workers
  - Criminalisation of clients
  - Anti-migration policies & practices and conflation of trafficking, sex work & migration
  - Gentrification (displacement of street-based sex workers & closure of indoor workplaces)
  - Transphobia & violence against trans sex workers
- Increased stigma and prejudice



In general, the political tendencies are in favour of more conservative policies. In the last European Parliament elections, the booming of the far-right parties led to a situation where member parties of the European People's Party turned to more conservative policy-making in their respective national legislations in order to attract some of the extreme-right voters.

As a consequence of the abovementioned trends, sex workers are facing increased stigma and discrimination. In addition the debate on 'abolition' of prostitution has reinforced some of the negative sentiments against sex workers in general, advocating for blanket legislation based on morality at the expense of recognition of sex worker agency.

### **3. ICRSE Vision, Mission and Values**

#### **3.1 ICRSE's Vision**

ICRSE's vision is of a world where sex work is recognised as work; where all sex workers are respected and their rights are upheld; and where gender, racial, social and economic equality and freedom of movement are a reality enabling individuals to start, continue or leave sex work safely, and free from violence and coercion.

#### **3.2 The ICRSE Mission**

ICRSE is a network of sex worker organisations and their allies that work together to support the development of national and international law, policy and practice, which respects and upholds the human and labour rights of sex workers throughout Europe and Central Asia.



### 3.3 ICRSE Core Values

- Recognise sex work as work
- Support sex worker self-determination and self-organising
- Oppose the criminalisation of sex work

## 4. Strategic Directions, Goals and Objectives

### Strategic Direction 1: Advocacy and Campaigning

Driven by the needs of its members and in line with the ICRSE Declaration of the Rights of Sex Workers and the ICRSE Manifesto and Demands, ICRSE will continue to step up its advocacy and campaigning efforts at national and regional levels. With the need for support for sex workers ever increasing and the worrying political trends developing across Europe, advocacy will continue to be the primary focus for ICRSE and maximum efforts will be invested in the next four years for positive changes to be achieved in policies and practices regulating and affecting sex workers.

**STRATEGIC GOAL 1: ICRSE is a respected partner in the European political arena and national legislatures and effectively advocates for the human and labour rights of sex workers.**

#### Associated Strategic Objectives:

##### **1.1 To develop a four-year targeted ICRSE Advocacy Strategy in line with member priorities**

The complex policy-making system of the EU and the Council of Europe requires ICRSE to have a detailed, systematic advocacy strategy for engagement at this level. The advocacy strategy should also incorporate the support provided to advocacy campaigns and initiatives by member organisations at national and local levels. The plan should be realistically



ambitious both in terms of the set goals and objectives and in terms of planned resources for its implementation. The plan will also entail detailed procedures and actions related to media and public relations.

### **1.2 To monitor relevant policies and political shifts that may impact sex work in member countries and at national and international levels**

ICRSE should continue to strengthen its watchdog capabilities across the network to effectively respond to negative policy shifts with evidence-based recommendations and campaigns. ICRSE should continue to develop the four pillars of a successful advocate: legitimacy, credibility, transparency and accountability.

### **1.3 To build strategic alliances with relevant organisations, networks and rights-based movements**

With inclusiveness being a key to success in advocacy, gaining as much support as possible is crucial. ICRSE will map a wide range of potential partners and allies amongst civil society actors as well as amongst MEPs and other political figures. Strategic partnerships will be explored with rights-based groups and also possibilities for creation of an inter-parliamentary lobby group within the European Parliament should be explored.

### **1.4 To identify and lead regional campaigns**

Within the framework of this strategic plan and following the development of the advocacy strategy ICRSE will select priority issues between 2016-2019 that will be tackled with regional advocacy initiatives and campaigns. The selection will be conducted in a participative and transparent process involving members.

### **1.5 To provide support to at least three national-level advocacy campaigns/initiatives**

ICRSE will support national-level campaigns through the provision of advocacy tools required, capacity building and training with members where



appropriate, and upon request ICRSE will actively lobby the national and local decision makers alongside the national member group. All member campaigns will be amplified by the ICRSE media platforms, including the website and social media outlets.

## **Strategic Direction 2: Strengthening ICRSE Membership**

ICRSE plays a unique role among sex-worker led organisations throughout Europe. As highlighted in the survey conducted during the development process of this strategic plan, this is one of the key strengths of ICRSE that should be built upon.

Being recognised as a sex worker-led and member-driven network, ICRSE will invest resources to develop, expand and organise its membership base. To strengthen the membership of ICRSE, objectives will focus on the expansion of membership and the strengthening of existing and new communication channels between members and on the improvement of the ICRSE Secretariat's response to members' requests for support. A continuous process will be developed and maintained that will seek to identify changing needs of ICRSE members and ensure a timely response by ICRSE within available resources.

**STRATEGIC GOAL 2: A cohesive and vibrant sex worker-led movement in Europe which vocally advocates for the human and labour rights of sex workers.**

### **Associated Strategic Objectives:**

#### **2.1 To increase the membership and actively encourage membership applications from countries in which ICRSE doesn't currently have members**

Interviews with members and key stakeholders as part of this strategic planning process noted the importance of maintaining a strong, large membership that is predominately sex worker-led. ICRSE will continue to



advertise membership encouraging new applications particularly in countries where ICRSE currently doesn't have members. The process of reaching out to new and emerging sex worker organisations and collectives is also vital in ensuring ICRSE is accessible to newer groups who may otherwise be wary of regional activism.

## **2.2 To maintain and improve effective communication mechanisms for members through in-country meetings and online tools**

ICRSE will apply a proactive approach when communicating with members and enabling communication between members for knowledge sharing and strategising. Aside from the existing communication platforms there will be an updated communication strategy produced that will engage with members to identify other useful communication tools, and a concentrated effort will be made to increase the multilingualism of the ICRSE communication channels. ICRSE will also strengthen information sharing between members through the organisation of regular regional meetings and conventions.

## **2.3 To establish and maintain a tiered membership structure and associated membership communication**

As ICRSE has different types of membership available, a tiered membership structure will be formalised and reflected on the website.

## **2.4 To mobilise members' joint action on arising issues that affect sex workers nationally, regionally and globally**

One of the key strengths of ICRSE as highlighted in the process of this plan's development is the ability of the regional network to mobilise members from across the region to support national and regional campaigns. ICRSE will continue to mobilise members for joint action on arising campaigns and responses by providing the necessary tools and support for members to engage.



## **2.5 To build the capacity of member groups according to their needs as identified in this strategic planning process**

Members underlined the importance of thematic and regular face-to-face meetings that are expected to have multiple benefits including increased motivation, opportunities for knowledge and experience sharing as well as needs identification and prioritisation. ICRSE will continue to organise and facilitate these meetings in-country and use capacity building funds to organise and disseminate in-country workshops and trainings in line with members' needs and requests for support.

### **Strategic Direction 3: Sustainable Capacity Building**

In order to be able to implement its mission and to achieve its goals and objectives, ICRSE must develop its own organisational capacities to ensure the network is transparent, accountable and sustainable. The network has been chronically underfunded, understaffed and under-resourced yet the personal motivation and enthusiasm of individuals (staff, consultants, volunteers and members) have made possible the achievements to date. However, in order to build on this, ICRSE needs systematic organisational strengthening that will ensure that the networks' capacities, knowledge and skills are developed and accountability to members is maintained.

**STRATEGIC GOAL 3: ICRSE is a sustainable network that provides leadership and guidance in European sex workers' activism.**

#### **Associated Strategic Objectives:**

### **3.1 Strategic governance documents are developed, adopted and in operation**

ICRSE will formalise the processes in the organisation through finalisation of key organisational documents that will ensure:



- Functional and decentralised organisational structure with effective separation of steering and executive functions
- Regulated rights and responsibilities of all persons involved in the network
- Participatory decision-making procedures developed for Board and members

### **3.2 Organisational and HR capacities are adequately developed and sustained**

ICRSE will conduct an assessment on the HR needs associated with implementing this strategic plan. Furthermore, a plan will be developed to ensure continuous capacity and skills development of ICRSE staff and consultants that ensures the strategic goals and objectives are met through creative and successful activities. ICRSE will also capitalise on the enthusiasm of volunteers to get more involved with projects and activities by mobilising volunteers around specific projects that would benefit from input, for example community translation. ICRSE will revise and update the procedures for financial and administrative work as well as for archiving and storing. The operational plans will include provision of adequate space, office and IT equipment.

### **3.3 Fundraising strategy developed and implemented**

A fundraising team consisting of members from the Secretariat and Executive Committee will develop – with a fundraising strategy consultant – a viable plan for seeking potential funding for ICRSE, including the identification of potential funding streams. The strategy will incorporate continued strengthening of the fundraising capacities aimed at securing funds for at least 2-3 years ahead.

### **3.4 Monitoring and evaluation system established and functional**

In order to effectively measure the success of its work and to systematically incorporate the lessons learnt in the future planning processes,



ICRSE will develop an integrated system for monitoring and evaluation focused on the defined goals and objectives on strategic and programme levels.

## 5. Annual Planning and Revisions of the Strategic Plan

ICRSE will conduct annual planning for each of the calendar years which will be complemented with revision of the strategic plan if found necessary. Revisions will also be conducted if findings of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation indicate a need or as significant changes occur in the context in which ICRSE and its member organisations are operating.

The annual plans will break down activities proposed for implementation in the respective year. The plan will allow that the achievement of the strategic objectives is presented in the form of results and groups of activities.

## 6. Funding and Human Resources

At the moment, and in the previous period, ICRSE received support from limited sources (project funding and voluntary work of individuals) and was funded by one type of donor (foundations). The private donors providing funding for ICRSE activities are:

- Red Umbrella Foundation;
- Robert Carr Network Fund; and
- Open Society Foundations.

For the achievement of the goals and objectives in this strategic plan it is of utmost importance that ICRSE seeks to increase its annual budgets.



This will be done through increasing ICRSE's fundraising capacities, which is expected to result in diversification of funding sources. It is expected the funding obtained through project work will provide the vast majority of finances. As a result, ICRSE will invest significant resources in strengthening the capacities for project proposal development aimed at long-term expansion of the project portfolio as well as increasing the number of donors funding ICRSE activities.

ICRSE is a network whose mission is to advocate for the rights of sex workers. Changes of policies and practices, aside from being inherently difficult at some levels, take time. Often it takes several projects and initiatives to achieve positive change. Hence, ICRSE should aim for more long-term funding through sensitisation of donors on the importance of our advocacy issues and the complexity of the policy creation process in Europe.

In terms of finances and for the achievement of projected goals and objectives, ICRSE would strive to increase the level of effort of the key personnel in the Secretariat. Ideally, every position in the Secretariat would be full-time. However, within the framework of this Strategic Plan efforts will be made to increase the engagement of the key positions: Coordinator, Policy Officer and Advocacy and Campaign Officer.

## **Acknowledgements**

The process of developing this Strategic Plan was facilitated by the consultant Dimitar Spasenoski from Strategic Management Systems, with timely contributions and logistical support provided by ICRSE Coordinator Luca Stevenson.



## References

- <sup>1</sup> National Front – France; Lega Nord – Italy; True Finns – Finland; Dansk Folkeparty – Denmark; Austrian Freedom Party; Dutch Freedom Party; German National Party; Golden Dawn – Greece, Jobbik Party – Hungary, etc.
- <sup>2</sup> The Commission Majority has 477 MEPs whereas the Opposition and Non-Aligned have 277 MEPs.
- <sup>3</sup> Named after Ulrike Lunacek, MEP Greens, co-president of the European Parliament’s Intergroup on LGBT Rights.
- <sup>4</sup> Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, “In It Together: Why Less Inequality Benefits All”. (2015)
- <sup>5</sup> International Labour Organization, “2015 World Employment Social Outlook”. (2015)
- <sup>6</sup> Oxfam, “Women and Precarious Work”. (2005)

**ICRSE**

International  
Committee on  
the Rights of Sex  
Workers in Europe

[www.sexworkeurope.org](http://www.sexworkeurope.org)

