**Now and then…**

*Volume 1, Issue 1*

**Of Special Interest:**

- ICRSE establishes new Advisory Group.
- ICRSE network members attend OSI Cambodia meeting.
- SWAN gets support from ICRSE in Kiev.

**Individual Highlights:**

- Cambodia: 2
- SWAN Kiev: 2
- Translation: 5
- Political e-cards: 5
- Red Umbrella: 6

---

**New Advisory Group for the ICRSE!**

The ICRSE is proud to announce that we will be holding our first meeting for the new Advisory Group in June 2007! This is a fantastic group of people who are all dedicated to making the ICRSE network as dynamic and responsive to challenging anti-sex work attitudes, laws, policies, negative stereotypes and the general bullshit we face on a daily basis because we dare to challenge the status quo around sex work, rights, gender, labour and migration.

New members:
- Jö (Portugal),
- Maj (Denmark),
- Thierry (France),
- Benjamin (Switzerland),
- Gulnara (Kyrgyzstan),
- Jelena (Serbia),
- Stephanie (Germany) and Maria Ornella (Italy)

will join with former members:
- Marianne (Netherlands),
- Marjan (Netherlands),
- Ruth (United Kingdom),
- Giulia (Italy),
- Licia (Netherlands) and Petra (Netherlands) for our first planning meeting June 15 & 16 2007.

More information and requests for your input will be shared on the ICRSE Network email list.

Bios of all the Advisory Group members will be added to our website soon.

---

**Sexworkeurope.org**

The sexworkeurope.org website is your forum for sharing news about what is going on in your country or region. The site is changing all the time to make it easier for you to participate and locate the information you need!

**Latest change:** we have renovated our **resources** section to make it easier to find, download and upload documents. Take a look at the new **Document Library**. If you have registered on the website just login and you will see how it is possible to use the library. We will be expanding the library content.

**Not logged in yet?**

Registration can be done from the front page where you can also include your individual or organization website, blog or other web-based site address.

Once you are registered and logged in it is also possible to submit links and news about events so you can let everyone know what is happening!
ICRSE attends global meeting in Cambodia

In April 2007 ICRSE members Petra, Maj from Denmark, Nikita from France, and Shahnaz from Kyrgyzstan attended the OSI sponsored meeting held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. 22 countries representing various established and emerging sex work rights networks were there to brainstorm on how we could promote better coordination at regional and global levels around our shared achievements and concerns.

We had a very ambitious agenda but the main focus was to listen to and discuss some of the main fronts that sex workers are fighting at the moment including, end demand legislation, raids and rescues, police entrapment and abuse, regulations around sex work, Promoting positive messages, UNAID and PEPFAR, UNFPA 3-pillars. Participants recognised that although these issues may look different in our own countries they were shared concerns. The idea was to get a better understanding about the impact this was having on sex workers and to draw up a ‘short list’ of issues that we could work on together in a coordinated way. Three of the most pressing issues would then be brainstormed to develop ideas for concrete collective action.

The short list included:

- Raids and rescue or anti-trafficking
- Donor agenda
- UNFPA – (United Nations Population Fund)
- Sex Worker Pride
- Policy Agendas
- Mobilising Activism

By default we began with using raids and rescues as our starting point to look at how our work as activists translates across local, national, and international settings. This was an interesting exercise facilitated by Cheryl Overs because it made very clear that we are all doing a lot of work at the local level and some at the regional level.

Spanish meeting in Phnom Penh

“Brainstorm Short List:
1. Raids and rescue or anti-trafficking
2. Donor agenda
3. UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund
4. Sex Worker Pride
5. Policy Agendas
6. Mobilising Activism.”

SWAN and ICRSE in Kiev, Ukraine

Kiev, Ukraine
April 26-30, 2007

This was truly an exciting meeting!

This was the 2nd SWAN meeting. Now with a new member organisation from Kazakhstan and with 12 new sex worker participants this year SWAN is coming into its own.

The meeting was held over 5 days with the final day reserved for the sex workers participants. The ICRSE coordinator Petra Timmermans was invited, along with Anna-Louise Crago (Canada) and Rachel Thomas (US/OSI), to continue the capacity building that was begun in 2005. The meeting was organised and supported by SWAN Coordinator Aliya Rakhatova, SWAN member Shahnaz Islamova and HCLU Media trainer Nebojsa Radics and our local host was Alexandr Ostapov from the All Ukrainian Harm Reduction Network. Translation was provided in both Russian and English.

This SWAN meeting was divided into three themes:

Day one was about informing and inspiring SWAN members by highlighting what is currently happening internationally in sex work activism and looking at some historical examples of successful organising. Petra put together a presentation “Cultural production for advocacy” illustrating the power of art as a political tool being used by sex workers and allies around the world.

Continued on page 3

Continued on page 4
ICRSE Cambodia...continued

but this was not translating to the global level in a coordinated way. This is important because if our voices remain isolated we are less able to affect the decisions being made at regional and global levels that directly impact on us as individuals and our work to promote the rights of sex workers everywhere.

There were plenty of great and positive examples of work being done at the local level by sex workers and their allies; now we need to find ways to give these achievements a bigger profile.

Raids and rescue (R&R) was our reference point for the development of possible key messages that we could all start promoting on our websites, e-lists, newsletters and other information that we produce. For example if we committed to putting

a small umbrella logo on everything that we produce then we create global messages which become internationally recognisable. We need to start thinking like Nike! (See Red Umbrella Power page 6)

Some sample key messages that we thought up in the short time that we had for R&R were:

- Why I don’t want to be trafficked (again)
- Not slavery but immigration and work
- Workers not victims
- Sex workers are part of the solution
- R&R violates UN conventions
- Only rights can fix the wrongs

Once we identified what was happening locally we talked about advocacy messages and Juhu Thukral from the Sex Workers Project at the Urban Justice Centre in New York (sexworkersproject.org) presented material that would help us to organize our messaging campaigns including thinking strategically about who our messages might target, for example 'the almost' allies (people who are 80% there) as opposed to hardnosed abolitionists whose fear of losing their careers, funding and fan base prevent them from hearing our voices; sex workers, migrants, women, transwomen and men and youth.

A parallel theme to the meeting was to explore how technology could be more of a friend to us in our work. At the invitation of OSI two members of Tactical Tech (tacticaltech.org), Stephanie Hankey and Dirk Slater joined us along with sex worker activist and committed blogger Melissa Gira. They were brought in specifically to help us look at the many ways that it is possible to use technology to our advantage and although many groups use some form of tech locally the degree of use and engagement varied widely. We talked about the successes and obstacles and we were shown several free open source options.

On the last day we returned again to the framing example of R&R to come up with a few concrete steps that could be taken around this issue. Several participants at the meeting thought that the World Aids Conference in Mexico would be a good place to have targeted campaigns. It is important to remember that the outcomes from our R&R discussion could be used for any important issue. We can do this by:

Selecting 3 key messages that people can use anywhere in the world for their communication on raid and rescue. (language and translation will mean that this may look different)

Creating links on organization and network websites to information about raid and rescue

Adding signature boxes to individual emails, highlighting the issue of raid and rescue (a signature box is an easy way to make your contact info, logo or campaign slogan appear in all your emails automatically).

collecting all raid and rescue information in one place, with resources linked back to the original posts

continuing to document raid and rescues, translate this information, and disseminate it broadly

A full report of this meeting will be shared by OSI and Tactical Tech once it is completed.

Read Maj’s report on the ICRSE website (Go to: Resources, Document Library, ICRSE updates)

If you would like a copy of the agenda and some of the background material available from conference on some of the issues we discussed please send an email to: info@sexworkeurope.org
Sex Work Europe News

**From the “I have traded sex for... game” (Stella, Canada)**

“Money
Because I was bored
For a quite morning
For my own orgasm need
For comfort
To end an argument
To get out in time to catch the train
For riding a motorbike
For staff for mending my house
For a goldfish
For passion, lust, fun
For a gold ring
For Gifts
For Status as a married woman
To not be bored
For drugs
To preserve the relationship
To get to know what they are like in sex
For free; to please myself and my lover.”

---

**SWAN and ICRSE in Kiev...continued**

while Anna-Louise talked about political strategies that are being used by organisations and the positive outcomes. Anna-Louise started one of her sessions with a great exercise “I have traded sex for...” (see sidebar) and challenged our ideas about sex, work and exchange.

On day two Nebojsa Radic (Hungary HCLU/SWAN) built on the media skills participants were introduced to at the first SWAN meeting. The focus was on learning how to get your point across through planning and practice. Most of us are intimidated by dealing with the media but much of this intimidation can be overcome by understanding how the media works and how to work the media.

Last year SWAN members were introduced to the Declaration of the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe as an advocacy tool and over the last year many SWAN volunteers have translated this document into their first languages (see declaration website).

This year Petra focused on how the Declaration could offer a good grounding to respond to questions from the media and reported news. As a group we took examples from the news involving sex workers; including the public shaming incident in China and an article from Bratislava about police discrimination and we developed responses to these rights abuses using the Declaration.

Nebojsa also helped members practice for on-camera interviews and both Anna-Louise and Nebojsa held interviews with SWAN members for their website and newsletter; including a ‘sound bite’ project where people had 30 seconds to make their point.

Day three was devoted to SWAN; evaluating and talking about future network priorities as well as establishing a working group that would be responsible for motivating the network over the next year. SWAN members agreed that the issue of police violence and repress was priority number one from a list of issues generated and they agreed to develop a collaborative campaign to give this issue greater public profile leading up to December 17, 2008 (Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers).

On the final half-days sex workers took matters into their own hands. During our first afternoon we shared information about local working conditions. Many of the participants wanted to learn more about the regulation system in the Netherlands and about how things worked in Canada.

Everyone agreed that decriminalisation was an important fight but there was a lot of uncertainty as to what this actually means in reality for sex workers!

The majority of sex workers at this meeting were part of a newly formed group in the Ukraine but there were also sex workers from Russia, Macedonia, Kyrgyzstan and Czech Republic.

And then we made art! After four days of intense talking and listening it was time to get active. Petra led this workshop which combined simple collage techniques, mobile phone cameras and computer applications to make political e-cards for advocacy messaging (see make your own political e-card on page 5).

It was an intense but satisfying meeting. Having the possibility to network with colleagues is fantastic; learning new ideas and skills for advocacy work is vital for ‘doing’ politics; reaffirming the positive and important work being done by sex workers and allies is essential, but taking the time to laugh and have fun is what keeps us sane.
ICRSE receives translation grant from OSI

The ICRSE is moving into the collaborative phase of our translation project.

The focus of this project is to produce and promote resources produced by sex workers that seek to tackle the violence and stigma faced by sex workers which violate their human rights and increases their vulnerability to HIV.

Some preliminary work has been done in collecting resources from across Europe available via the Internet that could be considered.

Now we need your help.
We are looking to identify more resources in western European languages which challenge violence and promote sex workers rights that can then be translated into English and French and hopefully Russian for wider distribution through community based organisations.

Has your organisation produced resource materials for promoting sex workers rights that you think more of us could benefit from if they were translated?

Please contact info@sexworkeurope.org

The final product will be a package of resources and a guide to using them that will be available on CDrom or as a download from the ICRSE website.

The ICRSE is cooperating on this project with TAMPEP (http://tampep.com) and APNSW (Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers, http://apnsw.org)

This €19.000 grant has been provided by the Open Society Institute – SHARP program

Make your own political e-card!

A simple e-card is just an image postcard that you can send by email to someone. A political e-card can be a great, visual way to get your point across!

For example the ICRSE invited members to make e-cards to protest 17 December 2006:

At the recent SWAN meeting in Kiev, Ukraine, I worked with a group of sex workers to make our own postcards. We used paper collage, a mobile phone with camera, a computer and in this case a projector. Here are the steps we took: Make a collage and take a picture of it:

Finish your card by making the size the same as a postcard (10.5cm X 15cm). Put it on your website for others to use or copy and paste into an email message and send it to your favourite politician!

On the home page of the ICRSE website you will see a button ‘send an e-card’. Try it out and think about contributing to the next political postcard action.

Activism is easy and fun. Petra
Red Umbrella Power!

The red umbrella was used by sex workers of Venice, Italy in 2002 as a symbol of beauty and the resistance to humans' and sky's attacks, red.

On the occasion of the Biennale of Art in 2002, they walked the streets together out and proud. Continuing this tradition and in honour of all sex workers who dare to resist oppression everywhere, the ICRSE adopts the red umbrella as a symbol of sex worker resistance to discrimination.

The red umbrella started as a simple idea and is quickly becoming an international symbol for sex workers’ rights.

Be relentless, Be everywhere, Be recognisable!

Put a red umbrella on the front page of your website. Put a red umbrella on your letterhead. Create a signature with a red umbrella for your emails.

You can download different versions of the red umbrella from the ICRSE website (go to the image gallery).

Download a version without text and add your own slogan in your own language. If you do not know how to do that, just send the text to info@sexworkeurope.org and we will help you.

No one has to ask what the red ribbon means. The red umbrella can have the same global impact!

The red umbrella started as a simple idea and is quickly becoming an international symbol for sex workers’ rights.

Be relentless, Be everywhere, Be recognisable!

Put a red umbrella on the front page of your website. Put a red umbrella on your letterhead. Create a signature with a red umbrella for your emails.

You can download different versions of the red umbrella from the ICRSE website (go to the image gallery).

Download a version without text and add your own slogan in your own language. If you do not know how to do that, just send the text to info@sexworkeurope.org and we will help you.

No one has to ask what the red ribbon means. The red umbrella can have the same global impact!

The red umbrella started as a simple idea and is quickly becoming an international symbol for sex workers’ rights.

Be relentless, Be everywhere, Be recognisable!

Put a red umbrella on the front page of your website. Put a red umbrella on your letterhead. Create a signature with a red umbrella for your emails.

You can download different versions of the red umbrella from the ICRSE website (go to the image gallery).

Download a version without text and add your own slogan in your own language. If you do not know how to do that, just send the text to info@sexworkeurope.org and we will help you.

No one has to ask what the red ribbon means. The red umbrella can have the same global impact!

The red umbrella started as a simple idea and is quickly becoming an international symbol for sex workers’ rights.

Be relentless, Be everywhere, Be recognisable!

Put a red umbrella on the front page of your website. Put a red umbrella on your letterhead. Create a signature with a red umbrella for your emails.

You can download different versions of the red umbrella from the ICRSE website (go to the image gallery).

Download a version without text and add your own slogan in your own language. If you do not know how to do that, just send the text to info@sexworkeurope.org and we will help you.

No one has to ask what the red ribbon means. The red umbrella can have the same global impact!

The red umbrella started as a simple idea and is quickly becoming an international symbol for sex workers’ rights.

Be relentless, Be everywhere, Be recognisable!

Put a red umbrella on the front page of your website. Put a red umbrella on your letterhead. Create a signature with a red umbrella for your emails.

You can download different versions of the red umbrella from the ICRSE website (go to the image gallery).

Download a version without text and add your own slogan in your own language. If you do not know how to do that, just send the text to info@sexworkeurope.org and we will help you.

No one has to ask what the red ribbon means. The red umbrella can have the same global impact!