

This bill is an excellent example of paternalistic "white knight" sexism. Its authors should be ashamed of themselves for depriving sex workers the right to choose their occupation without the arbitrary approval of a civil servant. The bill cites *"Sex Work, Stigma and Violence in the Netherlands,"* yet either has not read, or simply does not understand the findings of the study as they related to the proposed legislation. The most common form of violence, experienced by 93% of sex workers interviewed, involves social stigma.

Has it been considered what it would feel like to be required to be interviewed and judged suitable or not suitable, subjectively, for sex work? Not only would it be insulting and degrading, it would be a likely vector for sexual and physical violence perpetrated by civil servants.

*"Sex Work, Stigma and Violence in the Netherlands"* advises:

*"Based on this research we make the following recommendations for reducing violence against sex workers in the Netherlands:*

- *Make sex workers the center of prostitution policies and address violence against sex workers.*
- *Lower the threshold for filing police reports.*
- *Decriminalize sex work so that all sex workers have once again access to (labor) laws, thereby reducing the risk of violence."*

None of these points are addressed by this legislation--sex workers will be in more vulnerable under this law. For example, debts are cited as a root cause for forced prostitution. This bill introduces fines of up to 20,000e for sex work without a license. How many independently operating women will become casualties of forced prostitution at the hands of this bill? You will have only yourselves to blame.

It is stated that:

*"Alternatives were considered when drafting the bill. When it comes to visibility the entire industry and the creation of barriers to traffickers, however every form of 'gaining insight into' is accompanied by a form of registration. That's it alternative to the current proposal: do nothing."*

There is another alternative, one that apparently has not been considered: draft legislation that considers the sex worker as a person, with free will and human rights--then reconsider what could be done to address the 'unsubstantiated' problems. Maybe then you will find yourselves with a document that truly helps women, rather than one that turns the government and its civil servants into perpetrators of sexual violence by proxy.

It is not my role to re-write your misguided, chauvinistic legislation for you--that burden falls on you. Please take it seriously.