

Lund University
European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation
A.Y. 2013/2014

Do More Liberal Prostitution Policies Increase Human Trafficking?

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An Analysis of the Swedish and the German Prostitution Policies

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Abstract

In 2013 Germany among other EU states, started to review its prostitution policy and naturally discussions on trafficking in human beings (THB) as the “modern-day slavery” are always accompanying these legislative reforms. Although clear empirical evidence on an actual link between the prostitution policies of states and THB is still missing, the public and political debate on prostitution is always highly emotionally loaded and it is never discussed without also touching upon the topic of THB.

Sweden and Germany have completely different prostitution policies. The so called Swedish Model was the first prostitution policy that focussed on the clients of sex workers through criminalising the purchase of sexual services in 1999. In contrast, the German prostitution law reform from 2002 liberalised the German sex work market through *inter alia* a legal de-stigmatisation of sex work. This thesis deals with the question whether or not more liberal prostitution policies increase THB. For this purpose the terms THB, prostitution/sex work and forced prostitution are defined and the question, how THB and sex work are interlinked, is answered. Furthermore, the Swedish and German prostitution policies and their present statistics on THB for sexual exploitation are analysed, evaluated and compared.

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