

THE GOVERNANCE OF PROSTITUTION BY RESPONSIBILIZATION

Panel chair: Dr. Nicolle Zeegers (University of Groningen)

Panel discussants: Dr. Eva-Maria Euchner (Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich) and Prof. (emeritus) Joyce Outshoorn (TBC)

The question of how to govern prostitution in the EU in accordance with gender equality and women's (human) rights is a polarized and widely debated issue; whereas some member countries swear by their 'criminalization of the client regime', others claim that 'legalization of selling and buying sex' works best.¹ In this panel the focus will be on the description and explanation of strategies of responsabilization that are used by some countries to get a firmer grip on human trafficking, the organization of 'voluntary' sex work and the fight against forced prostitution without criminalizing buying and selling sex as such.² The diversity of actors addressed (brothel owners, clients of prostitution, sex workers and/ or their organizations) and instruments used (administrative or criminal liabilities; voluntary engagement) will be shown and the possible (gender) effects of such strategies will be discussed.

¹ Between women's rights groups and EU institutions versus NGOs similar claims are disputed.

² Examples of such countries are the Netherlands, Germany and the UK. In Germany and the Netherlands voluntary prostitution is legal, however street based prostitution is often forbidden through municipal laws and policy. In England and Wales prostitution is not inherently illegal, but many associated activities such as street-based sex work, brothels and the purchase of sex from a sex workers subject to coercion are illegal.