

Vilnius 2014-06-19



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# Sex purchase law

“A person who, obtains casual sexual relations in return for payment, shall be convicted of purchasing a sexual service and sentenced to a fine or a prison term of at most 1 year.

The provision of the first paragraph also applies if the payment was promised or given by another person.”

(Swedish Penal Code, chapter 6, section 11)



# Sex purchase law

- Introduced in 1999
- Attempt is illegal
- Helping someone else is illegal
- The payment can be other than money
- The law is gender-neutral
- 50 days of fines



# Background

## Perspective 1: Equality

-It is not acceptable that women and children can be bought and sold in a modern, equal society. Buying sex is considered as a part of mens violence against women

## Perspective 2: Victim

”...it is unreasonable to also criminalize the one who, at least in most cases, is the weaker party who is exploited by others who want to satisfy their own sexual desires“ (Swedish government proposition 1997/98:55)

## Perspective 3: Demand

-Focus on the root cause. With no demand for sexual services there will be no market for sexual services. Sexbuyers are the crucial sponsors of human trafficking



# Short case study

How we work with the law



# Arresting a sexbuyer

- Arrested when leaving
- Cellphone confiscated
- Interrogation on the spot
- Admits: fine
- Denying: possible trial
- DNA sample taken on all persons arrested for buying sex
- Prostitution unit works very close with Stockholm Social Services. All sexbuyers offered optional therapy after arrest.
- All persons encountered in prostitution informed about Swedish legislation and the possibility to help and support. Always offered to be taken to a shelter. Contact information to Prostitution unit always given.



# Result - 1 day case

- 1 sexbuyer arrested
- 1 pimp arrested
- 1 victim taken to shelter
  
- The pimp sentenced to 14 months imprisonment and 5 years of deportation
  
- Surveillance time: 2 hours
- Law enforcement personnel needed: 2 police officers + 1 social worker



# Criticism

- Prostitution will go underground and authorities will not be able to find it
- The violence will increase against women in prostitution
- Women in prostitution will not speak to authorities and they will not dare to report violent clients
- The law refuses men with disabilities the right of having a sexlife





# Criticism

-The sex purchase law will drive sexbuyers to other countries

-Prostitution will not decrease

2013 – 120 persons in street prostitution

2012 – 150 persons in street prostitution

2011 – 163 persons in street prostitution

2010 – 175 persons in street prostitution

2009 – 191 persons in street prostitution

2008 – 200 persons in street prostitution

(Stockholm Social Services 2014)



# Results



 **Socialdemokraterna**

 **Moderaterna**

 **Miljöpartiet**

 **Folkpartiet**

 **Centerpartiet**

 **Sverigedemokraterna**

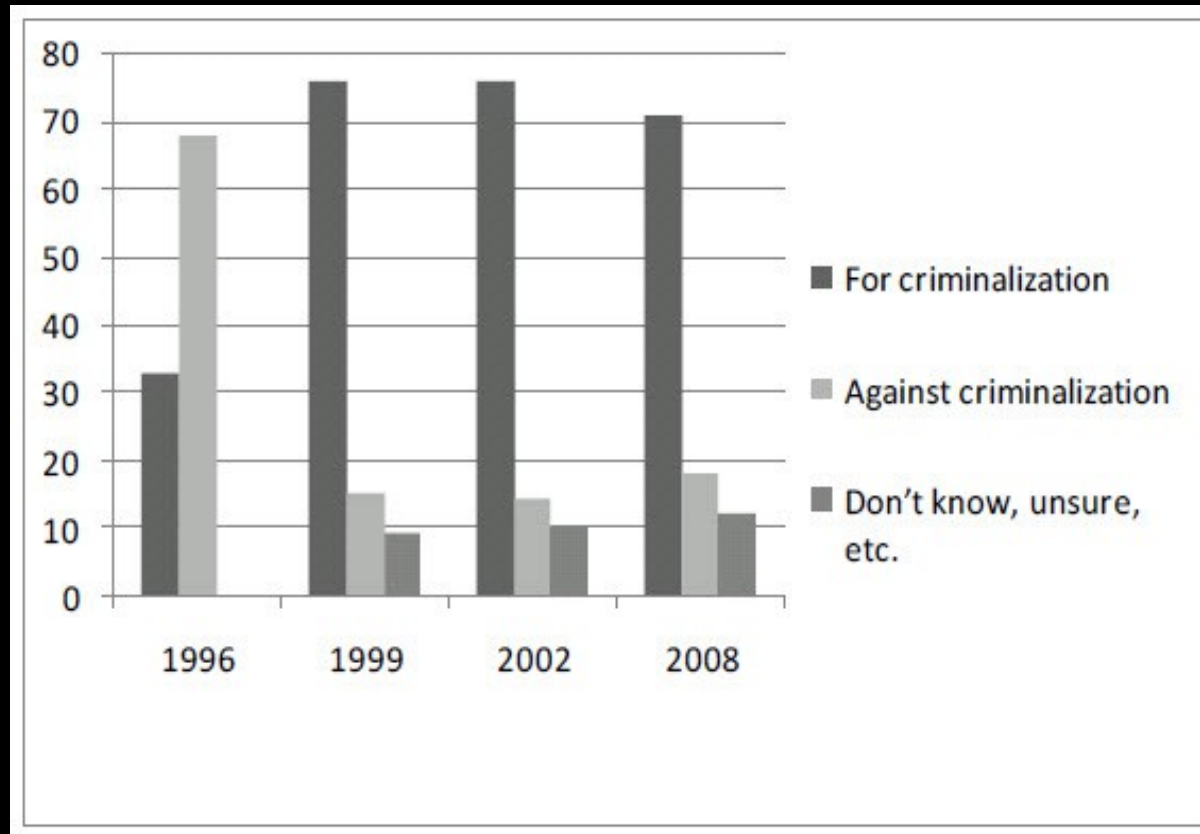
 **Vänsterpartiet**

 **Kristdemokraterna**



# Results

Four official opinion polls made since 1996.



(Swedish government commission SOU 2010:49)



# Results

Polls are showing that the support of the law is particularly strong among young people.

1999 poll showed 84% of people aged 15-29 in support of the law

2002 poll showed 87% of people aged 15-29 in support of the law

2008 poll showed 78% of people aged 18-28 in support of the law

(Swedish government commission SOU 2010:49)



# Results

According to academic research, the legislation has a direct impact on Swedish men's prostitution behaviour - the number of Swedish men who have bought someone for the purpose of prostitution has decreased from 13.6 % in 1996 to only 7.9% in 2008.

(Prostitution i Norden, Kuosmanen 2008 & Nordic Gender Institute)



# Results

- Pimps and traffickers consider Sweden as a bad market
- Women in prostitution speak of Sweden as a safer place compared to other countries
- Women in prostitution (both street and indoor) claim that the amount of sexbuyers drastically has decreased the last years since they are afraid of being arrested



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