



MASTER THESIS

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**„ Profession or Oppression? -
The History of Prostitution Policies and the Lobbies
Behind Them in Vienna, Austria. “**

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Abstract

The debate surrounding the legal status of prostitution has been contentious and polarizing. In Austria prostitution is legal but heavily regulated and there are lobbying groups on both sides of the issue. The two largest and longer established groups, LEFÖ and Sophie, push for liberalization, while three smaller and younger groups, Solwodi, Verein feministischer Diskurs and lightup, advocate the abolition of prostitution (in terms of the Nordic model which legalizes selling sex but criminalizes the purchase of sex). This thesis explores the history of these groups and their arguments, the intriguing dynamic of coalitions between leftist, feminist and conservative groups, as well as the rifts within leftist and feminist groups themselves. Furthermore, the impact of these lobbying activities on both national and international legislation, discourse and other achievements, as well as the impact of international developments in legislation on the lobbies' efforts and arguments is explored. Special attention is also given to arguments raised, which link prostitution policy to combatting human trafficking. Interviews and archival items (stenographer's notes in legislative processes; motions proposed and debated in parliament; annual reports) were used to understand the history and motivation behind the lobbies' arguments and cooperation. Findings show that feminist and leftist groups are indeed split on this issue in Austria and that feminist, leftist and more conservative groups do form coalitions to jointly advance their goals. Since no lobbies consisting of prostitutes have existed in Vienna since the 1980s, it appears the government primarily refers to these NGO opinion-makers regarding this issue.

Abstract: German

Die Debatte um den rechtlichen Status der Prostitution wird weltweit teilweise polemisch und polarisierend geführt. In Österreich ist Prostitution legal, aber stark reguliert, und es gibt Lobbying-Gruppen auf beiden Seiten der Debatte. Die beiden größten und länger etablierten Gruppen, LEFÖ und Sophie fordern Liberalisierung, während drei kleinere und jüngere Gruppen: Solwodi, Verein feministischer Diskurs und lightup die Abschaffung der Prostitution befürworten (im Sinne des nordischen Modells, das den Verkauf von Sex legalisiert, aber das Kaufen von Sex kriminalisiert). Diese Arbeit untersucht die Geschichte dieser Gruppen und ihrer Argumente, die faszinierende Dynamik von Koalitionen zwischen linken, feministischen und konservativen Gruppen, sowie die Spaltung innerhalb linker und feministischer Gruppen. Darüber hinaus werden die Auswirkungen dieser Lobbying-Aktivitäten auf die nationale und internationale Gesetzgebung, der Diskurs und Errungenschaften sowie die Auswirkungen internationaler Gesetzesentwicklungen auf die Bemühungen und Argumente der Lobbies untersucht. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit gilt auch den Argumenten, die die Prostitutionspolitik mit der Bekämpfung des Menschenhandels verknüpfen. Interviews und Archivalien (Stenographische Protokolle im Gesetzgebungsverfahren; im Parlament vorgeschlagene und diskutierte Anträge; Jahresberichte etc.) wurden verwendet, um die Geschichte und die Motivation hinter den Argumenten und der Zusammenarbeit der Lobbies zu verstehen. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass feministische und linke Gruppen in diesem Bereich in der Tat gespalten sind und dass feministische, linke und konservativere Gruppen tatsächlich Koalitionen bilden, um gemeinsam ihre Ziele voranzutreiben. Da es in Wien seit den achtziger Jahren keine aus Prostituierten bestehenden Lobbies gibt, scheint es, als würde sich der Staat bei diesem Thema in erster Linie auf diese NGO-Meinungsmacher beziehen.

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I. Introduction

Prostitution has always been a rather taboo topic, but also a very hotly contested one, when it comes to the policies that regulate this practice. The debate started out, and continues to be discussed, along ideas of morality and the question as to whether prostitution is a necessary evil since it is impossible to eradicate or, if it is a job like any other. The debate has, however, shifted from a purely moral debate to being discussed regarding questions of public security, public health, human trafficking, feminism, as well as human, citizens', women's, migrant's and workers' rights. There are many interest groups in this context, ranging from the prostitutes themselves, to human rights activists, to governments and activist groups, all representing a plethora of positions, aiming to achieve a multitude of different purposes.

This work will seek to show the development of this debate and the role such groups played in the passing of legislation in Vienna, Austria. In Austria, legislation on prostitution is regulated on the *Länder*-level (state level). Vienna, as a *Land* (province) and key transit city between Eastern and Western Europe, has been particularly exposed to the debate of the role of prostitution in connection with human trafficking. It is also here that NGOs have been lobbying for legislation in Austria and where governmental taskforces on human trafficking and prostitution have been active. Although there has been some research on prostitution in Austria¹, no work has focused on the lobbies in Austria in particular, especially in a rather contemporary context. Therefore, the time frame under examination is the period from the mid 1970s to the present, since it is then that lobbies began to form and take action.

The following central research question follows: How did various and at times opposing lobbying/advocacy groups frame their arguments and form coalitions in their attempt to shape the law on prostitution in Vienna from the 1980s onwards and what impact did they have?

The sub-research questions will inquire:

- a) Who were the groups lobbying for the abolition or decriminalization/liberalization of prostitution in Vienna from the 80's - present?

¹ See Sauer 2004, Waldenberger 2012.

- b) Were/Are there leftist groups in Austria lobbying for the abolition of prostitution? If so, how and why did they side with conservative groups on the issue?
- c) What was the main goal these groups wanted to achieve and what was their motivation for pursuing this goal? How effective were they in achieving their interests?
- d) How did the groups frame their arguments?
- e) Did the constellation of groups on the same side of this issue resemble the patchwork of otherwise politically opposed groups in countries like the USA?

The author's hypotheses are the following:

- 1. Left-leaning groups in different countries differ in their opinion regarding the legalization of prostitution, arguing from contradictory but primarily feminist points of view.
- 2. The different groups lobbying against prostitution in Vienna do so for very different reasons despite being on the same side of the issue. They consequently frame their arguments differently, with consequences for our understanding of political lobbying coalitions and cooperation across the political spectrum.

Compared to the scholarship conducted on prostitution policies in Sweden, France the Netherlands and Germany, scholarship on Austria has been very limited. Work has been done by Waldenberger² on prostitutes' movements in Vienna and how they mobilized to fight for more rights, but little to no work has been done on other actors including those in civil society, private industry and politics who have campaigned for a variety of prostitution policies without being directly touched by or involved in the field. Specifically, the question of examining the diverse lobbying groups, their motives and arguments, as well as their frameworks of cooperation across the political spectrum has not been delved into so far. The question is worth studying since it might have important implications for our understanding of political lobbying coalitions. Furthermore, it

² Waldenberger, Almuth. "... wie andere auch! Geschichte und Debatten der Hurenbewegung in Deutschland und Österreich von den 1970er Jahren bis 2011." *Diplomarbeit*, University of Vienna. Historisch-Kulturwissenschaftliche Fakultät, 2012. Betreuer: Eder, Franz.

might shed light on the motives behind specific arguments for a certain prostitution policy and what the consequences of this might be for questions and policies concerning human trafficking, according to the lobbies.

This thesis strives to present a balanced and objective evaluation of the information gathered on lobbies on both sides of the debate. Terms such as “prostitution” and “sex work” are used depending on the context but are both intended to convey no judgement on part of the author. Furthermore, the reader is advised to consult the glossary of definitions of terms such as “prostitution”, “leftist”, “feminism”, “conservative”, “liberal”, “neo-abolitionist”, “pro-liberalization” etc. In general “leftist” is used to denote groups on the left side of the political spectrum and is usually associated with liberal values; “liberal” refers to a certain ideology or tendency which is favourable towards progress or reform and focused on the rights of the individual; “conservative” refers to those groups who wish to preserve existing and/or traditional institutions and conditions; “right” refers to those on the right side of the political spectrum and is typically associated with conservative values; “feminist” is used to denote those advocating social, political and economic rights for women; “neo-abolitionist” refers to the political position that aims to reduce demand for prostitution in terms of the Nordic Model³; “pro-liberalization” refers to the political position that aims to remove legal restrictions and gain more rights for sex workers.

I.I Disciplines and Methodology

This research examines the history of different non-governmental groups in Austria who are or were engaged in political lobbying for differing prostitution policies. The central aim is to discover the goals and motivations of the respective groups, shed light on the way they have framed their arguments and presented information, and explain how this might be informed by their goals and motivations. In essence, the question of how the respective groups perceive and present prostitution and why will be examined. A second step will consist of examining how these lobbies have influenced the lawmaking process on the issue of prostitution in Vienna, as well as the international impact of both the lobbies and laws and conversely how international laws and lobbies have influenced Austrian groups and legislation. In sum, the framing of the narrative

³ The Nordic Model will be examined further on.

around prostitution, the emphasis of the arguments as well as the unusual coalition building regarding this issue are at the centre of inquiry of this thesis.

This will be an interdisciplinary work covering the areas of history and law. Moreover, the abovementioned explanation of the aim of this research calls for a qualitative case study of the lobbies and laws that concern prostitution in Vienna, Austria. Consequently, the main sources for this thesis will consist of primary sources including interviews, position papers, as well as a variety of archival materials.

The primary source material will be critically analysed to detect the historical development of the goals and arguments, as well as the framing of the arguments around prostitution policy. Simultaneously, these developments of advocacy will be compared with the changes in prostitution law in Vienna over time to see whether any of these lobbies were successful in influencing the law or social discourse. Additionally, the impact of international lobbies and international law on the Viennese lobbies and law will be examined.

I.II Selection of the Examined Lobbying Groups

Six organizations were selected for this study, two from the pro-liberalization or pro-sex work side (LEFÖ and Sophie), three from the neo-abolitionist (Solwodi, lightup and Verein feministischer Diskurs) tendency and Herzwirk, which is deeply involved in this issue but takes no official position, as will be further explained. These groups were chosen, since they appear to be the most active, involved and influential in this field and all conduct political lobbying work. Groups such as sexworker.at, MAIZ or LENA were excluded, because they are not active in Vienna, but rather in other Austrian provinces, or because they did not constitute an organization or NGO that conducts political lobbying work. Since prostitution overwhelmingly affects women and some organizations such as LEFÖ exclusively cater to women, the issue of male prostitution will not be discussed in this thesis.

The two pro-liberalization groups are the largest and arguably most influential and represent similar positions, while the neo-abolitionist are smaller groups with very diverse backgrounds. Consequently, neo-abolitionist groups receive more space in this thesis due to their varied arguments and motivations, which lie at the heart of the research question. To ensure accurate

representation, the interview partners that were chosen are those responsible for the political lobbying work and positioning of the organization regarding prostitution policy.

I.III Chapter Roadmap

In what follows, context for the Austrian situation, as well as the global and historical background relevant to the debate on prostitution, will be presented in chapter one. Chapter two will focus on the history of lobbying actors in Austria including small sex worker movements in the 1980s, before moving to explore the history, position and goals of the non-governmental lobbying groups. Chapter three will delve into the lobbies' motivations, arguments, demands, strategies, and their alliances, using original interviews and historical archival materials. Finally, chapter four will examine the lobbies' achievements and their influence, both in Austria and on a broader European scale.

II. Chapter I: The Global Debate on Prostitution and the Austrian Case

This first chapter seeks to contextualize the Austrian case. First, background information on Viennese prostitution law and lobbying will be provided. Second, the essential global debates regarding prostitution and its link to human trafficking will be presented in an extended literature review, since the nature of this link is heavily debated and essential to the lobbies' arguments.

II.I Austria: Law and Lobbying

Up until 1975 prostitution was part of Austrian criminal code but is now within the remit of civil and administrative law.⁴ Furthermore, prostitution policy is regulated on the federal level by the "Länder" in Austria.⁵ The most populous of these is the capital. Vienna, a large metropolis and main point of transit between the East and West, has most adapted and modified its laws to perceived needs and the political climate.

The most extensive law regarding prostitution came into force in 1984 with the *Wiener Prostitutionsgesetz*,⁶ which was slightly reformed in 1991. The Reformed Prostitution Law of 1991⁷ included only slight changes, such as the removal of the clause which barred married women from practicing prostitution.⁸ This abolished clause had inversely also made it illegal for practicing prostitutes to marry.

According to Sauer it was in the mid 1980s that NGOs and women's rights groups began to work towards better working conditions for prostitutes. She also holds that the time of the grand coalition between SPÖ and ÖVP was particularly conducive to the advancement of women's politics.⁹ During this period, several groups emerged to attempt to shape the political landscape concerning

⁴ Hendrik Wagenaar, Sietske Altink and Helga Amesberger, *Final Report of the International Comparative Study of Prostitution Policy: Austria and the Netherlands* (The Hague: Platform31, 2013).

⁵ Hendrik Wagenaar, Helga Amesberger and Sietske Altink, *Designing Prostitution Policy: Intention and Reality in Regulating the Sex Trade* (Bristol, UK: Policy Press, 2017), 117-118.

⁶ Viennese Prostitution Law

⁷ Reformiertes Prostitutionsgesetz 1991

⁸ Birgit Sauer, "An der Front des Westlichen Patriachats: Sexarbeit, Frauenhandel und Politische Regulierungen in Wien," in *Frauenhandel, Diskurse und Praktiken*, ed. by Jürgen Nautz and Birgit Sauer (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2008), 84.

⁹ Birgit Sauer, "Taxes, Rights and Regimentation: Discourses on Prostitution in Austria," in *The Politics of Prostitution: Women's Movements, Democratic States and the Globalization of Sex Commerce*, ed. by Joyce Outshoorn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 41-61.

prostitution law. These included the feminist migrant worker organization LEFÖ¹⁰ which was founded in 1985, as well as the *Vereinigung österreichischer Prostituerter* (VPÖ; Coalition of Austrian Prostitutes). The VPÖ was established in 1986 and was dissolved in 1992, but not before it initiated its own publication, *Horizontal*, in 1990.¹¹

Based on a LEFÖ initiative in 1997, which was supported by the Greens and the Liberal Forum,¹² the *Plattform für die Rechte von Prostituierten* (Platform for Prostitutes' Rights) began its lobbying and public affairs work to promote the acknowledgement and rights of sex workers.¹³ The Aids law passed in 1993 brought further minor changes, namely that HIV-positive prostitutes were now barred from practicing prostitution.¹⁴ Then in 2003 the counseling center *Sophie: Bildungsraum für Prostituierte* was created as part of the EU funded initiative EQUAL-Projects.¹⁵ Soon after, in 2004, female asylum applicants were given permission to work in prostitution, although they were barred from taking on practically any other job.¹⁶ The so-called Bartenstein Decree states that asylum seekers may only work as seasonal workers in tourism businesses or as harvest workers, as long as the quota figures have not been exhausted. In addition, they may also act as self-employed, provided they do not require a trade license for that purpose, but only two occupations fulfil these criteria, namely: newspaper distribution and prostitution.¹⁷

According to Sauer one of the biggest issues in the Austrian debate is that prostitution was long legally classified as *sittenwiedrig* (against good morals), which strongly disadvantaged prostitutes

¹⁰ LEFÖ (*Lateinamerikanische emigrierte Frauen in Österreich*/ Latinamerican emigrated women in Austria) changed its name to LEFÖ: Beratung, Bildung und Begleitung für Migrantinnen in 2004.

¹¹ Almuth Waldenberger, "... wie andere auch! Geschichte und Debatten der Hurenbewegung in Deutschland und Österreich von den 1970er Jahren bis 2011," (*Diplomarbeit*, Universität Wien, 2012), http://othes.univie.ac.at/20344/1/2012-05-11_0305907.pdf.

¹² A political party in Austria which was formed out of liberals in the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) in 1993 and which merged into NEOS in 2014.

¹³ Birgit Sauer, "An der Front des Westlichen Patriachats: Sexarbeit, Frauenhandel und Politische Regulierungen in Wien," in *Frauenhandel, Diskurse und Praktiken*, ed. by Jürgen Nautz and Birgit Sauer (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2008), 84.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 81.

¹⁵ Sophie website, <http://www.sophie.or.at/2008/10/13/unterstuetzung-fur-sexarbeiterinnen-anonym-und-kostenlos/>.

¹⁶ Birgit Sauer, "An der Front des Westlichen Patriachats: Sexarbeit, Frauenhandel und Politische Regulierungen in Wien," in *Frauenhandel, Diskurse und Praktiken*, ed. by Jürgen Nautz and Birgit Sauer (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2008), 86.

¹⁷ Christa Zöchling, "Asylwerber Dürfen Nicht Arbeiten Außer als Prostituierte und Erntehelfer," *Profil*, July 20, 2012, accessed January 10, 2019, <https://www.profil.at/home/asyl-asylwerber-prostituierte-erntehelfer-335349>.

vis-à-vis their customers, since it rendered them unable to sue customers for what they were due if a customer refused to pay.¹⁸ This clause was quietly overturned by the Supreme Court in 2013.¹⁹

The 2011 *Wiener Landesprostitutionsgesetz*²⁰ (from now on referred to as the 2011 Viennese Prostitution Law) is still in force today and brought further changes to the law. Prostitutes are thus currently required to both report their entry into the practice, as well as their exit. Police may arrest them if they do not appear for regular health-checks, if they have not given notice of their exiting. This law also provides for the deletion of all personal records once the person has chosen to leave prostitution. The compulsory registration of operators of prostitution localities also became a requirement and additionally brothel owners were made to undergo a *Zuverlässigkeitsprüfung* (reliability testing) to prove their criminal blamelessness and integrity.²¹ But the most far reaching change, according to Köfler, is the strong limitations put on street prostitution in Vienna, since hardly any spaces were left to this practice, although the law provides for exceptions, mostly in industrial areas out of public view.²²

In general, although prostitution was made permissible, the law appears to have placed an increasing amount of regulations and restrictions on all aspects of its practice. Despite lobbying by groups of prostitutes for more rights and less restrictive laws in the past, the trend has been rather less liberal. To potentially discover why this is the case, this study will examine the other actors, both national and international, lobbying or influencing Viennese prostitution law, beginning in the 1980s. First, however, this debate will be placed into its historical and global context, to understand the background of the Austrian prostitution debate and the lobbies' positions.

¹⁸ Birgit Sauer, "An der Front des Westlichen Patriachats: Sexarbeit, Frauenhandel und Politische Regulierungen in Wien," in *Frauenhandel, Diskurse und Praktiken*, ed. by Jürgen Nautz and Birgit Sauer (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2008), 81-82.

¹⁹ Hendrik Wagenaar, Sietske Altink and Helga Amesberger, *Final Report of the International Comparative Study of Prostitution Policy: Austria and the Netherlands* (The Hague: Platform31, 2013).

²⁰ *Wiener Landesprostitutionsgesetz*, LGBL Nr.24/2011.

²¹ See: Köfler, Florian. „Szenarien der Wiener Prostitutionspolitik - Eine Analyse der Problemwahrnehmungen und regulativen Bestrebungen in den Landesparteien Wiens“ (Masterarbeit, Uni Wien, 2013), 12-14.

²² *Ibid.*, 14.

II.II Literature Review

In all societies the debate surrounding the legal status of prostitution has been mostly contentious and polarizing. Groups lobbying for decriminalization or prohibition respectively may share their concern for the welfare of prostitutes but differ in their opinions of how that welfare should be achieved. Scholars tend to agree that the reasoning is split into two camps, those who believe that a woman's freedom of choice is the essential right to defend and those who think that the institution of prostitution is so essentially patriarchal that there can never be real freedom of choice and bodies should simply not be for sale.²³

Those lobbying in favor of criminalizing prostitution have often framed their cause in terms of slavery and abolitionism, considering women in prostitution as victims of an oppressive system. On the other hand, those advocating for legalization reject the stigma around prostitution and wish to see it established as a profession like any other with women being able to freely decide over their bodies.

II.II.I History of Advocacy

The debate over prostitution, which is commonly dubbed by some as the world's oldest profession,²⁴ by others the oldest form of oppression, is something governments have had to address for far longer than there have been advocacy and lobbying groups vying to influence policy. As Outshoorn points out, traditionally states have attempted to limit prostitution for various reasons including: "[...] preserving morals, maintaining public order, containing the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), [and protecting] women from sexual exploitation."²⁵ According to Duggan and Hunter,²⁶ in the United States, the feminist debate concerning the issue of pornography and the agency of prostitutes took to the mainstream and political stage in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Radical feminists such as Andrea Dworkin and Catherin MacKinnon took the neo-abolitionist approach and condemned prostitution, pornography and sexual violence as the

²³ See: Jolin, 1994; Simmons, 1998; Scoular, 2004; Wahab, 2002; Monroe, 2005.

²⁴ Jessica N. Drexler, "Governments' Role in Turning Tricks: The World's Oldest Profession in the Netherlands and the United States," *Penn State International Law Review* 15, no. 1, Article 6 (1996): 201, accessed January 12, 2019, <http://elibrary.law.psu.edu/psilr/vol15/iss1/6>.

²⁵ Joyce Outshoorn, "The Political Debates on Prostitution and Trafficking of Women," *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*. Oxford University Press 12, no.1 (2005): 141.

²⁶ Lisa Duggan and Nan D. Hunter, *Sex wars: Sexual Dissent and Political Culture* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1995), 16.

most insidious sources of women's oppression.²⁷ Others, such as Margot St. James who founded COYOTE (Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics) sought to decriminalize prostitution, seeing sex workers as "subverters of patriarchy" rather than victims.²⁸

The second wave of feminism in the early 1970s saw the first formation of interest groups of women in prostitution, who were quite successful in impacting new legislation, according to Outshoorn. This included the repeal of vagrancy laws, which indicted prostitutes in Australia, Canada, Finland and Sweden, and the recognition of sex work in Germany and Austria, which was followed up by granting sex workers social security and equitable taxation.²⁹

Furthermore, the mid-1970s saw the emergence of a very politicized prostitutes' rights movement across Europe, in response to feminist claims that all prostitution is forced prostitution. This movement culminated in the foundation of the International Committee for Prostitutes' Rights (ICP) in 1985 with the adoption of the World Charter for Prostitutes' Rights.³⁰

Outshoorn also cites the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s as a reason for increased politization of the issue of prostitution, which was regarded with fear as a source of contamination.³¹ However, Jeffreys shows that the argument of the legalization side gained importance in the 1980s when "the politics and economics of neo-liberalism became dominant" and consequently gave rise to a hugely profitable global sex industry which "forms a significant part of the GDP of many countries."³²

According to Chuang "the rise of the women's human rights movement, the increased international labor migration in response to globalization, the feminization of poverty (and hence of migration),

²⁷ Emily Bazelon, "Should Prostitution be a Crime? A Growing Movement of Sex Workers and Activists Making the Decriminalization of Sex Work a Feminist Issue," *New York Times Magazine*, May 5, 2016, accessed November 11, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/08/magazine/should-prostitution-be-a-crime.html>.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Joyce Outshoorn, "The Political Debates on Prostitution and Trafficking of Women," *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*. Oxford University Press 12, no.1 (2005): 143-144.

³⁰ Kamala Kempadoo and Jo Dozema, *Global Sex Workers: Rights, Resistance and Redefinition* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1998), eBook p. 17, accessed January 12, 2019, <https://books.google.at/books?id=Rnx0DwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

³¹ Joyce Outshoorn, "The Political Debates on Prostitution and Trafficking of Women," *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*. Oxford University Press 12, no.1 (2005): 143.

³² Sheila Jeffreys, *The Idea of Prostitution* (North Melbourne, Vic.: Spinifex, 1997), vii preface.

and the growing recognition of the role of organized crime in the clandestine movement of peoples”³³ gave rise to an even greater national discussion of these issues in the mid 1990s.

As previously mentioned, the early 2000s saw an increase in funding for the neo-abolitionist cause. The back and forth between the positions continued and increasingly shifted from the national onto the international scene.

The issue was, however, not restricted to governments attempting to make their mark on international policy. In May 2016 after a long process of deliberation, Amnesty International published its policy of decriminalizing adult prostitution, which sparked severe backlash from more than 600 groups.³⁴ The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, who saw this move as supporting a \$99bn sex industry and uncondusive to the promotion of women’s rights,³⁵ went so far as to accuse Amnesty of promoting “a system of gender apartheid” by allowing the setting aside of women for the consumption of men.³⁶ This goes to show that the issue is still being fiercely debated.

II.II.II Unlikely Advocacy Partnerships

One of the most fascinating aspects of this debate concerns the uncommon and diverse composition of groups on either side of the issue. In the United States for example, the abolitionist camp consists of “abolitionist feminists, evangelical Christians, and both conservative and liberal government officials.”³⁷ Although these groups are fighting for a common cause, they have very different roots behind their motivation. As Chuang puts it, they “diverge over why prostitution

³³ Janie A. Chuang, “Rescuing Trafficking from Ideological Capture: Prostitution Reform and Anti-Trafficking Law and Policy,” *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 158, no. 6 (2010): 1660.

³⁴ Darren Geist, “5 Reasons to be wary of Amnesty’s Prostitution Policy,” *Rolling Stone*, June 1, 2016, accessed November 9, 2018, <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/5-reasons-to-be-wary-of-amnestys-prostitution-policy-198762/>.

³⁵ Richard Orange, “Legalizing Prostitution: Has Sweden's Law Prosecuting Buyers, Not Sellers Worked?” *Independent*, August 7, 2015, accessed November 15, 2018, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/legalising-prostitution-has-swedens-law-prosecuting-buyers-not-sellers-worked-10446167.html>.

³⁶ Emily Bazelon, “Should Prostitution be a Crime? A Growing Movement of Sex Workers and Activists Making the Decriminalization of Sex Work a Feminist Issue,” *New York Times Magazine*, May 5, 2016, accessed November 11, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/08/magazine/should-prostitution-be-a-crime.html>.

³⁷ Elisabeth Bernstein, “ Militarized Humanitarianism Meets Carceral Feminism: The Politics of Sex, Rights, and Freedom in Contemporary Antitrafficking Campaigns,” *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 36, no. 1 (2010): 46.

should be abolished; to challenge patriarchal structural inequality or to sustain it.”³⁸ Thus, leftist and feminist groups tend to argue that the patriarchal structure that enables prostitution is inherently unequal and must be eliminated, while the conservative and evangelical Christian groups are concerned with abolishing prostitution to protect “heterosexual, nuclear families”³⁹ and ideas of purity.

Kissil explains that the questions feminists grapple with when framing the issue in terms of equality is “whether emancipation from male sexual oppression (prostitute as a victim) or freedom of choice (prostitute as a worker) is the primary equality issue.”⁴⁰ As Kissil points out, there is also a divide among feminists along racial lines because African American women accuse many vocal activists of framing the issue primarily in terms of sexism and class inequality despite the fact that women of color tend to be in prostitution longer and a higher percentage of them are arrested for prostitution.⁴¹ In Austria, there is also a strong racial component that will later be considered in the analysis.

Liberals display a similar split as the feminists in positioning themselves regarding this issue. Conservatives, as well as evangelical and Catholic Christians, are conversely positioned quite homogenously on the abolitionist or even prohibitionist side of the debate, mainly because of their moral and ideological values concerning family, sex, and marriage. As Chappel points out, for the Catholic Church, where it lost institutional power in terms of schools or organizations and was relegated to the private sphere around the 1930s, the nuclear family was seen as “[...] the last redoubt of social virtue and the institution to be protected above all else.”⁴²

According to Bernstein, evangelical activism increased drastically when faith-based organizations became eligible for federal funding after the Bush Administration expanded upon Clinton’s “charitable choice” initiative in 2001 with the establishment of the Office of Faith-based

³⁸ Janie A. Chuang, “Rescuing Trafficking from Ideological Capture: Prostitution Reform and Anti-Trafficking Law and Policy,” *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 158, no. 6 (2010): 1666.

³⁹ Elisabeth Bernstein, *Brokered Subjects: Sex, Trafficking, and the Politics of Freedom*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 55.

⁴⁰ Karni Kissil and Maureen Davey, “The Prostitution Debate in Feminism: Current Trends, Policy and Clinical Issues Facing an Invisible Population,” *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy, Taylor & Francis Group* 22, no. 1 (2010): 6.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴² James Chappel, *Catholic Modern: The Challenge of Totalitarianism and the Remaking of the Church* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 64.

Initiatives.⁴³ Thus, donations strongly increased for Christian groups such as International Justice Mission (IJM).⁴⁴ IJM is a Christian non-profit organization, which consists of lawyers and social workers and has often staged brothel-raids in various countries including Cambodia, India and Thailand in cooperation with local authorities. Their tactics are sometimes criticized, but they have pursued this path in light of their mission to ‘free the slaves’, meaning all those trapped in exploitative labor relations, including prostitutes.⁴⁵ Evangelical activism often focusses on the link between human trafficking and prostitution as will be explained further on.

Bernstein further argues that the more recent politically active generations of younger evangelical Christians are turning from what they perceive to be too divisive issues, such as abortion and gay marriage, and are gearing towards a path of humanitarian and social justice issues, following a more mainstream flow of ideas of justice, such as poverty alleviation and promoting human rights.⁴⁶ This does not necessarily mean that they care less about these more controversial issues, but rather that they consider social justice issues as more pressing; their environment exerts more pressure to conform, with many issues already having been decided in law with rulings such as *Roe v. Wade* or the legalization of gay marriage. Of course, these issues are still hotly debated on both sides, but it is Bernstein’s argument that younger generations of evangelicals are shifting their main emphasis to social justice, even if older generations still primarily mobilize for these more controversial issues.

According to Bazelon, human rights advocates prefer sex-worker unionizing to prohibition as a means of preventing trafficking and reducing the spread of disease with organized condom distributions, rather than brothel-raids. She points out, however, that others are angered by this

⁴³ Elisabeth Bernstein, *Brokered Subjects: Sex, Trafficking, and the Politics of Freedom*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 11.

⁴⁴ Emily Bazelon, “Should Prostitution be a Crime? A Growing Movement of Sex Workers and Activists Making the Decriminalization of Sex Work a Feminist Issue,” *New York Times Magazine*, May 5, 2016, accessed November 11, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/08/magazine/should-prostitution-be-a-crime.html>.

⁴⁵ Elisabeth Bernstein, *Brokered Subjects: Sex, Trafficking, and the Politics of Freedom*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 81.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 80.

approach, since they argue that these are merely means of protecting men from AIDS but not women from exploitation.⁴⁷

II.II.III Varying national legal policies

In order to understand the full extent of the issue as debated in international politics, it is important to first consider the divergent individual national policies on prostitution. The U.S., Swedish and Dutch models are examined here because their divergent policies cover the main models on the spectrum of national policy possibilities on the issue.

In the USA prostitution is illegal in all states except Nevada. Strikingly, the penalties for prostitution, purchasing sex and related activities such as pimping and brothel keeping vary strongly from being classified as a misdemeanor in North Dakota with 30 days and/or a \$1,500 fine per offence and Idaho differentiating between the severity of punishment between first and further offences, with up to 5 years imprisonment and/or up to \$50,000 fine from the third offence onwards.⁴⁸ The customer's punishment varies to a similar extent, being mostly equal to that of the prostitute, but potentially also more (e.g. Colorado) or less severe (e.g. Delaware) in certain states.⁴⁹ Consequently, the US has a very elevated number of arrests of up to 55,000 per year in connection with prostitution, a disproportionate majority of which affect women of color, which shows the issue's intersectionality with race.⁵⁰

In 1999 Sweden took the unique approach of legalizing the selling of sex while simultaneously criminalizing the purchase of sexual services. This has the effect of protecting prostitutes and criminally charging and prosecuting buyers. Östergren and Dodillet explain that feminist policy makers introducing the bill framed prostitution as a form of physical and psychological male violence against women, which no woman would partake in voluntarily and which had to be

⁴⁷ Emily Bazelon, "Should Prostitution be a Crime? A Growing Movement of Sex Workers and Activists Making the Decriminalization of Sex Work a Feminist Issue," *New York Times Magazine*, May 5, 2016, accessed November 11, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/08/magazine/should-prostitution-be-a-crime.html>.

⁴⁸ "US Federal and State Prostitution Laws and Related Punishments," *ProCon*, last updated April 5, 2018, accessed November 4, 2018, <https://prostitution.procon.org/view.resource.php?resourceID=000119>.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Emily Bazelon, "Should Prostitution be a Crime? A Growing Movement of Sex Workers and Activists Making the Decriminalization of Sex Work a Feminist Issue," *New York Times Magazine*, May 5, 2016, accessed November 11, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/08/magazine/should-prostitution-be-a-crime.html>.

eradicated if a gender-equal society was to be achieved.⁵¹ In time, Norway, Iceland, Northern Ireland, Canada, France and Ireland have followed suit in adopting what is dubbed ‘The Nordic model’.⁵² A decade after its implementation, the government claimed the policy as a sweeping success, finding that street prostitution had halved by 2008 and that it had not shifted to the internet as some had suspected. They also cited the National Criminal Police as stating that the law had worked as a deterrent to procurers, traffickers and customers, which was the desired effect.⁵³

Two years after Sweden passed its law to criminalize purchasing sex, Germany went the opposite route and declared prostitution to be a regular profession in 2001. This displeased the Swedish government as Dodillet quotes the Swedish minister for equality between men and women, Margareta Winberg, saying: “I deeply dislike what’s going on in Germany. It is a strike against equality. It is a strike against brotherhood.”⁵⁴ So why did Germany choose this other policy? Germany appears to not see prostitution as an issue in itself as the Swedes do, to differentiate more between different circumstances of prostitution, and exclude problems associated with prostitution from the discussion, such as drug abuse, incest and sex trafficking which are frequently mentioned in Sweden.⁵⁵

From the mid-20th century onwards, the Netherlands had a “tolerance policy” towards prostitution meaning the practice was unlawful, but the government formally suspended the enforcement of legislation.⁵⁶ Post et. al. explains that the Christian democrats managed to block liberalizing legislative initiatives, since they vehemently opposed the idea of sex work, until 1994 when they were not part of the government.⁵⁷ Consequently, parliament was able to lift the ban on brothels in 2000. From there on out Post et. al. note a difference in the Dutch legislators’ approach to

⁵¹ Petra Östergren and Susanne Dodillet, “The Swedish Sex Purchase Act: Claimed Success and Documented Effects,” *Conference paper presented at the International Workshop: Decriminalizing Prostitution and Beyond: Practical Experiences and Challenges* (The Hague, March 3 and 4, 2011), accessed January 14, 2018, <https://www.nswp.org/sites/nswp.org/files/Impact%20of%20Swedish%20law.pdf>.

⁵² The Nordic Model website, accessed January 20, 2019, <https://nordicmodelnow.org/what-is-the-nordic-model/>.

⁵³ Government Offices of Sweden, *Report: Prohibition of the Purchase of Sexual Services: An Evaluation 1999-2008* (SOU 2010:49), July 2, 2010, accessed January 20, 2019, <https://www.government.se/articles/2011/03/evaluation-of-the-prohibition-of-the-purchase-of-sexual-services/>.

⁵⁴ Susanne Dodillet, “Cultural Clash on Prostitution: Debates on Prostitution in Germany and Sweden in the 1990s,” in *First Global Conference: Critical Issues in Sexuality* (Salzburg, Austria, October 2004), 1.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁵⁶ Che Post, Ian Brower and Michael Vols, “Regulation of Prostitution on the Netherlands: Liberal Dream or Growing Repression?” *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research* published online February 23, 2018, accessed January 22, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10610-018-9371-8>.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

prostitution, estimating it to be a non-eliminable phenomenon, which thus called for a realistic rather than moralistic approach by the government. Legalization and decentralized regulation of prostitution and brothels ensued, with the law distinguishing between forced and voluntary prostitution.⁵⁸

II.II.IV Link to Human Trafficking

In addition, there is the issue of the link between prostitution and human trafficking. While some argue that criminalizing prostitution reduces human trafficking numbers because the penalties work as a disincentive for traffickers and the illegal status also reduces the demand for prostitution among buyers, others worry that prohibition forces the business underground and thus trafficking increases when it is not given a legal space.

In their study, which covered data from over 150 countries, Seo-Young et al. found that “on average, countries where prostitution is legal experience larger reported human trafficking inflows.”⁵⁹ Jakobsson and Kotsdam have found similar results in their cross-country analysis of European countries, namely that “trafficking of persons for commercial sexual exploitation is least prevalent in countries where prostitution is illegal, most prevalent in countries where prostitution is legalized, and in between in those countries where prostitution is legal but procuring illegal.”⁶⁰ However, Jakobsson and Kotsdam also found that “harsher prostitution laws may not only lead to decreased quantities but also to increased violence and other related criminality, as well as increased stigmatization for women working in these markets.”⁶¹ There thus seems to be a trade-off between the amount of people trafficked into prostitution and the quality of protection granted to those in prostitution. It must also be considered that studies attempting to answer this question have been scarce, since exact data on instances of human trafficking are quite difficult to come by.

In 2002, Kuo⁶² looked at the effect of prostitution policy on the amount of prostitution within a country, disregarding the trafficking aspect, and found that criminalization does not lead to an

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Cho Seo-Young, Axel Dreher and Eric Neumayer, “Does legalized Prostitution Increase Human Trafficking?” *World Development* 41, no.1 (2013): 75-76.

⁶⁰ Niklas Jakobsson and Andreas Kotsadam, “The Law and Economics of International Sex Slavery: Prostitution Laws and Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation,” *European Journal of Law and Economics* 35, no.1 (2013): 16-17.

⁶¹ Ibid., 17.

⁶² Leonore Kuo, *Prostitution policy: Revolutionizing Practice Through a Gendered Perspective* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2002).

automatic decline in the practice of prostitution, as it appeared to be on the rise in the US despite its illegal status in 49 states. The government of Sweden found the opposite to be true, when reviewing the effects of their law.⁶³ There might, however, be merit to looking into whether it is the illegal status of prostitution per se which affects the amount of prostitution or the extent to which law breakers are in fact prosecuted and punished.

Another issue in this debate is that human trafficking is often conflated with smuggling, which in contrast to women being trafficked against their will, might include those who wish to engage in prostitution elsewhere to make a better living and consequently employ the services of smugglers to see them to their destination.⁶⁴ Despite being distinguished in law, it appears that activists on the abolitionist side tend not to distinguish between the two, framing both in terms of forced recruitment into prostitution.

The nature of the link between prostitution and human trafficking is essential to the lobbies' arguments on either side, but because it remains contested and evidence is elusive, it is beyond the scope of this study to try to establish the nature of this link. Nevertheless, since it is important to understand the arguments, policies and legal developments surrounding this link, it will be further discussed in the following sections.

II.II.V International Relevance of Domestic Policies

Regarding this contentious issue, US domestic policies may have a far larger reach, since as Bumiller⁶⁵ shows, the US began exporting the feminists' neoliberal sexual violence interpretation of prostitution as part of their human rights policy in the early 2000s. Consequently, Chuang has found that "neo-abolitionists have successfully promoted their anti-prostitution agenda worldwide through targeted legal reforms that condition U.S. financial assistance to governments, NGOs, and government contractors on the recipients' commitment to an anti-prostitution stance."⁶⁶ The US State Department thus has a fact sheet on every country including Austria, which is rated as a tier

⁶³ Government Offices of Sweden, *Report: Prohibition of the Purchase of Sexual Services: An Evaluation 1999-2008* (SOU 2010:49), July 2, 2010, accessed January 20, 2019, <https://www.government.se/articles/2011/03/evaluation-of-the-prohibition-of-the-purchase-of-sexual-services/>.

⁶⁴ Joyce Outshoorn, "The Political Debates on Prostitution and Trafficking of Women," *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*. Oxford University Press 12, no.1 (2005), 147.

⁶⁵ Kristin Bumiller, *In an Abusive State: How Neoliberalism Appropriated the Feminist Movement against Sexual Violence* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 14.

⁶⁶ Janie A. Chuang, "Rescuing Trafficking from Ideological Capture: Prostitution Reform and Anti-Trafficking Law and Policy," *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 158, no. 6 (2010), 1658.

one country stating that “[t]he Government of Austria fully meets the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The government continued to demonstrate serious and sustained efforts during the reporting period; therefore, Austria remained on Tier 1.”⁶⁷

II.II.VI Instruments of International Law

Outshoorn notes that “[a]fter widespread public upheaval about “white slavery”—the recruitment of white women into sexual slavery in the 1880s—the trafficking of women was outlawed in international law in 1904.”⁶⁸ After the world wars, this was expanded upon by the United Nations in the 1949 International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons. Then, in 1979, the United Nations passed The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. This convention called on states “[...] to suppress all forms of traffic in women and the exploitation of prostitution,”⁶⁹ thus keeping the contended link between trafficking and prostitution intact in international law. Preserving this link came to be one of the central aims of the neo-abolitionist feminist NGO Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), which was founded in 1988.⁷⁰ According to Outshoorn, the first policy shift in international law away from abolitionism and towards an uncoupling of prostitution and human trafficking came with the UN’s Vienna Declaration of 1993. On the European level, the Colombo Svevo Report on human trafficking of 1995, which “accepted the distinction between voluntary and forced prostitution”⁷¹ and did not call for the elimination of all prostitution, was backed by the European Parliament (Resolution 1996) despite opposition from religious and conservative groups. As Jakobsson and Kotsadam⁷² note, however, it took until 2000 for the UN to reach a consensus on the controversial definition of human trafficking with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,

⁶⁷ US department of State Diplomacy in Action, *Country Narratives: Trafficking in Persons 2018 Report: Austria*, accessed January 5, 2019, <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2018/282605.htm>.

⁶⁸ Joyce Outshoorn, “The Political Debates on Prostitution and Trafficking of Women,” *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*, Oxford University Press 12, no. 1 (2005): 142.

⁶⁹ UN, “Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,” CEDAW, July 3, 2000, Article 6, accessed January 6 2019, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw24/cedawcbdi1.pdf>.

⁷⁰ Joyce Outshoorn, “The Political Debates on Prostitution and Trafficking of Women,” *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*. Oxford University Press 12, no.1 (2005): 150.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁷² Niklas Jakobsson and Andreas Kotsadam, “The Law and Economics of International Sex Slavery: Prostitution Laws and Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation,” *European Journal of Law and Economics* 35, no.1 (2013), 90.

a Protocol on Trafficking and a Migrant Smuggling Protocol, commonly known as the Palermo Protocols.⁷³ Trafficking in humans was defined as:

“[...] the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”⁷⁴

The definition cited prostitution as only one potential sub-category of human trafficking, thus rejecting the proposition that all prostitutes are trafficked or that the sole goal of trafficking is forced prostitution. Despite the increased unlinking of prostitution and trafficking in international law, however, Vanwesenbeeck finds that as recently as 2017 there have been renewed tendencies towards increased criminalization and repression by the continued practice of neo-abolitionists to equate prostitution and trafficking, leading toward more punitive “demand reduction” strategies.⁷⁵ Notably, with the coming into force of the Rome Statute in 2002, human trafficking was upgraded in severity as a crime against humanity under Article 7.2.⁷⁶

On a European level, in 2014 the European Parliament voted in favor of passing a resolution dubbed the Honeyball-Report⁷⁷ on sexual exploitation and prostitution and its impact on gender equality. Consequently, the EU recommended that member states adopt the Nordic model which criminalizes the buying of sex.⁷⁸ This means that the EU adopted an abolitionist stance, but notably not due to the link between prostitution and human trafficking, but for reasons linked to gender

⁷³ Joyce Outshoorn, “The Political Debates on Prostitution and Trafficking of Women,” *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*. Oxford University Press 12, no.1 (2005), 149.

⁷⁴ UN General Assembly, *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, November 15, 2000, accessed November 21, 2018, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4720706c0.html>.

⁷⁵ Ine Vanwesenbeeck, “Sex Work Criminalization Is Barking Up the Wrong Tree,” *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 46, no. 6 (2017): 1631-1640.

⁷⁶ General Assembly, *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, July 17, 1998, last amended 2010, ISBN No. 92-9227-227-6, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3a84.html>.

⁷⁷ European Parliament, *Report on Sexual Exploitation and Prostitution and its Impact on Gender Equality*, Rapporteur: Mary Honeyball, February 4, 2014, accessed April 12, 2019, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2014-0071+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>.

⁷⁸ Maya Oppenheim, “MEPs Vote to Criminalize Buying Sex,” *Guardian*, February 26, 2014, accessed November 15, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2014/feb/26/meps-vote-criminalise-buying-sex-european-parliament>.

equality. Because this is only a recommendation, however, member states are under no obligation to adopt the Nordic model and most European countries have not done so.

In sum, this chapter has established that prostitution policy in Austria developed from prohibition to legalization from the mid-70s onwards and was accompanied by relatively strong regulation. Historically, otherwise uncommon advocacy partnerships have been formed in countries like the USA, with liberal and feminist groups on both sides of the argument. Furthermore, domestic legal policies may have international relevance as they do in the American case because foreign aid money is subject to domestic policy guidelines and might therefore only be received by another country if they adopt the relevant policies. The link to human trafficking remains contested and essential to the debate and is also reflected in instruments of international law meant to guide policy behavior. Next, the Austrian case regarding the history of the lobbies and lawmaking will be examined in more detail.

III. Chapter II: History of Lobbying and Lawmaking

This chapter will first delve into the history of Austrian prostitution policy and the small sex workers movements of the late 70s and early 80s. Next, an original composition of umbrella groups and platforms that lobbies participate in to promote their position, along with the governmental working groups which advise the government on prostitution policy, will be examined. Finally, the history, position and goals of the individual groups will be analysed using newly collected primary sources and archival materials.

III.I Austrian prostitution policy history

It was long ago that prostitution was completely forbidden in Austria. Empress Maria Theresia (1740-1780) installed a *Keuschheitskommission* (chastity commission) and stipulated that prostitutes and other “anti-social” people be shipped out of the country.⁷⁹ Ever since those times, however, prostitution has been viewed as a necessary evil which must be tolerated but regulated by the state.⁸¹ In the 1850s, a doctor of the Viennese police first proposed that prostitutes should be registered by the police and receive two health checks a week.⁸² Then in 1873, the head of Viennese police Le Monnier made health certificates obligatory by reforming Viennese code on prostitution.⁸³ Prostitutes who complied with these terms were then no longer criminally prosecuted by the police, despite prostitution remaining part of the criminal code in Austria until 1975 when it came under the jurisdiction of civil and administrative law.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Werner Sabitzer, “300 Jahre Maria Theresia: Die Polizeireformen Maria Theresias,” *Öffentliche Sicherheit: Das Magazin des Innenministeriums* 3, no. 4 (2017): 53-54, accessed March 28, 2019, https://www.bmi.gv.at/magazinfiles/2017/03_04/files/300%20jahre%20maria%20theresia.pdf.

⁸⁰ Anita Winkler, “Maria Theresia und das Sechste Gebot,” *Die Welt der Habsburger*, last modified March 25, 2019, accessed March 29, 2019, <http://www.habsburger.net/de/kapitel/maria-theresia-und-das-sechste-gebot>.

⁸¹ Steffi, Vasold and Kati Hellwagner, “Sozialistische Jugend Österreich: Prostitution - zwischen Ablehnung, Marginalisierung und Akzeptanz. Interview mit Eva van Rahden von SILA,” *Internet Archive Wayback Machine*, July 21, 2011, accessed March 29, 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20110721232836/http://www.sjoe.at/content/frauen/themen/koerper/article/618.html>.

⁸² Werner Sabitzer, “Geschichte der Prostitution in Wien: Von ‚Unzüchtigen Weibspersonen‘,” *Öffentliche Sicherheit* 11, no. 12 (2000), accessed April 13, 2019, https://www.bmi.gv.at/magazinfiles/2000/11_12/files/geschichte%20der%20prostitution.pdf.

⁸³ Werner Sabitzer, “Wiens Erster Polizeipräsident,” *Öffentliche Sicherheit* 1, no. 2 (2012): 43, accessed March 29, 2019, https://www.bmi.gv.at/magazinfiles/2012/01_02/files/polizeigeschichte.pdf.

⁸⁴ Hendrik Wagenaar, Sietske Altink and Helga Amesberger, *Final Report of the International Comparative Study of Prostitution Policy*, The Hague: Platform31, 2013.

Up until the late 1970s and 1980s there was no concrete political lobby concerned with prostitution. Changes in the legal code were instead prompted by external circumstances that compelled lawmakers to adapt to reality. A century earlier the legal code had been changed since shipping prostitutes out of the country did not lead to a reduction in prostitution, so the state turned to regulation. In 1989, under paragraph 210 of the penal code (§210 StGB) homosexual male prostitution was legalized mainly due to the fear of HIV spreading and the wish to control this through mandatory medical check-ups.⁸⁵

III.II Sex Worker Movements

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the first groups that organized themselves to lobby for prostitution policy consisted of prostitutes themselves. Waldenberger presents a detailed historical record of this *Hurenbewegung* (whores' movement) in Austria.⁸⁶ She describes the initial efforts by Austrian women's movements and sex workers as very marginal, listing only a handful of initiatives between 1978-81 and in 1997. In 1978, led by the autonomous women's movement⁸⁷, 350 women went to a nightclub stating that they will turn it into a women's shelter. In 1980 another group of self-employed prostitutes, who were confronted by increasing police repression, lodged in a *Stundenhotel* (hour hotel) called Weinstock and began to make collective demands (including an end to patronage and the marriage ban), which they distributed in March of 1980 in a self-written leaflet. This protest was however put down by the state who bought and demolished the *Stundenhotel* Weinstock, which ended the cooperation between this rare group of self-reliant sex workers and the autonomous women's movement at that point.

Waldenberger notes another initiative in 1981 by 13 Viennese sex workers who demanded recognition of prostitution as sex work and equal legal treatment with other professions with leaflets and a battle song. The initiative was prompted by legal discussions concerning new

⁸⁵ Statistik Austria, "Gerichtliche Kriminalstatistik 2009," Alexander Hanika and Barbara Bauer, 2010, 22-23, accessed April 15, 2019, https://www.wienerzeitung.at/em/daten/funkinform/2014/06/17/140617_D1442_gerichtliche_kriminalstatistik_2009_statistik_austria.pdf.

⁸⁶ Almuth Waldenberger, "... wie andere auch! Geschichte und Debatten der Hurenbewegung in Deutschland und Österreich von den 1970er Jahren bis 2011" (*Diplomarbeit*, Universität Wien, 2012), 116-117.

⁸⁷ For more information on the autonomous women's movement see: https://www.geschichtewiki.wien.gv.at/Neue_Frauenbewegung

regulation of prostitution in Austria and Vienna in particular. This enterprise seems, however, also not to have been particularly consequential, as Waldenberger notes that in October of 1982 at the *Fachtagung 'Prostitution-Zuhälterei'* (conference on prostitution and pimping) no representative of a women's organization nor a sex worker was present. Neither did the state appear to make any reference to the demands of such groups in the resulting amendments to the law that was born out of this conference, according to Sauer.⁸⁸ Next, Lilith was founded in 1997 as an organization which aimed to improve communication between sex workers and the public, but it was disbanded in 2001.⁸⁹

Meanwhile in Linz, the Verband der Prostituierten Österreichs/VdPÖ (Association of Prostitutes of Austria), had been founded in 1986 and wanted to be perceived as a worker's union with the aims of promoting the status of prostitution, advising members on tax and legal issues and improving the communication between members as well as magistrates and other state institutions.⁹⁰ According to Waldenberger⁹¹ the VdPÖ initially had 200 members from all over Austria and gained increasing support from non-sex workers, although only sex workers (not including pimps) had the right to vote on issues within the association. After its initial success, however, the VdPÖ was not able to organize itself in a sustainable fashion as there was a lack of finances and many free riders. The society also consisted mainly of self-employed sex workers, meaning only they, and not the majority of sex workers in brothels who were dependent on pimps, were organized. Among the VdPÖ's successes one can count the progress in lobbying for legislation that led to the inclusion of sex work in the social security system in 1998⁹² and, according to Sauer, the hint of a gender-aspect in the Viennese Prostitution law of 1991.⁹³ The VdPÖ was disbanded in 1992.

⁸⁸ Birgit Sauer, "Taxes, Rights and Regimentation. Discourses on Prostitution in Austria," in *The Policies of Prostitution: Women's Movements and the State*, ed. Joyce Outshoorn (Cambridge UP, 2004), 41-61.

⁸⁹ Almuth Waldenberger, "... wie andere auch! Geschichte und Debatten der Hurenbewegung in Deutschland und Österreich von den 1970er Jahren bis 2011" (*Diplomarbeit*, Universität Wien, 2012), 120.

⁹⁰ Ibid, 121.

⁹¹ Ibid, 122-126.

⁹² Arbeitsgruppe Prostitution, *Regelung der Prostitution in Österreich: Empfehlungen der Arbeitsgruppe „Prostitution“ im Rahmen der Taskforce Menschenhandel*, III-216 der Beilage XXVI. GP, Mai 2018, 5, accessed April 19, 2019. https://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXVI/III/III_00216/imfname_721010.pdf

⁹³ Birgit Sauer, "Taxes, Rights and Regimentation. Discourses on Prostitution in Austria," in *The Policies of Prostitution: Women's Movements and the State*, ed. Joyce Outshoorn (Cambridge UP, 2004), 49-60.

In 2005 sexworker.at, which is both an Internet platform and an association (Verein Sex worker Forum) and presents itself as an NGO in Austria, was founded by a Viennese couple to fight for the interests of sex workers. A customer who became interested in the site, Christian Knappik, soon became its main protagonist, taking over in 2006. One of its main goals is to provide members with connections and to build a network both locally and internationally among sex workers. Its growing number of users and its 24-hour-phone hotline, which is personally tended to by Knappik, has increased its international visibility in the German speaking world. In 2007 the financially independent sexworker.at entered a close working relationship with Sophie (a counseling center for sex workers, which is supported by the SPÖ-affiliated Volkshilfe Wien). Finally, in 2010 at the behest of the Austrian state the Verein Sexworker Forum, among other NGOs, drafted a shadow report on the human rights situation of sex workers in Austria in the context of the United Nations Convention Against Torture (UN’CAT).⁹⁴⁹⁵

As can be seen from this brief overview of the politically active groups regarding prostitution policy in Vienna, the first groups which were formed in the 1970s, 80s and 90s consisted of sex workers who banded together to lobby for policies that would improve their situation. In general, those active in these groups seem to have been self-employed sex workers who were independent from pimps and brothel owners. Moreover, these groups tended to last for only a brief period, up to a couple of years, but they were all disbanded. Sexworker.at is the only group which continues today and comes closest to a political lobbying group that is driven by sex workers themselves. At its head however is not a sex worker, but Knappik, a brothel customer who is passionate about this business. One potential interpretation for the absence of groups like sex workers unions could be the decline of self-reliant prostitutes. Ninety-five percent⁹⁶ of prostitutes in Vienna are migrants who are increasingly controlled by pimps, and it is difficult for foreigners with different languages and legal status in Vienna to organize themselves.

⁹⁴ Almuth Waldenberger, “... wie andere auch! Geschichte und Debatten der Hurenbewegung in Deutschland und Österreich von den 1970er Jahren bis 2011“ (*Diplomarbeit*, Universität Wien, 2012), 127-130.

⁹⁵ In 2009, Austria submitted a report to be treated in the UN committee which asked NGOs to make their own statements, so-called 'shadow reports'. *Sexworker.at* then came up with four main points of criticism for the state's position on dealings with sex workers and considered these deficiencies to constitute “degrading treatment of sex workers” and “forms of psychological torture”. See Waldenberger p. 128-129.

⁹⁶ Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior, *Jahresbericht Bundeskriminalamt: Lagebericht Menschenhandel und grenzüberschreitender Prostitutionshandel 2017*, 14, accessed April 18, 2019, <https://bundeskriminalamt.at/502/start.aspx>.

III.III Umbrella Groups, Platforms and Governmental Working Groups

The following section will provide an overview of the platforms and umbrella groups that some lobbies form to bundle their efforts and better promote their common position. Moreover, the composition and functioning of governmental working groups, which are key in policy making, will be explored before moving to examine the lobbying groups themselves.

III.III.I Pro-Liberalization Platforms and Umbrella Groups

*Österreichischer Frauenring*⁹⁷

The Austrian umbrella organization of Austrian women's associations positioned itself on the pro-sex work liberalization side in 2008.⁹⁸ In a footnote they state that their position is based on the expertise of LEFÖ.⁹⁹ LEFÖ and Sophie are ÖFR members along with various other women's groups. Internationally, the ÖFR is part of the European Women's Lobby, however, which advocates the Nordic Model.

TAMPEP

Given the internationalization of sex work and the international nature of trafficking in women, LEFÖ has developed an international network to promote the implementation of women's rights at European level. To this end, they have joined TAMPEP,¹⁰⁰ a “European Network for the promotion of rights and health among migrant sex workers”¹⁰¹ that focuses exclusively on advocacy and networking on a European level. LEFÖ also promotes awareness within public authorities, the media and society through targeted public relations and media work in the areas of feminism, migrant women, sex work, trafficking in women, and women's rights. TAMPEP's and therefore LEFÖ's advocacy goals are to have sex work recognized as work, to promote “equal protection and access to health, rights, and justice”, to “fight stigma”, “to oppose the conflation of migration, trafficking, and sex work, as well as the use of trafficking laws against migrant and mobile sex workers”, and to oppose the “criminalization of migration, sex work, and health status.”¹⁰²

⁹⁷ See: Austrian Women's Ring website, accessed March 27, 2019, <https://www.frauenring.at/>.

⁹⁸ See: ÖFR Position Paper on Sex Work, accessed March 27, 2019, <https://www.frauenring.at/sites/default/files/artikel/OEFR-Sexarbeit-Stellungnahme.pdf>.

⁹⁹ Ibid.: 1. “Das Positionspapier des ÖFR basiert auf der Expertise von LEFÖ, die sich bereits seit 1993 - als erste Migrant*innenorganisation Österreichs - für die Rechte von Sexarbeiter*innen einsetzt.”

¹⁰⁰ See: “Who we are,” TAMPEP website, accessed April 14, 2019, <https://tampep.eu/about-tampep/>.

¹⁰¹ See: “Vision,” TAMPEP website, accessed April 14, 2019, <https://tampep.eu/vision/>.

¹⁰² See: “Who We Are,” TAMPEP website, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://tampep.eu/about-tampep/>.

III.III.II Neo-Abolitionist Platform and Umbrella Group

Stopp Sexkauf

The Initiative Stopp-Sexkauf¹⁰³ was launched in 2016 with the first press conference on the issue held at the Swedish Embassy in Vienna.¹⁰⁴ In an interview with the author, Kienesberger, from Verein Feministischer Diskurs, explained that this was designed to bundle the effort of groups advocating that the Nordic model be implemented in Vienna, as it was in countries like Sweden, Norway, Ireland, Canada and France.¹⁰⁵ The position is summarized and presented as follows:

“The premise of this movement is that prostitution is not a profession like any other; rather it constitutes a breach in both the integrity and the dignity of women. She is therefore never acting out of free will, because women who engage in prostitution almost exclusively do so out of economic desperation. [...] In a society which esteems equality and respect, this is not a line of work which promotes these values. [...] It is only the johns and pimps who are punished by law in this model. Women who work in prostitution will not be penalized; rather they will receive counselling and other services.”¹⁰⁶

Furthermore, they insist that selling sex cannot be considered a service like any other. An ex-prostitute wrote the following in an article for Stopp-Sexkauf: “Why is prostitution not a service? Because, by definition, a service is ‘not physical and cannot be touched.’ (see: BWL textbook HAK 1) A tangible good, however, is ‘physical and can be used and touched.’”¹⁰⁷

Although the members of Stopp Sexkauf all lobby for a society free of the “system of prostitution” which “exposes women to various forms of violence”, “robs them of their dignity” and “creates the false awareness that the sexual use of women is a ‘male right’”,¹⁰⁸ they come from varied backgrounds and advocate the Nordic Model for different reasons. While Solwodi lobbies from a

¹⁰³ See: “Presse,” Stopp Sexkauf website, accessed April 12, 2019, <http://www.stoppsexkauf.at/presse/>.

¹⁰⁴ Stopp Sexkauf Press release, *Für eine Neue Prostitutionspolitik in Österreich*, February 19, 2016, accessed March 12, 2019, <http://www.stoppsexkauf.at/ssk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Presseaussendung-.pdf>.

See: “Presse,” Stopp Sexkauf website, accessed April 12, 2019: <http://www.stoppsexkauf.at/presse/>.

¹⁰⁵ Stopp Sexkauf, „Positionspapier der Initiative Stopp Sexkauf,“ accessed April 19, 2019.

<http://www.stoppsexkauf.at/ueber-uns/positionspapier-der-initiative-stoppsexkauf/>.

¹⁰⁶ See: “Background,” Herzwirk website, accessed February 10, 2019, <https://www.herzwirk-wien.at/background/>.

¹⁰⁷ German distinction between „Sachgutbenützung“ [use of tangible good] versus „Dienstleistung“ [service].

See: „‘Sachgutbenützung’ versus ‘Dienstleistung’,“ Stopp Sexkauf, June 5, 2017, accessed March 18, 2019,

<http://www.stoppsexkauf.at/sachgutbenuetzung-versus-dienstleistung/>.

„Warum handelt es sich bei der Prostitution um keine Dienstleistung? Weil per Definition eine Dienstleistung „nicht körperlich ist und nicht angefasst werden kann“. (siehe u.a.: BWL-Lehrbuch HAK 1) Ein Sachgut ist hingegen „körperlich und kann benutzt und angefasst werden.“

¹⁰⁸ Translated from German. See Stopp Sexkauf’s position paper: <http://www.stoppsexkauf.at/ueber-uns/>.

Christian and humanitarian position involving human dignity and how it is violated by coercion into prostitution in the broadest sense, Verein feministischer Diskurs comes from a feminist background which calls the system of prostitution out as being deeply patriarchal and incompatible with gender equality. Lightup comes from yet another angle of criticizing the consumer behavior that leads to the exploitation of others in society, thus offering a critique of neo-liberalism.¹⁰⁹

III.III.III Governmental Working Groups on Prostitution and the Platform against Human Trafficking

Steuerungsgruppe Prostitution

Alongside the current prostitution law which came into force in November 2011, the *Steuerungsgruppe: Prostitution* (Steering Group for Prostitution) was established in September 2011 to observe the development of the law's implementation and recommend solutions to issues that might arise. Along with the representatives of political parties, several ministries and the police, NGOs were also included to offer advice.¹¹⁰

Arbeitsgemeinschaft (AG) Prostitution

Within the framework of the *Taskforce Menschenhandel* (Taskforce Human Trafficking) the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Prostitution* (Working Group on Prostitution) was set up in March of 2009 under the direction of the Federal Ministry of Education and Women.

The group consists of various representatives of the *Länder* and a variety of ministries; LEFÖ, Sophie and MAIZ¹¹¹ are also represented in this group. There are no representatives of a sex worker's union as none really exists, but *sexworker.at* is mentioned as a group representing the interests of sex workers. Neo-abolitionist groups are also not included among the members or advisers of this group.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ These positions are further elaborated in chapter 3.

¹¹⁰ "Prostitution: Steuerungsgruppe hat das erste Mal getagt," Stadt Wien Presse-Service Rathauskorrespondenz, September 2011, accessed April 19, 2019, <https://www.wien.gv.at/presse/2011/09/09/prostitution-steuerungsgruppe-hat-das-erste-mal-getagt>.

¹¹¹ MAIZ, a pro-liberalization group, is based and mainly active in Linz, which is why this organization falls out of the scope of this work. It is, however, also influential in Vienna to some extent, which is why MAIZ was contacted for an interview, but they declined citing reasons of financial and staff cuts. They referred to LEFÖ's position on the issue.

¹¹² "Anhang Mitgliederliste" [List of Members] in *Regelung der Prostitution in Österreich: Empfehlungen der Arbeitsgruppe „Prostitution“ im Rahmen der Taskforce Menschenhandel*, March 2015, 81-82, accessed March 19, 2019,

In their position paper the AG explains: “The AG Prostitution considers it necessary to take the possible dynamics of increasing abolitionist initiatives and legal projects within the EU (e.g. appeal by Alice Schwarzer, Honeyball report, French government bill, etc.) seriously, to engage in a factual discussion internationally, and in particular at European level, and to counteract projects often influenced by moral concepts.”¹¹³ What is interesting to note is that the interviewed abolitionists did not refer to morality whatsoever, except perhaps in connection with the idea of human dignity and what one should refrain from doing to a person to safeguard their dignity.

The AG’s report gives an account of the arguments of both sides and positions itself in favor of liberalization and regulation.¹¹⁴ The neo-abolitionist side is said to aim for the prohibition of prostitution,¹¹⁵ even though this is something neo-abolitionists criticizes, since in accordance with the Nordic Model they do advocate for prostitution to be legal, so as not to harm women in prostitution, but aim to penalize the consumers and thus work on reducing prostitution. The working groups report also calls into question the efficacy of the Nordic Model as reported by the Swedish government. The position paper therefore cites the impossibility of eliminating prostitution without driving it underground¹¹⁶ and the possibility of clearly differentiating between the concept of voluntary and forced prostitution¹¹⁷ as reasons for advocating for liberalization and regulation of sex-work.

https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Menschenrechte/Bericht_AG_Prostitution.pdf.

¹¹³ AG Prostitution, *Regulierung der Prostitution versus Verbot (Kundenstrafbarkeit) Positionspapier* [Regulation of prostitution versus prohibition (customer punishability) Position Paper], March 2015, 1, accessed April 19, 2019, https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Menschenrechte/Positionspapier_AG_Prostitution_Maerz_2015_Deutsch.pdf.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 1-5.

¹¹⁵ Arbeitsgruppe Prostitution, *Regelung der Prostitution in Österreich: Empfehlungen der Arbeitsgruppe „Prostitution“ im Rahmen der Taskforce Menschenhandel*, March 2015, 8, accessed March 19, 2019, https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Menschenrechte/Bericht_AG_Prostitution.pdf. “Die sog. abolitionistischen Bestrebungen zielen auf ein Verbot von Prostitution ab – mit der Begründung, dass es sich hierbei um eine schwere Menschenrechtsverletzung handelt, die auf patriarchalen Ausbeutungs- und Unterdrückungssystemen basiert.“ [„The so-called abolitionist endeavors aim at a prohibition of prostitution - with the justification that this is a serious violation of human rights based on patriarchal exploitation and oppression systems.”]

¹¹⁶ Ibid. [“Assuming that the sex market hardly limited and certainly not avoided it is therefore the best way to allow enough legal work opportunities and to regulate them in such a way that, in addition to other legitimate interests (e.g. the residents), the focus is also on the working conditions of sex service providers.”]

¹¹⁷ Ibid. [“However, a clear concept in dealing with voluntary prostitution not only makes it possible to influence working conditions, but also offers better opportunities for counseling. Support and health care for sex service providers.”]

*Platform gegen Ausbeutung und Menschenhandel*¹¹⁸

This platform was constituted in January of 2015 and serves to provide a network to exchange information and work together to develop proposals to prevent trafficking in human beings and to support victims. Its members include Herzwerk, Caritas Wien, Solwodi, lightup and others. Associated members include LEFÖ and others along with various individual experts in the field.¹¹⁹ The debate around prostitution laws plays a central role in their discussions but they only make public such positions or claims that were unanimously adopted within the platform and there is currently no consensus on this issue.

III.IV Pro- Legalization/Liberalization Organizations

The set of groups which emerged after the small sex workers movement ended in the late 80s were the pro-legalization groups which were not driven by sex workers themselves, but by sympathetic social workers who followed a certain strand of feminism regarding prostitution.

III.IV.I LEFÖ: History, Position and Goals

LEFÖ was founded in 1985 by a group of female political refugees from Latin America with the goal of helping migrant women to process their traumatic experiences by offering them counseling, language courses and support groups.¹²⁰ With the increase of migration flows from Central and Eastern Europe, as well as internal migration from Eastern Europe to Central Europe, the interface of migration and sex work became increasingly apparent and demanded the group's attention. According to Renate Blum¹²¹, a member of LEFÖ's leadership team, the women's association was first founded to receive government subsidies to cater to migrant women's most pressing needs, such as providing a space for mutual exchange and offering German lessons. Their focus today is on empowering sex workers, as well as on improving their working and living conditions.

¹¹⁸ Platform Against Exploitation and Human Trafficking

¹¹⁹ See: "Platform Gegen Ausbeutung und Menschenhandel," website, accessed March 20, 2019, <http://gegenmenschenhandel.at/>.

¹²⁰ See LEFÖ's website for a detailed history, accessed March 20, 2019, http://www.lefoe.at/tl_files/lefoe/Mehr%20zur%20Geschichte%20von%20LEFOe.pdf.

¹²¹ Renate Blum, interview by the author, Vienna, December 10, 2018.

Initially, LEFÖ received the bulk of its finances from EU subsidies, while the aspects of LEFÖ's work to do with trafficking in women was funded by the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Women.¹²² Particularly, LEFÖ's work as the only official victim protection facility was supported by the Austrian state. A smaller portion of its funds were gained by raising donations through fundraisers. Today LEFÖ is funded by a variety of EU initiatives and Austrian ministries.¹²³

In the 1990s, as a stark increase of trafficking in women was noted across Europe, LEFÖ also began addressing this issue. Following a two-year preparatory phase, LEFÖ started work in the *Interventionsstelle für Betroffene von Frauenhandel* (IBF; Intervention Center for Victims of Trafficking in Women) in 1998. The LEFÖ-IBF is the first and main victim protection organization for victims of trafficking in women throughout Austria, offering women counsel and accommodation and seeking redress for them as victims of an international crime. They also offer trainings for NGOs, lawyers and others.¹²⁴ Their annual report of 1998 sees their counseling, mentoring, education and information work with migrant women as embedded in a conceptual communication center with a holistic approach to care.¹²⁵

In an interview with the author, Blum explained that their primary goal in their lobbying work targeting legislation in Austria was to improve the working rights, conditions and privileges of sex workers, with some more practical demands including petitions that the city of Vienna set up benches, lights and portable toilets for the sex workers who conduct business on the streets to make their working environment safer and more comfortable.¹²⁶

¹²² Redaktion, "LEFÖ in der Krise", *Der Standard*, August 1, 2005, accessed March 27, 2019, <https://derstandard.at/2122085/Lefoe-in-der-Krise>.

¹²³ See: "Förderungen," LEFÖ website, accessed March 20, 2019, <http://www.lefoe.at/index.php/foerderungen.html>.

¹²⁴ See: LEFÖ website, accessed March 20, 2019, http://www.lefoe.at/tl_files/lefoe/Mehr%20zur%20Geschichte%20von%20LEFOe.pdf.

¹²⁵ *LEFÖ Jahresbericht [Annual Report] 1998*, 2. „Das heißt, wir verstehen unsere Beratungs-, Betreuungs-, Bildungs- und Informationsarbeit mit Migrantinnen als eingebettet in ein konzeptuelles Kommunikationszentrum mit einem ganzheitlichen Betreuungsansatz.“

¹²⁶ Renate Blum, interview by the author, Vienna, December 10, 2018.

III.IV.II Sophie – Beratungszentrum für Sexarbeiterinnen¹²⁷: History, Position and Goals

Sophie is an institution geared specifically towards women in sex work under the umbrella of the charitable, SPÖ-associated association Volkshilfe. Sophie- *BildungsRaum für Prostituierte* (Educational space for prostitutes) emerged in 2005 from an EU community initiative for innovative social projects called EQUAL. In 2013, Sophie was recognized as a women's service center by the then Austrian Minister of Women Gabriele Heinisch-Hosek.¹²⁸ Sophie's funding is provided by various Viennese and Austrian departments and ministries, as well the provinces of Lower Austria and Burgenland and the European Social Fund.¹²⁹

Sophie addresses women who are or were involved in prostitution. Sophie's staff aims to adopt a work ethic that is characterized by an accepting approach to the life situations of sex workers.¹³⁰ Their goal is "to expand the scope for action of sex workers inside and outside sex work."¹³¹ Specifically, Sophie provides counseling regarding legal questions that concern sex workers, offers crisis intervention, conducts street work where they visit women and distribute information about their services but also practical items including condoms and lube.

As an NGO expert Sophie participates in working groups at both the federal and state level. They are particularly active in the Working Group on Prostitution in the framework of the Task Force Human Trafficking, which is coordinated by the Federal Ministry of Health.¹³²

¹²⁷ Counseling Center for Sex Workers

¹²⁸ "10 Jahre SOPHIE BildungsRaum für Prostituierte: Beratungsstelle für Sexarbeiterinnen erhält Anerkennung als Frauenservicestelle," APA, June 12, 2013, accessed March 26, 2019, https://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20130612_OTS0075/10-jahre-sophie-bildungsraum-fuer-prostituierte-bild.

¹²⁹ See: Sophie's website, accessed March 26, 2019, <http://www.sophie.or.at/2008/10/13/unterstutzung-fur-sexarbeiterinnen-anonym-und-kostenlos/>.

¹³⁰ "10 Jahre SOPHIE BildungsRaum für Prostituierte: Beratungsstelle für Sexarbeiterinnen erhält Anerkennung als Frauenservicestelle," APA, June 12, 2013, accessed March 26, 2019, https://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20130612_OTS0075/10-jahre-sophie-bildungsraum-fuer-prostituierte-bild.

¹³¹ See: Sophie's website, accessed March 26, 2019, <http://www.sophie.or.at/2008/10/13/unterstutzung-fur-sexarbeiterinnen-anonym-und-kostenlos/>.

„Ziel von SOPHIE ist es, die Handlungsspielräume von Sexarbeiterinnen inner- und außerhalb der Sexarbeit zu erweitern.“

¹³² Ibid.

III.V “Neo-abolitionist” Organizations

The prostitution-abolition lobby follows the Nordic Model by aiming to eliminate demand for prostitution by criminalizing the purchase of sex to reduce demand, while simultaneously protecting prostitutes by legalizing the selling of sex. The Austrian lobby consists of several small and relatively young organizations, namely of Solwodi, lightup and Verein feministischer Diskurs. There are also umbrella groups such as the initiative Stopp Sexkauf and other even smaller organizations which work with women in prostitution but are not politically active. An organization that actively promotes the prohibition of prostitution outside of the framework of the Nordic Model does not appear to exist.

III.V.I Solwodi: History, Position and Goals

Solwodi stands for Solidarity with women in distress and was founded in 1985 in Kenya. The Austrian branch, consisting of a group of *Ordensfrauen* (nuns/ religious women), who aim to assist “women / migrants who have been victims of trafficking, sexual violence and exploitation”, began its work in 2010.¹³³ Politically, Solwodi aims to improve the situation of women exploited in the sex-trade by promoting the Nordic model to reduce demand for prostitution and thereby human trafficking. Their main work, however, is practical. Women receive help from Solwodi through short- term interventions and medium or long-term counseling processes. Solwodi aims to stabilize the women’s psyche, strengthen their self-esteem and help them develop new life perspectives and make self-determined choices. The goal is to assist women in developing self-help techniques and self-reliance. The work of Solwodi Austria is funded by the Association of Austrian Women's Orders, religious communities and private donors.¹³⁴

Solwodi’s work focusses on women who have fallen victim to trafficking and those who wish to leave prostitution. It is their opinion that: “Extreme poverty and emergency situations, false promises and hopes for a better life make women leave their home countries. By exploiting helplessness or financial dependence, by threatening and using psychological and physical violence, women are forced into exploitative relationships, employment or prostitution, depriving

¹³³ See: “About Us,” Solwodi website, accessed April 7, 2019, <https://www.solwodi.at/%C3%BCber-solwodi/>.

¹³⁴ See: *Solwodi Jahresbericht [annual report] 2017*, 14. See also: <https://www.solwodi.at/%C3%BCber-solwodi/>.

them of their rights and dignity.”¹³⁵ Thus, they employ a wider definition of coercion than those in the pro-liberalization lobby, by including relational dependencies and economic need in their understanding of what constitutes coercion in trafficking in women.

Aside from offering accommodation in safehouses, psychological and social counseling and accompaniment, Solwodi also engages in raising awareness for the issue and lobbying through lectures and participation in events, to draw attention to grievances and problems that lead to emergency situations for women. They do this because they deem it important to adopt a holistic approach in this issue.¹³⁶

III.V.II Lightup: History, Position and Goals

Lightup exists in Norway, Germany and Austria and originated as *Freethem*, which was founded as a local youth-led initiative in Norway in 2008 and became an official organization in 2011. In 2016 the name was changed to lightup to better emphasize the awareness-raising aspect of the group.

Lightup is an international youth organization that seeks to “raise awareness for the issue of human trafficking and the structures behind it”. They set their focus on the issue of sexual exploitation and consequently also talk about prostitution and pornography in this context.¹³⁷ They are funded through private donations, events, the sale of promotional items and creative fundraising projects of the lightup teams.¹³⁸

They seek to do preventative work by raising awareness through empowered youth, who aim to change the public’s awareness of the issue, thereby reducing the demand of consumers for prostitution, pornography and labor exploitation.¹³⁹ Lightup offers young people a platform to raise

¹³⁵ “Extreme Armut und Notsituationen, falsche Versprechen und die Hoffnung auf ein besseres Leben bewegen Frauen dazu, ihre Heimatländer zu verlassen. Durch Ausnutzung von Hilflosigkeit oder finanzieller Abhängigkeit, mit Androhung und Ausübung von psychischer und physischer Gewalt werden Frauen in ausbeuterische Beziehungen, Arbeitsverhältnisse oder in die Prostitution gezwungen und so ihrer Rechte und Würde beraubt. Frauenhandel ist eine Verletzung der Menschenrechte.“

See: “Frauenhandel,” Solwodi website, accessed April 8, 2019, <https://www.solwodi.at/frauenhandel/>.

¹³⁶ Anna Mayrhofer, interview by author, Vienna, December 10, 2018.

¹³⁷ See: “About Us,” lightup website, accessed April 9, 2019, <http://lightup-movement.at/uber-uns>.

¹³⁸ See: “FAQ,” lightup website, accessed April 9, 2019, <http://lightup-movement.at/faq>.

¹³⁹ See: “General Information,” lightup website, accessed April 9, 2019, <http://lightup-movement.at/allgemeine-information>.

awareness for human trafficking in their communities and routinely organize lectures, talks at schools and workshops. Within Stopp Sexkauf they advocate that the Nordic Model be implemented in Austria.

III.V.III Verein Feministischer Diskurs (Society of feminist discourse): History, Position and Goals

Verein feministischer Diskurs (VFD) is a political organization which promotes socio-politically relevant political-feminist discourse.¹⁴⁰ It was born out of a feminist Master studies cohort at the Rosa Mayreder Collegs in Vienna, who wanted to continue discussing feminist issues. They first formed a reading and discussion group, followed by the founding of this association in 2012. According to a key founding member, Anita Kienesberger,¹⁴¹ they arrived at their position on prostitution through extensively studying feminist and other relevant literature, which culminated in Kienesberger's Master thesis and consequent book.¹⁴²

Kienesberger's and VFD's Nordic Model position emerged from this review of feminist literature. Although Kienesberger considered it, she deliberately did not do fieldwork for her thesis. She explained: "The survivors always say you cannot exit prostitution, because it is always part of you." Kienesberger recalls an ex-prostitute explaining that she always used to say she entered prostitution out of her own free will due to financial need, because who likes to say about themselves: 'I am not doing the right thing for me'?'¹⁴³ Kienesberger, however, finds it necessary not to focus on single cases, but to look at the broader system of dependency and power.

A change in Austrian legislation on prostitution in terms of the Nordic Model is the aim VFD strives for, along with the platform Stopp Sexkauf. In order to achieve this, they believe it is essential to promote an alternative discourse in opposition to the mainstream in Austria. In their

¹⁴⁰ See: VFD's Facebook page, accessed April 10, 2019, https://www.facebook.com/pg/verein.feministischerdiskurs/about/?ref=page_internal.

¹⁴¹ Anita Kienesberger, interview by the author, Vienna, December 20, 2018.

¹⁴² See: Anita Kienesberger, *Fucking Poor- What does 'sex work' have to do with work? A shift of the term and the effects on the discourse of prostitution* (Hamburg: Marta Press Verlag Jana Reich, 2014).

¹⁴³ Anita Kienesberger, interview by author, Vienna, December 20, 2018.

appeal they explain that they want to convince people that “[...] the deeply contemptuous, patriarchal system of prostitution must be abolished.”¹⁴⁴

III.VI Other

III.VI. I Herzwirk: History, Position and Goals

Herzwirk is an NGO that was founded in 2007 and is under one of Austria’s umbrella organizations for social services, which is linked to the Protestant Church: Diakonie Österreich.¹⁴⁵ They take a holistic approach to helping people in prostitution, by promoting self-empowerment, and offering to walk beside a person leaving prostitution, if they desire.¹⁴⁶ Having experienced that most of the individual cases “involve a personal dilemma” leading to this work, Herzwirk has set a particular focus on aiding people in “forced prostitution and human trafficking.”¹⁴⁷ Herzwirk does not receive state funding but supports itself through donations and, since 2017, partially through EU project funding.¹⁴⁸

Herzwirk is the most active organization in street work in Vienna. In 2017 they visited the two street prostitution areas 98 times, as well as 235 brothels (8 of which were large establishments called *Laufhäuser* with up to 25 women).¹⁴⁹ Their teams visit the street prostitution zone, brothels, clubs, and studios in Vienna several times a week and provide accompaniment to doctor’s or consultation appointments for the women, often also translating for those who don’t speak German or English. They also put women in prostitution in touch with partner organizations who provide free healthcare services, German classes, psychological services, crisis intervention or a way to leave prostitution if possible and desired.

¹⁴⁴ “[...] das zutiefst menschenverachtende, patriarchale System Prostitution abgeschafft werden muss.“
See: Verein Feministischer Diskurs, *Wiener Appell*, April 2013, accessed March 28, 2019, http://www.stoppsexkauf.at/wiener_appell.html.

¹⁴⁵ The Diakonie Austria, based in Vienna, is the umbrella organization of all diaconal Protestant providers in Austria. It consists of 34 organizations with around 7,500 employees. See website: <https://diakonie.at/>

¹⁴⁶ See: “Who We Are,” Herzwirk website, accessed March 22, 2019. <https://www.herzwirk-wien.at/who-we-are/>

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Caroline Sanders, interview by the author, Vienna, December 20, 2018.

¹⁴⁹ See: *Herzwirk Tätigkeitsbericht [progress report] 2017*, 3.

This extensive first-hand experience with women in prostitution has also driven Herzwirk to engage in public awareness, research and advocacy work. At schools they engage in preventative work by raising awareness for issues, such as the role of men and the demand for sexual services or the lover boy method (where young men feign being in love with women to coerce them into prostitution). Aiming also to “emphasize the role of the church and its responsibility within society,” Herzwirk co-founded the “Schluss mit Schweigen (SMS)-Netzwerk” (Break the Silence SMS-Network) in 2014.¹⁵⁰ Politically, they aim to represent “the interests of people in prostitution and victims of forced prostitution and human trafficking on a national and international level.”¹⁵¹ Consequently, Herzwirk co-founded the Austrian “Platform Against Exploitation and Human Trafficking” and are part of the EU “Civil Society Platform against Trafficking in Human Beings”. Additionally, Herzwirk is participating in the EU-funded research project “BINI-Best practices in tackling trafficking Nigerian Route.”¹⁵²

As a result of being under the umbrella of Diakonie Austria, Herzwirk is subject to the Diakonie’s positioning on the issue. While Diakonie Germany¹⁵³ has released an official statement on prostitution,¹⁵⁴ Diakonie Austria has issued no such statement for the time being. Herzwirk therefore has no official position regarding the legal status of prostitution. Internally, however, some employees personally identify with the neo-abolitionist approach and their website provides

¹⁵⁰ See: “Who We Are,” Herzwirk website, accessed March 22, 2019. <https://www.herzwirk-wien.at/who-we-are/>.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Diakonie Deutschland, “Diakonie-Position zu Menschenhandel,” Diakonie Deutschland website, October 28, 2015, accessed March 24, 2019, <https://www.diakonie.de/broschueren/diakonie-position-zu-menschenhandel/>.

¹⁵⁴ Two main takaways: **1.** Diakonie Deutschland is for regulation of prostitution not prohibition: „Die Diakonie unterstützt ausdrücklich nicht ein Verbot der Prostitution, da dies eine weitere Stigmatisierung der Prostituierten zur Folge hätte. Sie sieht jedoch dringenden Handlungsbedarf zur Regulierung des Prostitutionsgewerbes [...]. See: Diakonie Deutschland’s thesis paper of 10 points they consider important when dealing with this question: Diakonie Deutschland, “Worauf es uns ankommt: 10 Punkte in der Sozialen Arbeit mit Prostituierten und Betroffenen von Menschenhandel,” October 2015, 1-8, accessed March 24, 2019, https://www.diakonie.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Diakonie/PDFs/Journal_PDF/Thesenpapier_Prostitution-20151007.pdf.

2. Diakonie Deutschland does not consider prostitution to be a job like any other but acknowledge and accept that people make their living in this way: “Prostitution ist kein Beruf wie jeder andere, jedoch für viele eine Erwerbstätigkeit.”

See: Diakonie Deutschland. *Stellungnahme der Diakonie Deutschland – Evangelischer Bundesverband zum Referentenentwurf des BMFSFJ eines Gesetzes zur Regulierung des Prostitutionsgewerbes sowie zum Schutz von in der Prostitution tätigen Personen (ProstSchG-E)*. July 29, 2015, 1-19, Accessed March 24, 2019. https://www.diakonie.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Diakonie/PDFs/Stellungnahmen_PDF/150911_Diakonie_STN_RE_ProstSchG-E.PDF.

information on the Stopp Sexkauf (Stop Sex Work) initiative in Austria and the Swedish Model, although they are not officially part of Stopp Sexkauf.

III.VII Preliminary Conclusions

Austria opted for regulating prostitution in the 1850s and de-criminalized prostitution in 1975, although the Sittenwiedrigkeits-clause was in force until 2013. Small prostitutes' movements existed in the 70s and 80s in Austria and were first replaced by pro-sex work groups like LEFÖ and Sophie who sought to increase sex worker's rights. Herzwirk and Neo-abolitionist groups including VFD, lightup and Solwodi followed in the late 2000s, promoting the Nordic model inspired by the Swedish example.

IV. Chapter III: Evolution of the Lobbies' Arguments, Demands, Strategies and Alliances

This chapter will analyze the lobbies' motivation, their arguments and how they arrived at them, their demands, their strategies for achieving their goals and the alliances they enter for strategic purposes. Original interviews have been conducted by the author for this purpose to distill more detailed, qualitative and previously unrecorded information.

IV.I "Pro-liberalization" Organizations

These groups work for the decriminalization, liberalization and de-stigmatization of sex work and demand more liberal regulation, which entails more rights for sex workers. They often cited feminist and liberal reasons for their position.

IV.I.I LEFÖ

Motivation and Arguments

Renate Blum,¹⁵⁵ a member of the LEFÖ-leadership team, explained that the feminist and anti-racist political stance behind LEFÖ was present from the onset but has also evolved with time. She acknowledged that "There is not only one feminism but different feminisms,"¹⁵⁶ such as that of Alice Schwarzer for example, who argued against the liberalization of sex work, but for LEFÖ "the aspect of self-determination is of utmost importance."¹⁵⁷ According to Blum, this was born out of mutual exchange and discourse between the founding women and developed with their experience. An example of this is how in their annual report of 1998 LEFÖ took a clear position of demanding rights for prostitutes but did not consistently use the term sex worker at this point. It is also in this year that they worked on a position paper regarding the "Swedish model."¹⁵⁸

Blum stated that LEFÖ has "no moral approach" even though they see that "some framework conditions or things that happen in sex work are not good"¹⁵⁹ and that they "want to change society

¹⁵⁵ Renate Blum, interview by the author, Vienna, December 10, 2018.

¹⁵⁶ Blum: "Es gibt ja nicht nur einen Feminismus, sondern mehrere Feminismen."

¹⁵⁷ Blum: "[...] Der Aspekt der Selbstbestimmung ist uns am wichtigsten."

¹⁵⁸ LEFÖ *Jahresbericht 1998*, 16.

¹⁵⁹ Blum: "Wobei wir schon sehen, dass manche Rahmenbedingungen und Dinge die in der Sexarbeit passieren nicht gut sind." "Daher wollen wir schon etwas in der Gesellschaft verändern, aber auf Grund dessen was uns die Sexarbeiterinnen sagen."

based on what the sex workers say.” “At LEFÖ,” Blum said, “we speak of sex work to stress the context of work.”¹⁶⁰

It is very important to the organization to keep trafficking in women for sexual purposes or other forms of exploitation separate from sex work, because they believe that in order to help women in both situations very different approaches are required. Blum stated that there are overlapping areas, but generally they are two separate issues: “Not all are under duress and are not all exploited.”¹⁶¹

Blum considers it problematic that migrants and asylum seekers often do not have the opportunity to work in another area. “For many jobs, the doors are currently locked, but that does not mean that you are under duress, but that you do a job that brings money now and then you stop again,” she said.¹⁶² Although Blum stated that they do not actually hear sex workers ever say: “I want to do this all my life,”¹⁶³ LEFÖ believes, “that it is better that they work in this area than have no work, if it is good for them.”¹⁶⁴

When asked about her views on the neo-abolitionist position Blum stated that “We are not very willing to engage in conversation on that front. We see that [position] as very counterproductive.”¹⁶⁵ She further explained that: “We do not think that sex work should be banned. It may be that some women would then no longer be active in this field, but we do not believe that sex work would stop, but rather that sex workers would then go underground because they have an interest in conducting their business. They will not report the customers even if only they are penalized under the Swedish model. We also do not think trafficking in women would be

¹⁶⁰ LEFÖ Jahresbericht 2017, 30: “Wir sprechen auch von Sexarbeit, um den Fokus auf die Arbeit zu richten, (die erbracht wird und auf entsprechende Forderungen nach umfassenden Arbeits- und Sozialrechten für Sexarbeiter*innen).“

¹⁶¹ Blum: “Es sind nicht alle unter Zwang und werden auch nicht alle ausgebeutet.“

¹⁶² Blum: “Für viele Arbeiten sind aktuell einfach die Türen verschlossen, aber das heißt nicht, dass Sie unter Zwang stehen, sondern sie machen eine Arbeit die jetzt ein Geld bringt und dann auch wieder beendet wird.“

¹⁶³ Blum: “Das Sexarbeiterinnen sagen ich möchte das jetzt mein Leben lang machen, das erfahren wir eigentlich nicht.“

¹⁶⁴ Blum: “Wir sagen, dass es besser ist, dass sie in diesem Bereich arbeiten als gar keine Arbeit haben zu können, wenn es für sie gut ist.“

¹⁶⁵ Blum: “Wir sind da nicht sehr Gesprächsbereit, das kann man so sagen. Wir sehen das als sehr kontraproduktiv.“

reduced.”¹⁶⁶ Blum maintained that “more rights and participation is a better measure and results in more empowerment for the women.”¹⁶⁷

In sum, LEFÖ argues from an inclusive, feminist, and non-moralistic position that for reasons of self-determination, empowerment and economic necessity women should be able to work as sex workers and that this area should not be conflated with human trafficking.

Demands

LEFÖ’s demands concern the public perception and legal treatment of sex workers, as well as various legal and practical demands to do with improving their working conditions.

"Dissolving social stigmatization requires a clear political statement,"¹⁶⁸ said Blum. Therefore, LEFÖ demands that respect be enforced because “it is a human right to work”¹⁶⁹ and “every woman has the right to a dignified life,”¹⁷⁰ but currently there are a lot more obligations than rights for sex workers. Blum continued: "We see that women have different wishes regarding the work. Many are against street prostitution, but some prefer it because in brothels they are often required to consume alcohol. On the street, the women are their own bosses.”¹⁷¹ Regarding the street, therefore, LEFÖ pushes to have sanitary facilities, lights and benches installed to increase the comfort and security of sex workers.

Blum stated that "in our opinion, but also and especially for the women doing this work, it is important that they themselves are profiteers of the work and do not have to pay owners of brothels.”¹⁷² With the 2011 law,¹⁷³ safety regulations for brothels and the like have become stricter,

¹⁶⁶ Blum: “Wir halten nichts davon wenn gesagt wird das Sexarbeit verboten werden soll. Es mag sein, dass manche Frauen dann nicht mehr in dem Bereich tätig wären, aber wir glauben nicht, dass die Sexarbeit beendet werden würde, sondern wir glauben dass Sexarbeiterinnen dann in den Untergrund gehen, weil sie ja ein Interesse daran haben, dass sie ihr Geschäft machen. Desshalb wird sie auch die Kunden nicht anzeigen auch wenn nur diese bestraft werden unter dem Nordischen Modell. Wir sehen auch nicht das Frauenhandel reduziert wird.“

¹⁶⁷ Blum: “Wir denken mehr Rechte und Mitbestimmung ist eine bessere Maßnahme und bedeutet mehr Empowerment für die Frauen.“

¹⁶⁸ Blum: “Gesellschaftliche Stigmatisierung aufzulösen, dazu braucht es ein klares politisches Statement.“

¹⁶⁹ Blum: “Es ist ein Menschenrecht zu arbeiten.“

¹⁷⁰ LEFÖ *Jahresbericht 2017*, 5: „Jede Frau hat das Recht auf ein würdevolles Leben!“

¹⁷¹ Blum: “Wir sehen das Frauen unterschiedliche Wünsche haben an den Arbeitsort. Viele sind gegen den Strich aber manche bevorzugen ihn, weil in Lokalen wird oft verlangt wird das Frauen Alkohol konsumieren. Auf der Straße sind die Frauen ihre eigenen Chefinen.“

¹⁷² Blum: “Unserer Meinung nach, aber es ist für viele Frauen auch so, das es wichtig ist, dass sie selber Profiteure sind von der Arbeit und nicht an große Betreiber zahlen müssen.“

¹⁷³ Wiener Prostitutionsgesetz 2011. StF.: LGBl. Nr. 24/2011, accessed on April 17, 2019, <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000170>.

which is beneficial, but Blum criticizes that many cannot afford to pay to work there anymore. She sees small studios, shared by two or three sex workers as desirable, but for this to be possible, “the mood towards sex workers with regard to renting to them must change.”¹⁷⁴

Blum further elaborated: “We criticize that sex work is still very much assigned to the criminal area, if you think about the mandatory registration with the police and health checks. These are control mechanisms that, in our opinion, must be abolished.”¹⁷⁵ Blum also believes that it would be essential to involve sex workers in legislation that affects them.

Strategies

“For us,” Blum explained, “it is important to see what effects laws have on the living and working conditions of women.”¹⁷⁶ Monitoring of political and legislative developments was already key in LEFÖ’s early years.¹⁷⁷ “We are a mouthpiece for what we hear and also analyze and interpret ourselves,” said Blum, “we pass that on, so that the laws can change.”¹⁷⁸ According to Blum, sex work cannot be disconnected from society, rather one must consider the place sex workers hold in society and where discrimination occurs.

She explained, however, that they have had bad experiences when inviting sex workers to official discussions. Blum recalled an instance of a Taskforce meeting, where the sex worker invited by LEFÖ was poorly treated, discriminated and delegitimized as a representative for sex workers, because she was not considered a “typical sex worker”, something Blum doubts exists.

Regarding the street, they often encourage women to approach the police when violence does occur, although this is often problematic, since it is often in conflict with their dependency on

¹⁷⁴ Blum: “Die Stimmung gegenüber Sexarbeiterinnen soll verändert werden, auch was das vermieten angeht.“

¹⁷⁵ Blum: “Wir kritisieren, dass es nach wie vor sehr dem Kriminalbereich zugeordnet wird, auch die Registrierung bei der Polizei und Gesundheitskontrollen. Das sind Kontrollmechanismen, die unserer Meinung nach abgeschafft werden müssen.“

¹⁷⁶ Blum: “Uns ist es wichtig zu schauen welche Auswirkungen Gesetze auf die Lebens- und Arbeitssituation von Frauen haben.“

¹⁷⁷ LEFÖ Jahresbericht 1998, 14: “Analyse der Auswirkungen der neuen Vorgangsweise der Politik in Europa gegenüber der Prostitution und ihrer Folgen für die Gesundheit sowie die Lebens- und Arbeitsbedingungen von ausländischen SexarbeiterInnen.“

¹⁷⁸ Blum: “Wir sind ein Sprachrohr für das was wir hören und selber auch analysieren und interpretieren. Das geben wir weiter, damit sich die Gesetze verändern können.“

earning money. LEFÖ also encourages women to work together and not against each other, especially on the streets, which is difficult.

Alliances

In terms of alliances, the Nationwide Network of Counseling Centers and Sex Worker Organizations¹⁷⁹ is key for LEFÖ, since they have a common policy of lobbying for more sex workers' rights. Blum also considers the Steuerungsgruppe Prostitution,¹⁸⁰ which features various stakeholders on the Viennese level, as well as the AG Prostitution under the Taskforce Menschenhandel to be important to their work.

Regarding the Austrian state, Blum reported mixed experiences. As far as the street is concerned, there are "no good developments" according to Blum and "you can tell that politicians are deliberately looking away."¹⁸¹ Nevertheless, LEFÖ does believe the state has come to understand that two different approaches to human trafficking and prostitution are necessary and LEFÖ is willing to work with most any party in this regard. According to Blum, it is difficult with the FPÖ, because they represent a world view that LEFÖ does not concur with, since LEFÖ stands for "migration as a human right." Regarding the SPÖ, Blum said there is no clear positioning. The Greens are LEFÖ's most viable partners. All parties, however, do consider respect towards sex workers important.

Although they are not on the same page politically, Blum considers the street work other organizations do to also be important, since "we do not have the capacity to do street work outreach as often as necessary." She added: "The essential thing is that sex workers are supported and encountered with respect."¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ Bundesweites Netzwerk von Beratungsstellen und Sexworker Organisationen

¹⁸⁰ Steering Group on Prostitution

¹⁸¹ Blum: "Was die Straße anbelangt sieht man in Wien keine gute Entwicklung und man merkt, dass die Politik bewusst wegsieht."

¹⁸² Blum: "Sofern wir politisch total unterschiedlicher Meinung sind ist die Arbeit die andere Organisationen tun um Frauen aus der Prostitution zu helfen die raus wollen ja gut. Und es ist gut, dass sie streetwork machen. Das ist super das sie vorbei schauen, denn das können wir einfach nicht leisten."; "Wichtig ist, dass Sexarbeiterinnen unterstützt und mit vollem Respekt begegnet werden."

IV.I.II Sophie

Motivation

The people at Sophie seek to improve the living and working condition of women in sex work. Eva van Rahden,¹⁸³ the head of Sophie, stated that the feminist position is key to Sophie's work and vision of a gender equal society. Van Rahden explained that a *Bedarfsanalyse* (needs analysis) by the *Institut für Konfliktforschung*,¹⁸⁴ which sought to discover sex workers' needs and wishes, formed the basis of this feminist position. She also mentioned the German *Hurenbewegung* (prostitutes' movement) of the 1980's and how that discourse came to Austria and influenced the autonomous women's movement and this particular feminist view of prostitution as sex work. Acknowledging the "patriarchal structures", "economic gaps and power gaps"¹⁸⁵ that place women into disadvantaged positions, Van Rahden said that as long as these persist one must work to improve the real working conditions of these women.

Arguments

Van Rahden was adamant that the legal status of sex work must be ensured to improve the situation of sex workers. Therefore, Sophie opposes the Nordic Model, because they argue "you cannot improve things in illegality."¹⁸⁶ Van Rahden further maintained: "It is dangerous if rights are restricted as a consequence of implementing protective measures."¹⁸⁷ She explained how some sex workers in Sweden had lost their apartments because their landlords were afraid of being punished for "abetting prostitution".

For van Rahden it was also important to distinguish between criminal law and mutually agreed actions. She stated: "Everything that comprises violence belongs to criminal law,"¹⁸⁸ which must be persecuted, but "many women are satisfied, and it is important to hear their voices too."¹⁸⁹ The notion that women are selling their bodies, is a concept van Rahden also rejected by quoting a sex worker saying: "Look, I am here with my body. It's just time I'm selling."

¹⁸³ Eva van Rahden, interview by author, Vienna, April 2, 2019.

For more information on Eva van Rahden see SPÖ website, accessed April 6, 2019, <http://frauenhelfenfrauenhelfen.at/eva-van-rahden.html>.

¹⁸⁴ Institute for Conflict Research. See: IKF website, accessed April 12, 2019, <http://www.ikf.ac.at/>.

¹⁸⁵ Van Rahden: "Es hat mit patriarchalen Strukturen, ökonomischen Gefällen und Machtgefälle zu tun."

¹⁸⁶ Van Rahden: "In der Illegalität kann man nichts verbessern."

¹⁸⁷ Van Rahden: "Es ist gefährlich wenn im Zuge von Schutzmaßnahmen Rechte eingeschränkt werden."

¹⁸⁸ Van Rahden: "Alles was Gewalt beinhaltet ist Strafrecht."

¹⁸⁹ Van Rahden: "Viele sind zufrieden. Es ist wichtig diese Stimmen zu hören."

When asked about the importance of the concept of self-determination for Sophie, van Rahden stated: “I refuse to talk about self-determination in the context. It's about gainful employment.”¹⁹⁰ She argued that self-determination is not a reality for many people earning low wages in different fields. Nevertheless, she considers these sources of income necessary for their livelihoods.

Demands

Sophie places a strong emphasis on helping women in their current circumstances and is especially concerned about sex workers' legal rights including, unemployment benefits, social security, payroll tax and collective wage agreements. “It cannot be that sex workers have to pay taxes and have no social insurance,” said van Rahden.

Strategies and Alliances

As an NGO expert, Sophie participates in several working groups on prostitution in Austria to bring the sex workers' topics to government officials, explained van Rahden. She added that “[i]f a political party is dealing with the issue, we try to talk to them. You must be pro-active. [...] But sex work is a difficult political topic.”¹⁹¹

Sophie has also collaborated in discussions and presentations on the topic. Van Rahden has also appeared on television along with sex workers to discuss and raise awareness for the issue.

Van Rahden further pointed out that whom Sophie partners with depends on the topic and whether it is managed on a regional, state or European level. In Austria, Van Rahden considers the *Vida Gewerkschaft* (Vida labor union) to be a key partner in advancing the rights of sex workers. Recently, the Vida has developed a new offer for EPU's¹⁹² called *vidaflex*,¹⁹³ which offers a comprehensive insurance package that also applies to sex workers. It is such policies that van Rahden wishes to promote. Internationally, Sophie participates at *bufas*¹⁹⁴ (Alliance of the Counselling Centers for Sex Workers in Germany) conferences to trade experiences and expertise.

¹⁹⁰ Van Rahden: “Ich lehne es ab in dem Kontext über Selbstbestimmung zu reden. Es geht um Erwerbstätigkeit.“

¹⁹¹ Van Rahden: “Wenn sich eine Partei damit auseinandersetzt dann sehen wir wie wir mitreden können. Mann muss pro-aktiv sein. [...] Sexarbeit ist ein schwieriges politisches Thema.“

¹⁹² Ein-Personen-Unternehmen/ One-person-businesses

¹⁹³ See: Vidaflex website, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://www.vidaflex.at/>.

¹⁹⁴ Bündnis der Fachberatungsstellen für Sexarbeiterinnen und Sexarbeiter e.V. See: Bufas website, accessed April, 14, 2019, <http://www.bufas.net/en/>.

In sum, Sophie argues from a primarily feminist position and emphasizes the improvement of the real working conditions of sex workers. Consequently, they view regulation and liberalization as desirable and cooperate with partners, including governmental working groups and the labor union to advance the removal of what they consider restrictive laws and implement regulations that support sex workers in their business.

IV.II “Neo-abolitionist” Organizations

These groups advocate the Nordic Model as their overarching goal, but also support regulation that addresses and improves the immediate needs of people in prostitution. They rally around figures like Rachel Moran or Mellissa Farley, both survivors of prostitution abuse¹⁹⁵ who have now committed themselves to promoting the neo-abolitionist position. They cite varying reasonings underlying their positioning, including feminism, anti-neo-liberalism, anti-hyper-capitalism¹⁹⁶, ideas of human dignity and humanitarian or social-justice reasons connected to the understanding that prostitution is linked to human trafficking.

IV.II.I Solwodi

Motivation and Arguments

“The work of Solwodi is based on the Christian image of humankind, which sees the dignity and freedom of a person as the basis of a fulfilled life.”¹⁹⁷ Solwodi assists women wanting to exit prostitution,¹⁹⁸ some because they are human trafficking victims, some who were under another kind of duress and many because they become pregnant.¹⁹⁹ Sister Anna Mayrhofer²⁰⁰ explained that she is motivated in her work by the encounters with these women and their life stories.

¹⁹⁵ See: SPACE (Survivors of Prostitution Abuse Calling for Enlightenment) International website, accessed April 14, 2019, <http://www.spaceintl.org/>.

¹⁹⁶ Anti-hyper-capitalism refers to a position that criticizes that everything (in this case human bodies) is put on sale for the sake of profit.

¹⁹⁷ See: Solwodi website, <https://www.solwodi.at/%C3%BCber-solwodi/>.

¹⁹⁸ Around 30-40 women a year receive Solwodi’s assistance, one third of which come to live in Solwodi’s safehouse along with their children. See: *Solwodi Jahresbericht 2017*, 8.

¹⁹⁹ One third of women receiving help were pregnant or with a young child. See: *Solwodi Jahresbericht 2017*, 7.

²⁰⁰ Sister Anna Mayrhofer, interview by author, Vienna, December 10, 2018.

Mayrhofer found that the reasons women enter prostitution vary, but mostly it has to do with the lack of other feasible options of earning money. “I see that in Austria, 95%²⁰¹ of prostitutes are foreigners. That means we are dealing with prostitution originating in poverty,”²⁰² she elaborated. Mayrhofer views the word “voluntarily” as problematic: “Of course the women decided to earn money like this, if they aren’t trafficked. But if I have no work, if I must support children or I am divorced, and have no other means of income and there is also the view of women in the community that they can always still sell their bodies, then where does coercion end and free will begin?”²⁰³ She said that mostly the women’s families profit from what the women themselves view as sacrifices and “in return they receive the emotional recognition they crave.”²⁰⁴

Concerning their political work, Mayrhofer described Solwodi’s position as follows: “We are for the prostitutes, but against prostitution. No woman should have to be so poor, so uneducated, so helpless, or in such a situation that she must sell her body. We also think that prostitution permanently damages people physically and mentally. Not only the man or the woman prostituting themselves, but also the customers.”²⁰⁵ Mayrhofer recognizes symptoms of this, seeing that most of the women receiving help from Solwodi have a history of drinking alcohol, using drugs to endure it or have psychosomatic illnesses. Moreover, Mayrhofer referred to the 2014 Honeyball report which found that prostitution has negative consequences for the relationship between the sexes.²⁰⁶

²⁰¹ See: *Solwodi Jahresbericht 2017*, 5.

²⁰² Mayrhofer: “Ich sehe in Österreich sind 95% der Prostituierten Ausländerinnen. Das heißt es geht um eine Armutsprostitution.“

²⁰³ Mayrhofer: “Natürlich haben diese Frauen wenn sie nicht hergehandelt wurden sich entschieden so ihr Geld zu verdienen. Aber wenn ich keine Arbeit habe, wenn ich Kinder unterhalten muss, wenn ich geschieden bin, kein anderes Einkommen habe, und wenn noch dazu in der Gesellschaft das Frauenbild ist, dass ich, wenn sonst nichts geht, meinen Körper verkaufe... Wo fängt da der freie Wille an und wo hört der Zwang auf?“

²⁰⁴ Mayrhofer: “Im Gegenzug bekommen sie emotionale Zuwendung.“

²⁰⁵ Mayrhofer: “Wir sind für die Prostituierten, gegen die Prostitution. Keine Frau soll so arm, so ungebildet, so hilflos, in so einer Situation Leben müssen, dass Sie ihren Körper verkaufen muss. Wir denken auch das Prostitution auf dauer den Menschen psychisch und physisch schädigt. Nicht nur der Mann oder die Frau die sich prostituiert, sondern auch die Kunden.“

²⁰⁶ „AB.1. Recognizes that prostitution and sexual exploitation are highly gendered issues and violations of human dignity, contrary to human rights principles, among which gender equality, and therefore contrary to the principles of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, including the goal and the principle of gender equality.“

See: European Parliament, Report on Sexual Exploitation and Prostitution and its Impact on Gender Equality, Rapporteur: Honeyball, Mary, February 4, 2014, accessed April 12, 2019, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2014-0071+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>.

In sum, Solwodi questions the idea of voluntariness by pointing to underlying systematic economic need and citing the physical and psychological damage prostitution does to both prostitute and consumer, as well as the damage it does to a person's dignity and the healthy relationship between the sexes as reasons to assist the women wishing to exit but also to oppose the practice.

Demands

Regarding Viennese law, Solwodi advocates for the Nordic model but “the minimum would be to criminalize practices that really are inhumane or degrading, such as gang-bang parties for example, even if the women do it ‘voluntarily’.”²⁰⁷ Solwodi also considers it important that the real experiences and struggles of the women be considered, since oftentimes only “purely thematic and ideological discussions are being held”²⁰⁸ and, referring to the pro-legalization side, Mayrhofer considers it “perverse to measure the distress of a person according to their degree of self-determination.”²⁰⁹

Strategies

Mayrhofer further explained: “We do our lobbying work by always pointing out the situations these women come from, why they do it and what it does to them, meaning the consequences of prostitution. We resist when people say that it is a service. We do not use those terms. We do not say ‘sex work’.”²¹⁰ Even though Mayrhofer pointed out she is aware that other employment conditions can have a negative physical impact on people, such as in construction or nursing care for example, she believes it goes deeper in prostitution.

Although the direct care of their clients is Solwodi's priority, Mayrhofer thinks a holistic approach is important. Mayrhofer sees great strength in the firsthand experience gained with the women they help, but said that the demand that people often have that ‘the women should speak for themselves’ is quite difficult to put into practice in a public setting in Austria, because “our women don't speak

²⁰⁷ Mayrhofer: “Das Mindeste wäre die wirklich unmenschlichen und entwürdigende Praktiken zu verbieten, wie zum Beispiel diese Gang-bang-parties, selbst wenn es die Frauen ‚freiwillig‘ machen.“

²⁰⁸ Mayrhofer: “Da werden rein thematisch-ideologische Diskussionen geführt.“

²⁰⁹ Mayrhofer: “Es ist pervers die Not des Menschen an seiner Selbstbestimmung zu messen.“

²¹⁰ Mayrhofer: “Lobbyarbeit machen wir indem wir das immer aufzeigen, aus welchen Situationen diese Frauen kommen, warum sie das machen und was das mit ihnen macht, also die Konsequenzen der Prostitution. Wir wehren uns dagegen, dass man sagt: ‚Das ist eine Dienstleistung‘. Wir verwenden auch diese Begriffe nicht. Wir sagen nicht sexwork.“

German, did not finish their education and mostly do not want to [speak out].”²¹¹ Consequently, Solwodi gives talks and is part of various working groups such as the Platform against Human Trafficking, the Roundtable of the Bishops Conference, and the initiative Stopp Sexkauf, because they are in favor of the Nordic Model “to divert the focus from the women onto the demand for what they offer.”²¹²

Mayerhofer takes issue with the matter-of-fact-casualness towards the demand of sexual services and with the fact that oftentimes it is even presented as doing something good for the women because this way they at least earn some money.²¹³ She says there is also big hypocrisy in giving men the right to have these sexual needs satisfied, but have the women cater to these needs on the outskirts of Vienna. Because Mayerhofer considers prostitution such a complex issue, she recognized that “it is difficult to give it a suitable legal shape” and is aware that “the Nordic Model also has its issues” and “as with any law I’m not doing everyone justice.”²¹⁴

Alliances

When asked whether Solwodi’s position, as an association founded by Catholic congregations, was representative of the Catholic Church, Mayerhofer said that it was not. She explained: “The Catholic Church has stood for a strict sexual morality and at the same time it was always hypocritical.”²¹⁵ Because of the abuse scandals the church has also lost credibility, “which is why they have rightfully become reluctant to make a statement on this issue.” Furthermore, Mayerhofer believes that there are many customers in the Catholic upper-middle class environment, who resist not being allowed to satisfy their sexual needs. According to Mayerhofer, “Precisely in this area, there is this attitude: ‘From a prostitute I get what I don’t want to put my wife through.’ I heard

²¹¹ Mayerhofer: “Unsere Frauen sprechen kein Deutsch, haben ihre Ausbildung nicht abgeschlossen und wollen auch gar nicht öffentlich darüber reden.“

²¹² Mayerhofer: “[...] weil wir das Nordische Modell Vertreten, um dem Blick von den Frauen wegzurichten und auf die Nachfrage zu lenken, weil die Nachfrage das Angebot verstärkt. Das Angebot besteht aus der Armut.“

²¹³ Mayerhofer: “Die Nachfrage wird als Selbstverständlich hingestellt und oft wird es so dargestellt von den Kundinnen und Kundenn, dass man denen noch etwas gutes tut, weil die dadurch wenigstens ein bisschen Geld verdienen.“

²¹⁴ Mayerhofer: “Darum ist es auch schwer es in eine Gesetzesform zu geben, weil auch wenn ich sage wir sind fuer das Nordische Modell, weis ich auch, dass es seine Hacken hat.“ „Wie mit jedem Gesetz werde ich jemandem nicht gerecht.“

²¹⁵ Mayerhofer: “Die katholische Kirche hat eine strikte Sexualmoral Vertreten und gleichzeitig war sie immer auch Scheinheilig. Die katholische Kirche ist durch den Missbrauchskandal auch unglaublich geworden. Deshalb ist die katholische Kirche inzwischen auch zurecht sehr vorsichtig geworden etwas dazu zu sagen. Deshalb sagt die katholische Kirche dazu nichts.“

this quote from a man. There's a lot of double standards and hypocrisy.”²¹⁶ Mayrhofer also believes the Catholic Church fears coming across as moralistic. “The Catholic women’s movement also does not give a clear statement like we do. We do not receive support on that front.”²¹⁷ “The SPÖ and ÖVP women’s associations also have no clear position on this issue,”²¹⁸ adds Mayrhofer.

Practically, Solwodi works together with everyone. Ideologically, the means and ways are different. Mayrhofer pointed out that although Solwodi’s view of the world has little in common with that of the founders of Stopp Sexkauf, who come from a leftist position, they found common ground regarding this issue. Mayrhofer said they all agree that “no woman should be stigmatized or moralized.”²¹⁹

IV.II.II Lightup

Motivation and Arguments

According to Jedida Sutter,²²⁰ the young women behind lightup were first motivated to investigate and speak out about the topic, when they became aware of the one-sided reporting on prostitution in the media and the casualness the topic was dealt with in Austrian society. Seeing that nearly all women in prostitution are foreigners also gave them pause and made them “question the supposed voluntary nature of prostitution.”²²¹ Sutter explained that they concluded that prostitution “prevents gender equality” and must be understood as “violence against women,” because it has “nothing to do with emancipation” and the harm it does is strongly played down in society.²²² In terms of gender equality Sutter considers the Nordic countries to be further ahead and there “buying sex is viewed as the oldest form of exploitation and not the oldest trade.”²²³ “Why do we

²¹⁶ Mayrhofer: “Gerade auch in diesem Bereich gibt es diese Einstellung: ‚Von einer Prostituierten hol ich mir das wofür mir meine Ehefrau zu schade ist‘. Das hab ich gehört. Das ist ein Zitat von einem Mann. Da gibt es ganz viel Doppelmoral und Scheinheiligkeit.

²¹⁷ Mayrhofer: “Die katholische Frauenbewegung gibt da auch kein klares statement so wie wir es tun. Also daher kommt auch keine Unterstützung.“

²¹⁸ Mayrhofer: “Die Frauenverbände der SPÖ und ÖVP haben auch keine klare position zum Thema Prostitution.“

²¹⁹ Mayrhofer: “Keine Frau soll stigmatisiert oder moralisiert werden.“

²²⁰ Jedida Sutter, interview by author, Vienna, December 12, 2018.

²²¹ Sutter: “Da hinterfragt man schon die angebliche ‚Freiwilligkeit‘ bei der Prostitution.“

²²² Sutter: “Gleichberechtigung wird verhindert.“; “Es muss als Gewalt an Frauen verstanden werden.“; “Prostitution wird verharmlost und hat nichts mit Emanzipation zu tun.“

²²³ Sutter: “Es ist die älteste Form der Ausbeutung und nicht das älteste Gewerbe.“

in Germany and Austria always take so long to arrive at these laws?,”²²⁴ she asked. They also want to give a voice to those who are not invited to speak up publicly.

In the current Austrian arrangement of legalized and regulated prostitution, lightup also considers it problematic that the state profits greatly. According to Sutter, “There are studies which show that cities like Hamburg for example would not be able to finance themselves without the income from prostitution and that is what we question. In Germany there are also big sex worker lobbies with a lot of money behind them and we doubt they are motivated solely by humanitarian purposes.”²²⁵

For lightup, there is also a clear link between prostitution and human trafficking. “Where do you find victims of human trafficking in Austria? Mostly in the business of legal prostitution. [...] You cannot say there is the clean sex work area and then see human trafficking as something separate.”²²⁶ She acknowledged that there are surely women who do this out of their own free will, but lightup takes issue with it being presented as them being the vast majority.²²⁷

In sum, lightup is concerned with and motivated by equality, humanitarian work and a critique of power and money.

²²⁴ Sutter: “Wieso brauchen wir in Deutschland und Österreich immer so lange um solche Gesetze einzuführen?”

²²⁵ Sutter: “Es gibt Studien die zeigen, dass Städte wie Hamburg zum Beispiel, sich ohne dem Umsatz von der Prostitution nicht finanzieren könnten. Das hinterfragen wir. In Deutschland gibt es auch eine riesen Sexworkerlobby wo ganz viel Geld dahinter steht und wir bezweifeln, dass sie nur aus humanitären Gründen motiviert sind.”

²²⁶ Sutter: “Wo findet man Opfer von Menschenhandel bei uns in Österreich? Im Bereich der legalen Prostitution. [...] Du kannst nicht sagen es gibt den sauberen Sexarbeitbereich und Menschenhandel und es ist getrennt.”

²²⁷ There are no conclusive statistics on how many women engage in prostitution voluntarily. Many interview partners from both sides believe that there are unregistered women in the *Edelbereich* (expensive branch) of prostitution, most likely Austrian students, who earn well and are not necessarily coerced or in economic need. Interviewing 82 Austrian sex workers, Amesberger found that two thirds earn well and half stated that they want to switch to another job soon (See: Beate Hausbichler, “Soziologin Helga Amesberger: Die Debatte über Sexarbeit ist eine moralische,” *Der Standard*, April 16, 2015, accessed April, 16, 2019, <https://derstandard.at/2000014361447/Soziologin-Die-Debatte-ueber-Sexarbeit-ist-eine-moralische>). Other studies show that 50%-90% of women in prostitution work involuntarily (See: “18 Myths on Prostitution,” *European Women’s Lobby*, 2014, accessed April 27, 2019, <http://prostitutionresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/18-myths-on-prostitution-EWL.pdf>). A 2014 European study stated that “1 in 7 prostitutes in Europe are victims of trafficking, while some Member States estimate that between 60% and 90% of those in their respective national prostitution markets have been trafficked.” (See: European Parliament, Sexual Exploitation and Prostitution and its Impact on Gender Equality: Study, Schulze, Erika, PE 493.040, January 2014, 6, accessed April 14, 2019, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/493040/IPOL-FEMM_ET\(2014\)493040_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/493040/IPOL-FEMM_ET(2014)493040_EN.pdf).)

Strategies

Lightup as a youth organization targets youth to create a different understanding of prostitution. “We want to empower the projects of young people on the issue.”²²⁸ Mostly lightup conducts workshops at schools to point out the links between human trafficking, prostitution, pornography and gender inequality. “We point out what these things do with our heart, environment, relationships, health and our world,”²²⁹ said Sutter.

In their political lobbying work, they want to bring the topic onto the agenda of politicians. “We aim to meet with all the politicians in the Equal Treatment Committee²³⁰ and also a deputy from the NEOS.”²³¹ In advocacy work Sutter said they frequently cite the 2005 EU guideline which recommended the Nordic Model, as well as the EU’s 2014 Honeyball-report.²³²

Alliances

Sutter believes that all organizations in this field in Austria want to help the women, consequently lightup seeks cooperation with them all. Mainly, they work together with others in the initiative Stopp Sexkauf. On a European level, they are part of the Youth 4 Abolition movement and work in cooperation with the European Women’s Lobby (EWL).²³³

IV.II.III Verein feministischer Diskurs (Society of feminist discourse)

Motivation and Arguments

VFD raises three central issues regarding the system of prostitution. Firstly, the feminist critique that women are treated as objects to be sold. In an appeal they argued: “This is not about that Puritan morality that is afraid of dealing with sexuality! It is about inalienable human rights, a

²²⁸ Sutter: “Wir möchten junge Leute mit ihren Projekten zu dem Thema ermächtigen.“

²²⁹ Sutter: “Wir schauen uns an: Was macht das mit unserem Herzen, unserer Umwelt, unseren Beziehungen, unserer Gesundheit und unserer Welt?“

²³⁰ Gleichbehandlungs Ausschuss

²³¹ Sutter: “Unser Ziel ist es mit allen Abgeordneten vom Gleichbehandlungs Ausschuss zu reden.“ „Wir wollen uns auch mit einer Abgeordneten der Neos treffen.“

²³² European Parliament, Report on Sexual Exploitation and Prostitution and its Impact on Gender Equality, Rapporteur: Honeyball, Mary, February 4, 2014, accessed April 12, 2019, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2014-0071+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>.

²³³ See: European Women’s Lobby website, <https://www.womenlobby.org/Youth4Abolition-discusses-youth-sexual-exploitation-in-Europe>.

morality that must demand humanity as a cultural achievement.”²³⁴ Secondly, VFD cited the link to human trafficking in their Viennese appeal: The system of prostitution “generates trafficking in women” and “creates a market with ever increasing profits and power for pimps.”²³⁵ Furthermore, “the concession a society makes by allowing this patriarchal system of prostitution leads to the woman's individual right to be able to say ‘No’ to being bought. In this context, it is not relevant if a prostitute prostitutes herself voluntarily or not.”²³⁶

Thirdly, VFD criticizes the hyper-capitalist motivation and those who profit from this system. Kienesberger²³⁷ considers one issue of our neo-liberal times to be that “the focus is always only on the individual, which originally was a great revolutionary step, [...] but has gone too far when we arrive at the point when someone can sell their own organs or body.”²³⁸ According to her, “Prostitution is a system as criminal as arms and drugs and people earn just as much money.”²³⁹ “The state profits and many are also consumers of prostitution. It is sold as part of the tourism branch, in cities like Hamburg, with the Reeperbahn or Amsterdam, with its red-light district.”²⁴⁰ In her book Kienesberger concluded that: “[...] prostitution is not work or a profession like any other and that the term ‘sex work’ and ‘sex worker’ is a concession to the terminology of the neo-liberal economic system in which the prostitute or rather her body becomes the raw material of an

²³⁴ “Hier geht es nicht um jene puritanische Moral, die eine Auseinandersetzung mit Sexualität scheut! Es geht um unveräußerliche Menschenrechte, eine Moral, die das Menschliche unter den Menschen als Kulturleistung einfordern muss.”

See: Verein Feministischer Diskurs, Wiener Appell, April 2013, accessed March 12, 2019, http://www.stoppsexkauf.at/wiener_appell.html.

²³⁵ “Dieses ‘Recht’ - angeblich eines der ältesten der Welt - verursacht Frauenhandel in einem nie dagewesenen Ausmaß und schafft einen Markt, auf dem die Zuhälter immer mehr Macht haben und immer höhere Profite erzielen.”

Ibid.

²³⁶ “Das Zugeständnis, das eine Gesellschaft macht, wenn sie dieses patriarchale System der Prostitution zulässt, führt dazu, dass der Frau ihr individuelles Recht, **Nein** sagen zu können, abgekauft wird. Dabei ist nicht von Belang, ob eine Prostituierte sich freiwillig prostituiert oder nicht.”

Ibid.

²³⁷ Anita Kienesberger, interview by author, Vienna, December 20, 2018.

²³⁸ Kienesberger: “Das Problem der neo-liberalen Zeit ist es, dass es immer nur um’s Individuum geht, was ja früher ein großer revolutionärer Schritt war [...], aber es geht eindeutig zu weit wenn jemand seine Organe oder seinen eigenen Körper verkaufen darf.”

²³⁹ Kienesberger: “Prostitution ist ein System so kriminell wie die Waffen und die Drogen und man verdient genau so viel Geld damit.”

²⁴⁰ Kienesberger: “Der Staat profitiert und viele sind auch Konsumenten. Es wird ja als Teil der Tourismusbranche verkauft! In Städten wie Hamburg mit der Reeperbahn oder Amsterdam mit ihrem Rotlichtviertel.”

economic process.”²⁴¹ “The times where prostitutes rallied together to demand their rights with the backing of us feminists are long gone”, said Kienesberger, “the market idea has swept over all that.”²⁴²

Demands

VFD and Stopp Sexkauf advocate for the Nordic Model. From monitoring the Swedish experience Kienesberger stressed that it is not just the legal text that must change but “the state must consistently want and work for it.”²⁴³ A successful implementation will require financial backing and credible “exit- and re-education programs for all women exiting prostitution,” because “lax implementation will fail.”²⁴⁴

Strategies and Alliances

VFD actively seeks meetings with unions and parties, the current minister of women, and according to Kienesberger, “next on the schedule is a meeting with Rendi-Wagner, the new SPÖ chairwoman. We also talked with the women’s chair of the NEOS who is now going to the EU.”²⁴⁵ VFD was also invited by an SPÖ politician interested in the issue. Currently, Kienesberger considers the NEOS²⁴⁶ as the most likely to support their position, but she thinks it essential to discuss the issues with every party. She also pointed out that this is not a political issue along party lines: “In 1999 in Sweden a red-green government passed the Nordic Model into law. Meanwhile in Germany a red-green government went for complete liberalization of prostitution.”²⁴⁷

²⁴¹ “Ich bin zum Schluss gekommen, dass Prostitution keine Arbeit und kein Beruf wie jeder andere ist und der Begriff Sexarbeit ein Zugeständnis an die Terminologie des neo-liberalen Wirtschaftssystems ist, in dem die Prostituierte bzw. ihr Körper zum Rohstoff eines ökonomischen Verwertungsprozesses wird.”

See: Anita Kienesberger, *Fucking Poor- What does ‘sex work’ have to do with work? A shift of the term and the effects on the discourse of prostitution* (Hamburg: Marta Press, 2014), 89.

²⁴² Kienesberger: “Die Zeiten wo Prostituierte sich zusammengetan haben um gemeinsam mit uns Feministen für ihre Rechte zu kämpfen sind lange vorbei.“; „Die Marktidee ist über das alles drübergeschwappt.“

²⁴³ Kienesberger: “Man muss es konsequent als Staat wollen.“

²⁴⁴ Kienesberger: “Es braucht Ausstiegs- und Umstiegsprogramme.“; „Lasche Umsetzung wird scheitern.“

²⁴⁵ Kienesberger: “Als nächstes muss die Rendi Wagner, die neue Vorsitzende der SPÖ mit uns reden.“; “Wir haben auch mit der Frauenabgeordneten die jetzt in die EU geht geredet.“

²⁴⁶ Das Neue Österreich und liberales Forum/ The New Austria and Liberal Forum

²⁴⁷ Kienesberger: “1999 hat eine rot-grüne Regierung in Schweden das Nordische Model eingeführt [...] In Deutschland hat zu der Zeit eine rot-grüne Regierung für völlige Liberalisierung gestimmt.“

For Kienesberger it is clear that the *Meinungsmacher* (opinion makers/ influencers) on the issue are the largest, as well as state-funded NGOs such as LEFÖ, Sophie and MAIZ.²⁴⁸ She hypothesized that “politics has stopped reflecting on these issues because the parties used to have schools where they discussed this,”²⁴⁹ but now the “NGOs are the opinion makers.”²⁵⁰ She questioned why the state allows NGOs (including themselves) and social workers to determine what is allowed and what is not. She suspects that these leading NGOs represent these opinions because “associations like Sophie and LEFÖ receive a lot of financial support from the state for taking care of the women and that would be endangered by the Nordic Model. I think not necessarily,”²⁵¹ because women will continue to require care. Kienesberger also pointed out that some of the women in these organizations are also politicians, such as “the leader of Sophie [who] is also a municipality chairwoman of the 15th district in Vienna.”²⁵² She said: “Sophie and LEFÖ do good work to make the women’s ‘work’ bearable, but they set the political opinion and allow no other discourse. [...] Everything that is different is considered wrong and ‘right-wing’. You are not allowed to have another opinion. But it is important to honestly question the dependencies underlying this system.”²⁵³ To back up this position with scientific research Stopp Sexwork fliers and publications frequently cite research by Melissa Farley, a survivor of prostitution turned author and researcher.²⁵⁴

²⁴⁸ MAIZ is based and mainly active in Linz, which is why this organization falls out of the scope of this work. It is, however, also influential in Vienna to some extent, which is why MAIZ was contacted for an interview, but they declined citing reasons of financial and staff cuts. They referred to LEFÖ’s position on the issue.

²⁴⁹ Kienesberger: “Die Politik hat aufgehört nachzudenken über Themen. Die hatten ihre ganzen politische Schulen, alle hatten Bildungsinstitute. Da war es auch üblich Dinge zu diskutieren.“

²⁵⁰ Kienesberger: “Die Meinungsmache machen NGOs.“

²⁵¹ Kienesberger: “Unser Verdacht ist, oder auch wenn man sich das politische Klima in den letzten 20 Jahren anschaut, dann ist es so, dass diese Vereine wie Sophie und LEFÖ viel Geld vom Staat kriegen für diese Arbeit, dass sie sich um diese Frauen kümmern. Das wäre gefährdet mit dem Model. Nicht unbedingt sag ich.“

²⁵² Kienesberger: “Die Leiterin von Sophie ist Gemeindevorsitzende im 15. Bezirk der SPÖ. Das ist ja nicht nichts. Die macht Meinung.“

²⁵³ Kienesberger: “Sophie und LEFÖ leisten gute Arbeit, um die ‘Arbeit’ der Frauen erträglich zu machen, aber sie bestimmen die politische Meinung und lassen keinen anderen Diskurs zu. [...] Alles, was anders ist, wird als falsch und ‘rechts’ angesehen. Man darf keine andere Meinung haben. Es ist jedoch wichtig, die Abhängigkeiten dieser Systeme ehrlich zu hinterfragen.“

²⁵⁴ See: Prostitution Research website, accessed April 12, 2019, <http://prostitutionresearch.com/>.

IV.III Other

As previously mentioned, Herzwerg has no official position on the issue. However, their focus on aiding women in forced prostitution and human trafficking, their policy work, particularly on a European level of pointing to these links, the fact that they do not promote sex work, along with the individual and personal opinions of some Herzwerg social workers, would indicate that there is a tendency towards the neo-abolitionist position.

IV.III.I Herzwerg

Motivation and Arguments

People at Herzwerg are primarily motivated by the conclusions drawn from their extensive street work with women in prostitution. Based on this experience Caroline Sander,²⁵⁵ responsible for the political work of Herzwerg, does recognize a clear connection between prostitution and human trafficking.

Faith Hampton,²⁵⁶ one of the Herzwerg women working with women in prostitution, explained that for her the purpose behind her work is “primarily spiritual”. According to Hampton, it essential to take on a “holistic loving treatment” which aims primarily at the “spiritual healing of the women” who have suffered, and which includes the “bodily and social aspects.” Hampton explained that individuals at Herzwerg are motivated to do their work, for a variety of reasons, including being motivated for reasons of justice, social work aspects, nurturing development, and pastoral care.

In Hampton’s personal opinion, she agrees with neo-abolitionism and explained that of course prostitution is an incredibly hard issue to tackle but “you do what is right whether it’s achievable or not.” She also drew parallels to black slavery and how “the peculiar institution”²⁵⁷ was also viewed as a necessary evil by many and abolitionists were thought of as being naïve. In her opinion, however, “it is possible to make it understood that ‘[prostitution] is wrong’, as a statement of affirmation for those who suffered through it” and she thinks “there is damage in saying it’s just

²⁵⁵ Caroline Sander, interview by author, Vienna, December 20, 2018.

²⁵⁶ Faith Hampton, interview by author, Vienna, December 22, 2018.

²⁵⁷ An expression which was used to describe the enslavement of black Africans, especially in the United States. This expression was considered neutral and Hampton uses it here to emphasize the hypocrisy of sugarcoating slavery with terminology.

normal work.” “Besides,” she argued, “if someone is willing to be abused it does not mean it isn’t abuse;” it is important to “look at the harm something causes someone, not whether they want to do it or not.”

Demands

Herzwerk presses for easier access to legal aid, visas and acknowledgement of human trafficking victim status, including the granting of a reflection period for presumed victims of trafficking who are seeking assistance.

One of the biggest issues Hampton pointed out is the fact that having someone recognized as a victim of human trafficking can be quite difficult. She said that, naturally, LEFÖ-IBF, being the official victim support organization requires specific statements for clear identification and the police require statements and proof which is often difficult to attain. Hampton, a fluent Chinese speaker visiting and working closely with Chinese women in prostitution both in China and Austria, pointed out that they often “don’t know what human trafficking is,” “have a different understanding of human rights,” “don’t understand the idea of *Arbeitsausbeutung* (work exploitation), because in China their situation was not better,” “don’t open up quickly concerning things like rape, because they view it as shameful,” “don’t trust the police, who are the same people who fine them on the streets” and are viewed as corrupt in their country, and “often narrate their story in a way that does not make sense to the authorities,” which sometimes leaves them traumatized from their legal proceedings because “they said it and weren’t believed.” She is sure most of them are victims, however, because, for example, their taxes and rent are being paid even though they don’t know any German or English, they “do not understand the idea of a visa,” but have one; likewise, they are helpless in regard to navigating in the city “but are supposed to have made the trip from some rural village in China over to Austria by themselves.” Hampton explained that they also speak about their experiences in very indirect language talking about “this kind of place (brothel), person (pimp/madam/exploiter) or job (selling sex)” and say they do not like doing this but must pay back their debt. In order to be officially recognized as a victim of trafficking, however, explicit statements by the trafficked person and proof of force or coercion are required.

Strategy and Alliances

Herzwerk's street work focusses on the most immediate needs of the women and takes a holistic approach. Instead of simply asking "How can we make your work better (as a sex worker)?", frontline workers ask: "How are you doing as a person?" Hampton criticizes the oppressive laws that target the women, since they often fall victim to the police because "the fine for standing in the wrong place on the *Strich* (areas of street-prostitution) [in Vienna] can be up to 500€, but a parking ticket is 36€" and "those who are most helpless should not have to carry the burden of the law."²⁵⁸ Hampton agreed that these laws must be changed.

In their political work, they seek to create networks of likeminded groups which lobby together mostly on the European level. In their annual report of 2016 Herzwerk listed 21 groups in their broader network including Solwodi, LEFÖ-IBF, Sophie and Freethem (now lightup). Another 19 partners are listed in their international network. Herzwerk has also applied to take part in the AG Prostitution but has so far not been admitted into the group to partake in discussions regarding the regulation of prostitution.

Herzwerk is an active participant in the Platform against Exploitation and Human Trafficking and the EU Civil Society Platform against Trafficking in Human Beings.²⁵⁹ In their 2017 report²⁶⁰ they explained how "at a workshop on 'Violence against Women' in the context of a platform meeting of the EU Civil Society Platform against Trafficking in Human Beings, the link between trafficking in women and girls (for sexual exploitation) and other forms of violence against women was stressed, all in the systemic context of the sexualization of society, normalization of pornography and impunity and invisibility of the perpetrators. A demand of many participants of the workshop was that EU Member States recognize their legislation on prostitution as a possible tool to counteract the demand and thereby human trafficking for sexual exploitation."²⁶¹

²⁵⁸ Faith Hampton, interview by author, Vienna, December 22, 2018.

²⁵⁹ *Herzwerk Tätigkeitsbericht 2017*, 6.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Ibid. "Bei einem Workshop zum Thema 'Violence against Women' (Gewalt gegen Frauen), an dem die HW-Mitarbeiterin teilgenommen hat, wurde die Verbindung zwischen Frauen- und Mädchenhandel (zur sexuellen Ausbeutung) und anderen Formen von Gewalt gegen Frauen betont, die alle im systemischen Kontext von einer Sexualisierung der Gesellschaft, Normalisierung von Pornografie und Straffreiheit und Unsichtbarkeit der Täter stehen. Eine Forderung vieler TeilnehmerInnen des Workshops war, dass EU-Mitgliedsstaaten ihre Gesetzgebung zu Prostitution als eine Möglichkeit erkennen sollten, der Nachfrage entgegenzuwirken und dadurch Menschenhandel zur sexuellen Ausbeutung zu bekämpfen."

In sum, Herzwirk argues from a humanitarian position that it should be ensured that legislation on prostitution does not burden people in prostitution, but rather the buyers, pimps and networks behind it.

IV.IV Preliminary Conclusion

In sum, the pro-liberalization lobbies, pulling both from experience and a theoretical framework, focused heavily on arguments of feasibility, feminism centered on self-determination, empowerment and the conviction that sex work and trafficking in women for sexual services must be regarded and legislated separately.

The neo-abolitionist groups were more diverse and differentiated in their argumentation. The various groups are far from being on the same page politically, except for agreeing on the issue of prostitution and the way they consider it best tackled. While Solwodi and Herzwirk have intensive firsthand experience, lightup and VFD take a more theoretical approach. While Solwodi and Herzwirk consider human dignity and wellbeing as central, lightup and VFD question the economic and patriarchal system underlying prostitution, although elements of these gender and economic critiques are also found with Solwodi and Herzwirk.

Concerning Solwodi and Herzwirk, another primary motivation behind their work is rooted in the spiritual dimension of these organizations. Solwodi exclusively consists of *Ordensschwwestern* (sisters/nuns) who have made an explicit spiritual commitment to dedicate their lives to help the less fortunate. Their website states that their work is “based on the Christian image of humans, which sees the dignity and freedom of humans as the basis for a fulfilled life.”²⁶² They consider this dignity threatened by the reduction of women’s bodies as objects for sale, especially when under pressure of any kind, be it physical, financial or otherwise. On its website, Herzwirk mentions its spiritual motivations less explicitly. Similar to SOLWODI, its annual reports,

²⁶² See: <https://www.solwodi.at/%C3%BCber-solwodi/>. „Die Arbeit von SOLWODI orientiert sich am Christlichen Menschenbild, welches die Würde und Freiheit des Menschen als Grundlage eines erfüllten Lebens sieht.“

however, state that: “Our diaconal mission is based on the Christian image of man.”²⁶³ They also summarize the responsibility they perceive they have as part of God’s church in the following quote: “A church that does not to good in the slums of the cities, which does not fight evil, overcome heresies, side with the poor, denounce injustice and publicly represent justice, has no *raison d’être*.” -Charles H. Spurgeon.²⁶⁴ Furthermore, praying for the women in prostitution is also a key element of their work, as is sharing the gospel with them through flyers, personal conversations, or bible translations, since spiritual and physical healing are both considered important.

Politically the liberalization and neo-abolitionist sides are occasionally antagonistic, with little understanding for the other position. Nevertheless, they do respect and appreciate each other’s practical work concerning the women they help and also work together in these areas on occasion.

The interviews also revealed the interesting trend of NGOs prescribing policy. These achievements and other areas of influence will be examined in the following chapter.

²⁶³ Herzwirk. Annual report. 2017. „Unseren diakonischen Auftrag verstehen wir auf der Grundlage des christlichen Menschenbildes. Jeder Mensch, egal welcher Herkunft, Nationalität, Religion oder Tätigkeit, ist eine von Gott geliebte und geachtete Person, deren Würde unantastbar ist.“

²⁶⁴ Ibid. „Eine Gemeinde, die nicht wohl tut in den Elendsvierteln der Städte, die nicht das Böse bekämpft, Irrlehren überwindet, die sich nicht auf die Seite der Armen stellt, Ungerechtigkeit anprangert und Gerechtigkeit öffentlich vertritt, hat keine Daseinsberechtigung.“ – Charles H. Spurgeon

V. Chapter IV: Lobbies: Achievements and Influence

This final chapter seeks to explore the extent to which the lobbies have been successful in advancing their position regarding policy, societal discourse, the media and public opinion in Austria and on the European level. The larger successes of these specific Austrian organizations under examination have of course been recorded by the media. They have not, however, been previously compounded in an academic work which additionally examines the more nuanced and less publicized impact of these lobbies using primary archival sources.

It must also be acknowledged that these groups have had a significant impact on aiding individual women in their practical social work. However, these statistics go beyond the scope of this thesis and will therefore not be covered.²⁶⁵

V.I Achievements and Influence of Pro-Liberalization Groups

The pro-liberalization groups, especially LEFÖ (since 1985) and TAMPEP (since 1993), have been active longest. Consequently, they have been able to establish reputations, networks and influence.

V.I.I Concerning Austrian Policy

Already in a parliamentary session in 1997 a deputy from the Liberal Forum²⁶⁶ referred to “specialists from the scene, social workers, [who] assured [him],” that transferring the jurisdiction to the magistrate rather than the police would be beneficial, because prostitutes would rather register themselves at a magistrate than with the police.²⁶⁷ The session’s city councilor²⁶⁸ responded that this argument had “also been submitted to her by social workers”, which is why she would take it seriously. Another deputy of the Green party²⁶⁹ pointed out that prostitutes are not allowed to insure themselves but are required to pay taxes. She argued that consequently

²⁶⁵ For more information on the practical street work of the organizations see the annual reports.

²⁶⁶ Abgeordneter Marco Smoliner (Liberales Forum)

²⁶⁷ Austrian Parliament, Verbal Protocol of the 9th session of the Landtag of 28.11.1997, File number: Id(4270), accessed April 12, 2019, https://www.wien.gv.at/infodat/docs/LTG_W/1997/WStLA_ltg_009_w_1997_11_28.pdf#page=8.

²⁶⁸ Amtsfrau Stadträtin Mag. Renate Brauner

²⁶⁹ Abgeordnete Jutta Sander (Grüne)

prostitution is work and criticized that it is not recognized as such.²⁷⁰ These arguments discussed in parliament with reference to social workers show the extent to which deputies at the time already looked to the arguments and experience of groups such as LEFÖ, who, while not explicitly mentioned, were the leading organization with social workers in the field at the time.

In a 2004 application²⁷¹ the Greens employed the term sex work and strongly argued for more liberalization because “stricter laws would increase illegality and marginalization.”²⁷² They asked that a working group consisting of social workers, experts and “projects like LEFÖ and SILA” (the forerunner of Sophie) be formed to design new framework conditions for sex workers.²⁷³ Again, this shows the extent of the pro-liberalization lobby’s influence, since parties tended to consult pro-liberalization NGO experts at that time.

Regarding the 2011 Viennese Prostitution Law LEFÖ expressed its discontent stating that the new law “seemed to be oriented towards the concerns of residents, rather than the protection of the rights of sex workers.”²⁷⁴ As can be seen in parliamentary records, FPÖ and ÖVP²⁷⁵ MPs spearheaded the restrictive aspects of the reworked law.²⁷⁶ This shows that although these NGOs

²⁷⁰ Austrian Parliament, Verbal Protocol of the 9th session of the Landtag of 28.11.1997, File number: Id(4270), accessed April 12, 2019,

https://www.wien.gv.at/infodat/docs/LTG_W/1997/WStLA_ltg_009_w_1997_11_28.pdf#page=8.

²⁷¹ Viennese State Parliament, Motion, 23rd session of the Landtag of September 24, 2004, File number: PGL - 04117-2004/0001 KGR/LAT, accessed April 14, 2019,

<https://www.wien.gv.at/ma08/infodat/2004/pgl-04117-2004-0001-kgr-lat.pdf>.

²⁷² Ibid.: “Verschärfte Gesetze würden die Illegalität und Randständigkeit verstärken.”

²⁷³ Viennese State Parliament, Motion, 23rd session of the Landtag of September 24, 2004, File number: PGL - 04117-2004/0001 KGR/LAT, accessed April 14, 2019,

<https://www.wien.gv.at/ma08/infodat/2004/pgl-04117-2004-0001-kgr-lat.pdf>.

²⁷⁴ “Die Novelle scheint vordergründig an den Anliegen der AnrainerInnen orientiert zu sein, als an dem Ziel, die Rechte von SexarbeiterInnen zu schützen und der Ermächtigung und Unterstützung der in der Sexarbeit tätigen Frauen gerecht zu werden.”

See: LEFÖ, *Stellungnahme zum Novellierungsentwurf des Wiener Prostitutionsgesetzes*, August 1, 2011, 1, accessed April 14, 2019, http://www.lefoe.at/tl_files/lefoe/Tampep.%20Stellungnahme%20Prost.G.%202011.pdf.

²⁷⁵ ÖVP MPs have at times also worked to improve the rights of prostitutes.

See: “Marek will mehr Rechte für Prostituierte,” *Österreich*, December 16, 2007, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://www.oe24.at/oesterreich/politik/Marek-will-mehr-Rechte-fuer-Prostituierte/214310>.

²⁷⁶ Viennese State Parliament, *Literal Log*, 2nd session of the Landtag of December 16, 2010, 8, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://www.wien.gv.at/mdb/ltg/2010/ltg-002-w-2010-12-16-008.htm>.

²⁷⁷ See: Viennese State Parliament, *proposed FPÖ Amendment*, 6th session of the Landtag of June 30, 2011, File number: PGL - 02950-2011/0001 - KFP/LAT, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://www.wien.gv.at/ma08/infodat/2011/pgl-02950-2011-0001-kfp-lat.pdf>.

had influence, regarding legislation MPs are more concerned with constituent complaints and party politics.

The pro-sex work groups were also outspoken²⁷⁸ concerning the removal of the *Sittenwidrigkeits* clause which categorized prostitution as an immoral act and consequently prevented sex workers from claiming their wages from customers if they refused to pay. In a 2012 report the AG Prostitution documented their recommendation that the clause be withdrawn.²⁷⁹ The clause was removed in 2013.

V.I.II Concerning Austria

LEFÖ has established itself as the NGO expert to consult regarding prostitution in Austria. As they stated in their 2017 report: “LEFÖ acts as the nationwide contact and information point, has a broad transnational network and combines information and research with support work through cultural mediation.”²⁸⁰ The state has even transferred certain competencies to LEFÖ-IBF²⁸¹ regarding the administration of human trafficking cases²⁸². As Blum explained, LEFÖ had a lot of convincing to do through the *Task Force Menschenhandel*²⁸³ and the *Steuerungsgruppe Prostitution*,²⁸⁴ but has managed to induce the Austrian state to differentiate between the issues and adopt different solutions for each.²⁸⁵ The federal chancellery’s website stated that “Austrian experts consider regulation better” than a prohibition on buying sex to reduce human trafficking²⁸⁶

²⁷⁸ See: Report on Prostitution in Austria where Eva van Rahden raises this issue, “Prostitution in Österreich,” *ORF1*, March 10, 2012, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://oe1.orf.at/artikel/299954>.

²⁷⁹ AG Prostitution, *Regelung der Prostitution in Österreich- Empfehlungen der Arbeitsgruppe ‚Länderkompetenzen Prostitution‘ im Rahmen der Taskforce Menschenhandel*, Vienna, May 2012, 5, accessed April 15, 2019, https://www.frauen-familien-jugend.bka.gv.at/dam/jcr:13357f10-a8d4-4268-85e0-4cb7f1559926/regelg_prostitution_in_oe_juni2008pdf.pdf.

²⁸⁰ “LEFÖ fungiert somit als bundesweite Anlauf- und Informationsstelle, ist transnational vernetzt und verbindet Information und Forschung mit Unterstützungsarbeit durch kulturelle Mediation.” See: *LEFÖ Jahresbericht 2017*.

²⁸¹ LEFÖ-IBF is the branch dealing with victims of human trafficking.

²⁸² LEFÖ works on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Women, Family and Youth and the Federal Ministry of the Interior. See: <http://www.lefoe.at/index.php/ibf.html>.

²⁸³ Task Force on Human Trafficking

²⁸⁴ Steering Group on Prostitution

²⁸⁵ Blum Interview: “Wir mussten viel Überzeugungsarbeit leisten.”

²⁸⁶ „Expertinnen und Experten in Österreich sind sich aber weitgehend einig, dass es besser ist, sexuelle Dienstleistungen zu regulieren, als durch ein Verbot in den Untergrund zu drängen.”

See: Bundeskanzleramt website, “Prostitution,” Bundesministerin für Frauen, Familie und Jugend, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://www.frauen-familien-jugend.bka.gv.at/frauen/prostitution.html>.

and referred to several counseling centers including LEFÖ, Sophie and lastly Herzwirk on their website.

V.I.III Concerning Other Politically Active Organizations

In 2008 *Österreichischer Frauenring*, an umbrella group for Austrian women's organizations, also adopted the pro-liberalization position and referred to LEFÖ's expertise in their position paper.²⁸⁷ The ÖFR advocates for sex workers' rights on a European level, but the European umbrella group for women's groups²⁸⁸ has so far taken on the abolitionist stance.

Sophie, concentrating more on the social rights which affect sex workers daily, has established a cooperation with the Austrian labor union who then developed an affordable social insurance scheme which is also made available to sex workers.²⁸⁹

V.I.IV Concerning the Media

Eva van Rahden, head of Sophie, has given several interviews on the topic. Some interviews were conducted by influential mainstream media platforms such as the *ORF*. In 2008²⁹⁰ van Rahden was accompanied by a sex worker to speak on the *Sittenwidrigkeit* issue and in 2012 on the legal conditions for sex workers in general.²⁹¹

LEFÖ also received extensive media coverage.²⁹² Most has been in reference to its work at LEFÖ-IBF, which is mostly covered by the media in connection to prostitution.²⁹³ LEFÖ's fight for the promotion of sex workers rights has also been repeatedly covered by *Der Standard*²⁹⁴ and others.

²⁸⁷ ÖFR. *Sexarbeiter*innenrechte sind Frauenrechte! Positionspapier des ÖFR zu Thema Sexarbeit*. ZVR-Zahl: 383162008, September 26, 2008, 1-2, accessed April 14, 2019, <https://www.frauenring.at/sites/default/files/artikel/OEFR-Sexarbeit-Stellungnahme.pdf>.

²⁸⁸ European Women's Lobby

²⁸⁹ Vidaflex website, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://www.vidaflex.at/>.

²⁹⁰ "Sexarbeit: Sittenwidrig und Steuerpflichtig," *ORF*, February 7, 2008, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://oe1.orf.at/artikel/212187>.

²⁹¹ "Prostitution in Österreich," *ORF1* March 10, 2012, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://oe1.orf.at/artikel/299954>.

²⁹² For a complete list see: "Presse," LEFÖ website, <http://www.lefoe.at/index.php/presse.html>.

²⁹³ "Verein LEFÖ hilft seit 20 Jahren Opfern von Menschenhandel," *Der Standard*, June 7, 2018, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://derstandard.at/2000081135747/Verein-LEFOe-hilft-seit-20-Jahren-Opfern-von-Menschenhandel>;

"Prostitution in Österreich," *ORF1* March 10, 2012, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://oe1.orf.at/artikel/299954>.

²⁹⁴ "Internationaler Hurentag: So feiert LEFÖ," *Der Standard*, June 20, 2008, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://derstandard.at/1207285879866/Internationaler-Hurentag-So-feierte-LEFOe>.

V.I.V Concerning Academia

Sociologist and political scientist, Helga Amesberger,²⁹⁵ is active in the AG Prostitution and has published numerous books and articles promoting the liberalization and de-stigmatization of sex work, which the AG Prostitution frequently cites.²⁹⁶ She has sat for interviews with mainstream media outlets, maintaining that the sex work debate is moralized, and too little emphasis is put on research.²⁹⁷ Together with LEFÖ and MAIZ she conducted a study interviewing sex workers,²⁹⁸ which has also been very influential.

Independent Political Scientist Birgit Sauer²⁹⁹ has also added to the list of publications concerning prostitution in Austria. Furthermore, she was involved in promoting the pro-liberalization position in Europe. From 2013-2017 she was a member of the managing committee of an EU-funded project,³⁰⁰ which sought to compare and offer advice on coordinating diverging European national policies on prostitution.³⁰¹ She is one of a few individuals who are very active in advocacy and research regarding this issue for one or the other position, although they are not part of one of these organizations.³⁰²

V.I.VI Concerning Europe

Umbrella groups like TAMPEP and ICRSE,³⁰³ which are active on a European scale, continuously report achievements in the promotion of sex workers rights. TAMPEP described its objectives as follows:

²⁹⁵ "MitarbeiterInnen: Helga Amesberger," *Institut für Konfliktforschung website*, accessed on April 16, 2019, http://www.ikf.ac.at/m_amesb.htm.

²⁹⁶ See: AG Prostitution's 2015 Position Paper.

²⁹⁷ Beate Hausbichler, "Soziologin Helga Amesberger: Die Debatte über Sexarbeit ist eine moralische," *Der Standard*, April 16, 2015, accessed April 16, 2019, <https://derstandard.at/2000014361447/Soziologin-Die-Debatte-ueber-Sexarbeit-ist-eine-moralische>.

²⁹⁸ Helga Amesberger, *Sexarbeit in Österreich. Ein Politikfeld zwischen Pragmatismus, Moralisierung und Resistenz* (Vienna: New Academic Press, 2014).

²⁹⁹ Birgit Tombor, "Verbot ist keine Lösung," *Der Standard*, January 22, 2012, accessed on April 16, 2019, <https://derstandard.at/1324410971631/Kauflicher-Sex-Verbot-ist-keine-Loesung>.

³⁰⁰ See: "Comparing European Prostitution Policies: Understanding Scales and Cultures of Governance," ProsPol COST Action IS1209 website, accessed April, 18, 2019, <https://www.cost.eu/actions/IS1209/#tabsName:management-committee>.

³⁰¹ See: "Ongoing Projects," *Birgit Sauer website*, accessed on April 16, 2019, <https://homepage.univie.ac.at/birgit.sauer/wordpress/projects/?lang=en>.

³⁰² See also Helga Amesberger, Susanne Riegler or Sabine Kalluch.

³⁰³ International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe (ICRSE) homepage, accessed April 15, 2019, <http://www.sexworkeurope.org/node/464>.

“The overall purpose of TAMPEP VII was to further develop the models of good practice and current tools to support the planning and implementation of coordinated and comprehensive health promotion and social care services for migrant sex workers and trafficked women in all EU countries, through on-going pan-European cooperation and through expanding the Network by including partners from new EU member countries.”³⁰⁴

TAMPEP’s 2017 activity report stated that “the broad objectives were achieved.”³⁰⁵

ICRSE has also grown to include 103 organizations (including TAMPEP) since its inception in 2005 with the signing of the Declaration of the Rights of Sex Workers in Brussels.³⁰⁶ They developed quadrennial strategic plans to advance pro-liberalization policies across Europe.³⁰⁷ Among their achievements are several publications, awareness-raising demonstrations and documentaries.³⁰⁸

V.II Achievements and Influence of Neo-Abolitionist Groups

Since the Austrian neo-abolitionist groups only emerged in the late 2000s to early 2010s, they have not significantly influenced Austrian policy so far. Their main political impact has been in awareness raising and opening the Austrian discourse to this alternative position. The neo-abolitionist lobby as a whole has, however, shaped European policy.

V.II.I Concerning the Media

The press conference³⁰⁹ organized by Stopp Sexkauf in 2016 was covered extensively by the mainstream Austrian press.³¹⁰ The fact that it was promoted and hosted by the Swedish Embassy

³⁰⁴ *TAMPEP Final Report 2017*, 4, accessed April 18, 2019, https://tampep.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/report_tampep_7.pdf.

³⁰⁵ *TAMPEP Final Report 2017*, 127, accessed April 18, 2019, https://tampep.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/report_tampep_7.pdf.

³⁰⁶ See: “The Declaration of the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe,” ICRSE homepage, accessed April 15, 2019, <http://www.sexworkeurope.org/resources/declaration-rights-sex-workers-europe>.

³⁰⁷ See: “Strategic Plan,” ICRSE homepage, accessed April 15, 2019, <http://www.sexworkeurope.org/who-we-are/strategic-plan-2016-2019>.

³⁰⁸ See: “General News,” ICRSE homepage, accessed April 15, 2019, <http://www.sexworkeurope.org/about/general-news>.

³⁰⁹ “Ordensfrauen Fordern Verbot von ‚Sexkauf‘,” *ORF*, February 19, 2016, accessed April 16, 2019, <https://religion.orf.at/stories/2758652/>.

³¹⁰ “Plattform Fordert ‚Sexkaufverbot,“ *Der Standard*, February 18, 2016, accessed April 16, 2019, <https://derstandard.at/2000031367328/Plattform-fordert-gesetzliches-Sexkaufverbot>.

and featured a politically diverse panel of advocates, including survivor of prostitution turned anti-prostitution campaigner and author Rachel Moran, lent this position legitimacy and increased its public awareness.

The journalist Susanne Riegler, a member of Stopp Sexkauf, has been especially active in reporting on the topic in Vienna and debating opponents such as Helga Amesberger and Tina Leisch in interviews.³¹¹ Riegler argued from a feminist perspective and criticized the neo-liberal tendency that puts bodies on sale. She believes the system of prostitution impedes gender equality and that human dignity is violated when people sell their bodies. Riegler warns that increased legalization and liberalization not only removes the category of the victim, but also that of the perpetrator, thus limiting the possibility of oversight and legal prosecution.³¹²

Smaller organizations have also received some media coverage. This includes Hope for the Future, which offers women the possibility to exit prostitution by teaching them German and showing them how to sew items, which they consequently sell. These articles³¹³ questioned the voluntariness of prostitution by highlighting that by being categorized as a *freies Gewerbe* (free trade) prostitution is one of very few possibilities open to asylum seekers. They also presented the link between prostitution and human trafficking.

V.II.II Concerning Research and Academia

Kienesberger, from Stopp Sexkauf, published a book examining the discourse on prostitution and how it has been trivialized by shifts in terminology: such as calling prostitution sex work.³¹⁴

Herzwerk also contributed to research on human trafficking with a report on the Nigerian trafficking route which mainly traffics women into prostitution.³¹⁵ Among the listed best practices and recommendations, they praise LEFÖ-IBF's work, as well as the work of smaller organizations

³¹¹ "Sexarbeit in Österreich: Verbieten oder Legalisieren?," *Der Standard*, September 5, 2013, accessed April 16, 2019, <https://derstandard.at/1378247971444/Sexarbeit-verbieten-oder-legalisieren>;

³¹² "15 Euro für Einen Blowjob, Nicht 100," *Wiener Zeitung* on August 4, 2015, accessed on April 16, 2019, <https://www.wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/panorama/europa/772691-15-Euro-fuer-einen-Blowjob-nicht-100.html>.

³¹³ Susanne Riegler, "Schöne, Heile Welt: Eine Reportage," *Gaisimair-Gesellschaft*, 2015, accessed on April 16, 2019, https://www.gaisimair-gesellschaft.at/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2015_Riegler_98-ilovepdf-compressed.pdf.

³¹⁴ Sofie Hörthler, "Ausstiegshilfe für Prostituierte in Wien," *ORF*, November 29, 2018, accessed on April 16, 2019, <https://wien.orf.at/news/stories/2948202/>.

³¹⁵ See: Anita Kienesberger, *Fucking Poor: Was hat ,Sexarbeit mit Arbeit zu tun?* (Hamburg: Marta Press, 2014).

³¹⁶ Caroline Sander, *Best Practices in tackling trafficking Nigerian Route (BINIs): National Report Austria* (2018).

such as Hope for the Future which offer work training to women wanting to leave prostitution.³¹⁶ They did not, however, list the implementation of the Nordic Model among the recommendations in this report, since it focusses on the human trafficking aspect.

V.II.III Concerning Social and Public Awareness

Lightup worked on a different front. Through workshops and lectures at schools, universities and for the public, they targeted youth to enlighten them about the effects of pornography, prostitution and human trafficking and the links between them. They thus hope to influence a new generation and work together with lightup groups in Germany and Norway to promote this movement.

Not only the youth took note of the growing neo-abolitionist position. The AG Prostitution has also made reference to the increasing influence of the neo-abolitionist position, especially on the European level, which they consider troubling.³¹⁷ TAMPEP also noted in 2015 that the abolitionist movement had developed into a “dangerous European and global trend.”³¹⁸

V.II.IV Concerning European Policy

On the European level these groups appear quite successful. The European Women’s Lobby took a neo-abolitionist position in 2013 with the so-called Brussels Call. In it, 53 members of the European Parliament from various countries and political groups expressed their view that “prostitution is an obstacle to equality between women and men and a violation of human rights.”³¹⁹ Countries that have implemented the Nordic Model, with Sweden at the forefront, continue to lobby for it on a European level.

The 2014 Honeyball Report³²⁰ which resulted in a motion for a European Parliament (EP) resolution, was likely the most crucial piece of policy for the neo-abolitionist movement. In it, the

³¹⁶ Ibid., 82-85.

³¹⁷ See: AG Prostitution’s 2015 Position Paper.

³¹⁸ TAMPEP, *Informationspapier*, July 2015, accessed April 17, 2019, https://tampep.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/TAMPEP-paper-GER.at_.pdf.

³¹⁹ “MEPs Call for a Europe Free from Prostitution and Support the Brussels’ Call Signed by 200 NGOs,” European Women’s Lobby Homepage, October 2, 2013, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://www.womenlobby.org/-News-about-the-Brussels-Call-?lang=en>.

³²⁰ European Parliament, *Report on Sexual Exploitation and Prostitution and its Impact on Gender Equality*, Rapporteur: Honeyball, Mary, February 4, 2014, accessed April 12, 2019,

EP stated that “prostitution is a form of slavery incompatible with human dignity and fundamental human rights.”³²¹ The report also stated that the EP:

“Recognizes that prostitution and sexual exploitation are highly gendered issues and violations of human dignity, contrary to human rights principles, among which are gender equality, and therefore contrary to the principles of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union [...]”³²²

The report also highlighted the strong link between prostitution and trafficking:

“The most conservative official statistics suggest that 1 in 7 prostitutes in Europe are victims of trafficking, while some Member States estimate that between 60% and 90% of those in their respective national prostitution markets have been trafficked [...]”³²³

The report by MEP Mary Honeyball amounted to a non-binding European recommendation that countries implement the Nordic Model, which still stands today, although the report was strongly criticized by the pro-sex work lobby. This report and recommendation are commonly referred to by Stopp Sexkauf to promote the position in Austria.

V.II.V Concerning Europe

France’s adoption of the Nordic Model in 2016 was considered a great achievement for the neo-abolitionist lobby. When the law was challenged in the constitutional court by the French sex worker’s lobby who argued it endangered the right to sexual self-determination and the freedom to do business, the court upheld the law in 2019, categorizing prostitution as a form of violence (against women).³²⁴ This further validated the neo-abolitionist position.

Furthermore, lightup is part of a multinational youth movement, which appears to be gaining momentum. In April 2019 a youth petition was presented to the Dutch parliament with 42,000 signatures asking for the Nordic Model to be implemented in the Netherlands.³²⁵ The youth

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2014-0071+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² Ibid.

³²³ European Parliament. *Sexual Exploitation and Prostitution and its Impact on Gender Equality: Study*, Schulze, Erika, PE 493.040, January 2014, accessed April 14, 2019,

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/493040/IPOL-FEMM_ET\(2014\)493040_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/493040/IPOL-FEMM_ET(2014)493040_EN.pdf).

³²⁴ AFP, “French Sex Workers Fail in Bid to Overturn Payment Ban,” *France24*, February 1, 2019, accessed April 16, 2019, <https://www.france24.com/en/20190201-french-sex-workers-fail-bid-overturn-payment-ban>.

³²⁵ Anna Holligan, “Dutch Prostitution Debate in Parliament Forced by Youth Petition,” *BBC*, April 10, 2019, accessed April 11, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-47865363>.

presented themselves as being feminist, Christian or neutral and demonstrated the momentum of their movement by re-opening the prostitution debate in the Netherlands, one of Europe's most liberalized countries regarding prostitution policy, which resulted in its famous red-light districts.

VI. Conclusion

In conclusion, the central research question: “How did various and at times opposing lobbying groups frame their arguments and form coalitions in their attempt to shape the law on prostitution in Vienna from the 1980’s onwards and what impact did they have?”, as well as the sub-research questions have been answered.

It was established that from the late 70s to early 90s there were small sex workers movements, which were replaced by NGOs, advocating for either regulation and liberalization of prostitution or its abolition through the reduction of demand for sex through the Nordic Model. LEFÖ and Sophie have been identified as the main representatives of the pro-sex work lobby striving for more sex worker’s rights and de-stigmatization. Solwodi, lightup and Verein feministischer Diskurs and the umbrella group Stopp Sexkauf represent the neo-abolitionist lobby whose goal is to have the Nordic Model implemented in Vienna. Herzwirk takes no official position but does point to the link between prostitution policy and human trafficking.

The pro-sex work organizations in Austria are older, mainly driven by feminist and pragmatic considerations and have established themselves as the main influencers on prostitution policy in Vienna. Evidence of this has been found in parliamentary records dating back to the late 90s. The pro-legalization lobby demands that the real conditions and legal needs of women in prostitution be ameliorated and that stigmatization be fought. There are differences, however, in the emphasis put on ideas of self-determination and necessity. Some argue that the law should adapt to the women’s self-determined wishes, while others rather believe it necessary that laws should adapt to the women’s disadvantaged situation. These lobbies have managed to position themselves as the main advisors in governmental working groups.

Leftist and feminist groups such as Verein feministischer Diskurs have indeed cooperated with arguably more conservative groups like Solwodi to further the neo-abolitionist cause, comparable with the US example. However, none of these groups affiliate themselves with a political party. Both lobbies confirmed they were open to collaborate with any political party willing to advance their position, with exception of the FPÖ, which was cited by many as a ‘last recourse’ on both sides.

The neo-abolitionist lobby covers a diverse political spectrum with groups motivated by different reasons. Generally, the Christian groups are concerned with human dignity and humanitarian

considerations, feminist groups are attentive to patriarchal structures and aspects of gender inequality, while leftist groups primarily criticize that capitalism has gone so far as to legalize putting human bodies on sale. A mixture of motives is naturally possible and common, especially in the umbrella groups. In sum, this lobby unites an uncommon and varied group of organizations and individuals, which have shown that despite not fighting for the same reason one can unite to work towards the same goal. In any case, it is a valuable example of cooperation across the political spectrum.

All lobbies agree that people in prostitution should not be stigmatized, although it appears that this means different things for the groups. Neo-abolitionists insist that each person must be met with respect and understanding, while those pro-sex work would argue that not only the person but how they earn their income must also be respected.

Clearly, patriarchal structures and economic inequalities persist, but the means to resolve this is disputed. It depends on the individual's point of view; whether self-determination and sexual freedom are considered emancipation or whether the abolition of a trade that puts predominantly women's bodies on sale for male satisfaction embodies this emancipation.

Each side has had successes and setbacks on the European level, while one side has usually managed to dominate the discourse and political influence in each specific country. Consensus has not yet been achieved and most likely will not be, because both sides present convincing and incompatible arguments and it ultimately depends on the weight individuals allot those arguments.

It should, however, be possible to cater to the real legislative needs of people in prostitution, such as insuring unemployment benefits and offering concrete and supportive solutions to people wishing to exit, while not dismissing the still utopian vision that no person should be compelled to prostitute themselves out of economic need or any other form of coercion.

Further research is required on lobbying groups in other Austrian provinces, as well as on politicians involved in policy making. Future studies could also expand on other lobbying groups, such as brothel owners and sex workers in other countries, where these movements exist. The question of the link between prostitution and human trafficking also requires further analysis, especially better data and statistics, which are unfortunately difficult to obtain.

VII. Glossary of Terms

church groups: organized associations of religious institutions and/or groups who are primarily run by or funded by religious institutions, who in the context of this paper are actively involved in lobbying for a certain prostitution policy.

conservative: refers to those groups who wish to preserve existing and/or traditional institutions and conditions

feminist: denotes those groups advocating social, political and economic rights for women

leftist: denotes groups on the left side of the political spectrum and is usually associated with liberal values

liberal: refers to a certain ideology or tendency which is favourable towards progress or reform and focused on the rights of the individual

prostitution: refers to the selling of physical sexual services in exchange for monetary recompense (non-physical types such as phone sex for example are not examined in the context of this thesis). This thesis also only focusses on female prostitution.

right: refers to those on the right side of the political spectrum and is typically associated with conservative values

sex work: refers to the selling of physical sexual services in exchange for monetary recompense, but the term is primarily employed by those in the pro-legalization camp to emphasize that selling sex is work and should not be stigmatized.

Neo-abolitionist: These groups advocate the Nordic Model as their overarching goal, but also regulation that addresses and improves the immediate needs of people in prostitution. They cite varying reasonings underlying their positioning, including feminism, anti-neo-liberalism/ anti-hyper-capitalism, ideas of human dignity and humanitarian or social-justice reasons connected to the understanding that prostitution is linked to human trafficking.

Pro-liberalization/legalization: These groups work for the decriminalization and de-stigmatization of sex work and demand more liberal regulation, which entails more rights for sex workers. They often cite feminist and liberal reasons for their position.

VIII. Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AG Prostitution: Arbeitsgemeinschaft Prostitution/ Working Group on Prostitution

BINI: Best practices in tackling trafficking Nigerian Route.

BUFAS: ¹ Bündnis der Fachberatungsstellen für Sexarbeiterinnen und Sexarbeiter/ Alliance of the Counselling Centers for Sex Workers in Germany

CATW: Coalition Against Trafficking in Women

COYOTE: Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics

EP: European Parliament

EPU: Ein-Personen-Unternehmen/ One-person-businesses

EWL: European Women's Lobby

FPÖ: Freiheitliche Partei Österreich/ Freedom Party of Austria

IBF: Interventionsstelle für Betroffene von Frauenhandel/ Intervention Center for Victims of Trafficking in Women

ICP: International Committee for Prostitutes' Rights

ICRSE: ¹ International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe

IJM : International Justice Mission

LEFÖ: Lateinamerikanische emigrierte Frauen in Österreich/ Latinamerican emigrated women in Austria. Renamed: LEFÖ- Beratung, Bildung und Begleitung für Migrantinnen in 2004.\

NEOS: Das Neue Österreich und Liberales Forum/ The New Austria and Liberal Forum

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

ORF: Österreichischer Rundfunk/ Austrian Broadcasting Corporation

ÖFR: Österreichischer Frauenring/ Austrian Women's Ring

ÖVP: Österreichische Volkspartei/ The Austrian People's Party

SOLWODI: Solidarity with women in distress

SPÖ: Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreich/ Social Democratic Party of Austria

TAMPEP: The European Network for the Promotion of Rights and Health among Migrant Sex Workers

VFD: Verein feministischer Diskurs/ Society of feminist discourse

VdPÖ: Verband der Prostituierten Österreichs/ Association of Prostitutes of Austria

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Pledge of honesty

“On my honour as a student of the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, I submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on it.”

Sofia Höndler
