

# The “German Legislation Model” for Prostitution: 17 years after the liberalization of prostitution

Speech by Dr. Ingeborg Kraus at the Italian parliament in Rom, 22.10.2019.

I am honoured today to have the opportunity to share our experiences with a law that legalises and normalises prostitution. **Far from protecting the women, “the German model“ has become “hell on earth“ for them.** I use this strong comparison on purpose, because the situation in Germany has become extremely serious. I will give you a short overview of the effects of this law.

What says the police? Competent criminal police officers who work for over 30 years in the red light district say that: *“today up to 98% of the women in prostitution are not there by their own will but because of some kind of form of coercion”*<sup>1</sup>. Helmut Sporer<sup>2</sup> says that *“prostitution has risen up to 30% since 2002”* and that *„90% of the women in prostitution have not freely chosen prostitution, they are subjected to various forms of pressure“*.<sup>3</sup> And Manfred Paulus says that *“Germany has become a hub for human trafficking and forced prostitution”*.<sup>4</sup>

Prostitution is treated by many politicians as a politically irrelevant topic, which certainly is not: because trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation has now become the most lucrative criminal business! *“It's not like a Kalashnikov that you sell once and never see again, with a woman buyers can have a profit for a very long time,”* says Chief Inspector with the police Manfred Paulus<sup>5</sup>.

We have made a huge mistake implementing this law and have gone in a direction few could have imagined would be so disastrous. Prostitution has nothing to do with sexual liberation, it is just money that counts. The profit of this business is enormous: we are talking about 15 billion Euros of direct transactions every year<sup>6</sup>. It has become an important industrial sector

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<sup>1</sup> Manfred Paulus: Tatort Deutschland, Menschenhandel, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Helmut Sporer, 10.07.2014, Augsburg Allgemeine. <https://www.augsburger-allgemeine.de/bayern/Immer-mehr-Prostituierte-aus-Osteuropa-kommen-nach-Augsburg-id30512282.html>

<sup>3</sup> Helmut Sporer: Speech for the Seminar “Reality of Prostitution” of the European Women’s Lobby on 1 Oct 2013 in Brussels.

<sup>4</sup> Manfred Paulus: „Deutschland ist längst zur Drehscheibe von Menschenhandel und Zwangsprostitution geworden.“ In: Dokumentation „Bordell Deutschland – Milliardengeschäft Prostitution“, ZDFinfo, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Manfred Paulus: speech at the „Seegespräche“ on 26.04.2019: <https://www.trauma-and-prostitution.eu/2019/05/24/vortrag-von-manfred-paulus/>

<sup>6</sup> Michael Jürgs, *Sklavenmarkt Europa*, 2014, p. 327.

were women's bodies are objectified and used as a commodity.

3500 brothels are officially registered<sup>7</sup>. But we know that there are at least as many illegal brothels. So: the main goal, that wanted to bring the women out of the darkness, has totally failed.

**It is the German state, by normalising prostitution and by guaranteeing a total decriminalisation of the sex buyers, that has contributed to an enormous increase in demand.** We witness the creation of mega-brothels with the capacity to accommodate around 1000 buyers of sex at once, and even more. "Flat-rate" brothels, where, for 70 Euros you get offered a beer, a sausage, and unlimited women<sup>8</sup>. This economical model of the sexual exploitation of the women has also led to an economical exploitation of those women<sup>9</sup>: they earn 30 Euros for sexual intercourse, while they must pay around 160 Euros for a room and 25,- Euro taxes per day; So they have to serve 6 men before starting earning money. These women are subjected to the rules of a free market of capitalism at its roughest: Their bodies are exploited to the maximum. We observe the kind of inhuman working conditions we thought have been surpassed since the beginning of the 20th century: these women live, eat, and sleep in the same room in which they receive their "clients". Many among them lead a Nomad life, moving from one city to the next and one brothel to the next to offer the sex buyers "variety".

The behaviour of the sex buyers became perverted overnight<sup>10</sup> with a law normalising prostitution, whose message to men is clear: There is "a right" to buy sexual acts and there is no need to feel guilty about that any more. The clients therefore see themselves entitled to demand more and more "services" for the lowest price.

**It is the German state that is responsible for the development of sexual practices that are totally incompatible with human dignity.** I will preserve you from details, but today, completely legally, you can buy a woman and piss her in her face, do group rapes, or force her to swallow semen.

The makeup of women in prostitution has changed. With the opening of Europe to the east, women come from the poorest regions of Europe: Romania, Bulgaria — and it's often minorities like the Roma who live in extreme poverty. Today around 95% of prostituted women come from other countries. It has become a prostitution of poverty.

*"30% of these women are young, under 21-years old. Often they are sacrificed by their own families in order to support them financially. The majority do not speak German. These young women come to Germany and are subjected to the perverse desires of these buyers. They aren't capable of saying "no", of defending themselves. They are completely*

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<sup>7</sup> Michael Jürgs, *Sklavenmarkt Europa*, 2014, p. 327.

<sup>8</sup> Chantal Louis : « *Die Folgen der Prostitution* », in Alice Schwarzer HG, *Prostitution, ein Deutscher Skandal*, p. 70-87.

<sup>9</sup> Documentation „Bordell Deutschland – Milliarden-geschäft Prostitution“, ZDFInfo, 2017. And also: Der Spiegel, *Bordell Deutschland*. 27.05.2013. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/human-trafficking-persists-despite-legality-of-prostitution-in-germany-a-902533-2.html>

<sup>10</sup> Radio interview with the Dominatrix Ellen Templin, 08.03.2010. <http://abolition2014.blogspot.de/2014/05/interview-mit-einer-domina.html>

*overwhelmed by the situation and completely traumatized by it.*<sup>11</sup> **It is the German state that abandons the most vulnerable women and delivers them to criminal businessmen and sexual predators.**

People who believe that prostitution is „sex work“ have a strange fantasy in their mind. They think that an 18 year old woman, from Bulgaria for example, wants to go to Germany to work as a sex worker in a brothel. It doesn't work like this. Almost all women in German brothels have been put there by men: by traffickers and pimps. And very often, they have entered a bond with those men: sometimes it's the own family that sacrifices a daughter and sends them to a German brothel, sometimes the trafficker establishes a bond to the victim by playing a love-relationship (this so called Loverboy-Method: 1 out of 6 trafficked women are victims of loverboys<sup>12</sup>), and sometimes the victim gets into a bond to the trafficker with the hope for a better future. If you go to the poor countries in Europe to a classroom and ask if anybody wants to go to Germany, everybody will raise their hands. So that makes it very easy to recruit them by defrauding them.

The working conditions and the level of hygiene have become disastrous. Out of 400,000 prostituted women (an estimate that is more than 20 years old), only 44 registered as independent business<sup>13</sup>. The vast majority remains illegal, which means that they have no access to a social system that would allow them to see a doctor. **The German state permits the exploitation of these women and supports them being crushed by the sex-industry, yet doesn't even include them in a social welfare system.**

There is a recent medical report from a gynaecologist<sup>14</sup> who is working with prostituted women. The health condition of these women is catastrophic. Within 30 years they often show signs of early-ageing. All women have persistent abdominal pains, gastritis, and frequent infections due to the unhealthy state of living conditions. And of course, all kinds of sexually transmissible diseases. The psychological traumatization can just about be tolerated with alcohol and pharmaceutical drugs. He reports about a growing demand for pregnant women in prostitution. Those women have to serve 15 to 40 men a day continuously until they give birth. Very often, they abandon their child and go to work as soon as possible. Sometimes 3 days after birthing the child. Those practices are totally irresponsible for the health of the mother and her child. It can cause irreversible damage to the unborn child. It is absurd to speak of the "reproductive rights" of women in prostitution, **this here is about the sex buyers' rights, and to guarantee them their rights of flourishing without restraint or restriction.**

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<sup>11</sup> Sabine Constabel, a social worker who has worked with prostituted women in Stuttgart für 20 years, made the following statements in a television interview on Oct. 17, 2013.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BpCPKDRcFg0>

<sup>12</sup> Bundeslagebild Menschenhandel und Ausbeutung 2018, page 10:  
<https://www.bka.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Publikationen/JahresberichteUndLagebilder/Menschenhandel/menschenhandelBundeslagebild2018.html;jsessionid=77FD100DA540CC33AC605C5DBF7F2F60.live0611?nn=27956>

<sup>13</sup> Michael Jürgs, Sklavenmarkt Europa, 2014, P. 327.

<sup>14</sup> Dr. Wolfgang Heide: Stellungnahme zur öffentlichen Anhörung zur „Regulierung des Prostitutionsgewerbes“ im Ausschuss für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Gesundheit im Deutschen Bundestag am 06. Juni 2016.  
<https://www.trauma-and-prostitution.eu/2016/06/05/stellungnahme-von-wolfgang-heide-facharzt-fuer-gynaekologie-und-geburtshilfe/>

I was asked by the Women's Health Mental Organisation to speak last year at the world conference in Dublin about the mental health situation of prostituted women in Germany. What can I say? What is the mental health situation of a woman that is reduced to a piece of meat? They are totally destroyed. A woman that is working in an exit program for prostituted women told me that there are very few women exiting prostitution. They will stay until they break down physically. It is just a matter of time. I asked myself, why it is like this? Because their will has been broken. They do not exist any more as a person that has an identity and a future they can imagine for themselves. We are talking here about complex traumatisation.

A study by the German ministry for family affairs in 2004<sup>15</sup> demonstrated that 87% of the women in prostitution reported having been exposed to physical violence, 82% to emotional violence, 92% to sexual harassment, 59% to sexual violence. These figures alone make it difficult to compare prostitution to a job like any other. And this research was conducted more than 10 years ago; things have since deteriorated significantly. **Violence is an inherent part of prostitution but the German state continues to deny these facts!**

Seen from the perspective of psychotraumatology<sup>16</sup>, prostitution is not a job like any other. To allow strangers to penetrate one's body, natural phenomena must be extinguished: fear, shame, disgust, alienation, contempt, self-blame. In their place women put: indifference, neutrality, a functional conception of penetration, a reinterpretation of this act as a "job" or "service". These women have learned very early on how to dissociate. In fact, many studies<sup>17</sup> on this subject demonstrate a strict correlation between entering prostitution and violence experienced during childhood. **These women were abandoned a first time in their childhood, and are abandoned a second time by a states politics that legitimises their sexual exploitation.**

Prostitution as a system uses this traumatisation for its own ends and profit. Under no circumstances can prostitution be defined as "work" or "a service". The erogenous and reproductive body parts of women are too sensitive to be objectified for the use as work tools. Prostitution can only be practised in a state of pathological dissociation.

In addition, prostitution can not be viewed as a job, as it is traumatising. Numerous studies<sup>18</sup> have shown that **the risk of developing post traumatic stress disorder is higher in prostitution than it is in war.**

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<sup>15</sup> Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend : *Gender Datenreport* », Kapitel 10: *Gewalthandlungen und Gewaltbetroffenheit von Frauen und Männern*, P. 651-652, 2004.

<sup>16</sup> Michaela Huber, *Trauma und Prostitution aus traumatherapeutischer Sicht*, 2014: <http://www.michaela-huber.com/files/vortraege2014/trauma-und-prostitution-aus-traumatherapeutischer-sicht.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Dre Muriel Salmona, *Pour mieux penser la prostitution: quelques outils et quelques chiffres qui peuvent être utiles. Chapitre 3: Violences avant l'entrée en situation prostitutionnelle.* <https://www.trauma-and-prostitution.eu/fr/2015/01/21/pour-mieux-penser-la-prostitution-quelques-outils-et-quelques-chiffres-qui-peuvent-etre-utiles/>

<sup>18</sup> - Study by Melissa Farley from 2008 that found that 68% of the women in prostitution experienced PTSD at a similar intensity to combattant veterans or people who survived torture. <http://www.trauma-and-prostitution.eu/en/2015/01/26/prostitution-and-trafficking-in-nine-countries-an-update-on-violence-and-posttraumatic-stress-disorder/>

- Study by Zumbeck in Germany in 2001, who found that 60% suffered from intense PTSD. Zumbeck, Sibylle: *Die Prävalenz traumatischer Erfahrungen, Posttraumatische Belastungsstörungen und Dissoziation bei Prostituierten*, Hamburg, 2001.

The “German model“ of legalising prostitution has shown itself to be a law obliging the criminal world and has turned Germany into traffickers’, procurers’ and brothel keepers’ Eldorado, as Manfred Paulus, Chief Inspector with the police, has stated<sup>19</sup>. The police are rendered powerless when faced with a law that has strengthened the prostitution system and has made criminals into recognised business men. The law from 2002 didn’t help to prevent trafficking at all<sup>20</sup>: in 2000, they were 151 persons condemned for trafficking, in 2011 only 32. The police recorded 636 cases of trafficked women in 2011, 3 times less than 10 years before. 13 of them were younger than 14 years old, 77 were under 18. The police feels helpless and complains that they have just little power to intervene, because without being able to deliver an evidence for the crime, they can not enter the brothels. Also, the legal proceedings depend on the women’s statement. Very often they are too afraid to give testimony and the procedures get stopped.<sup>21</sup>

Those women – once they are totally broken – are simply sent back. You can imagine what it means for those countries. Imagine, every year, 10,000 Italian women coming back to Italy totally traumatized from the German brothels. This would be a national disaster, affecting the population through generations. A situation like after a war that takes a long time to recover. And what are those women sacrificed for? For what are they sent into a situation similar to war? Is it to protect the country against invasions or terrorism? No, those women are being sacrificed so that some men can have sex whenever they want, the way they want and with whom they want. **It is the German state that encourages those men to impose their sexual acts to thousands of women.**

Approximately 50% of the punters are in relationships<sup>22</sup>, so women are being cheated by their partners and husbands: Do the calculation yourself: every day 1.2 Million men buy sex. They are not the same every day. We must realize, that Germany is a country where millions of women are being cheated on<sup>23</sup>. Those women call themselves “Schattenfrauen”<sup>24</sup>, which means women of the shadow. They stay in the shadow of the system of prostitution, their voice and their Trauma are being ignored. They are left alone with the humiliation and indignity, which is also typical for trauma victims. Some of them have contacted me and they say that it is much worse if a husband goes to a prostituted woman than if he falls in love with an other woman. Prostitution destroys the ability to love and therefore our fundamental value system. Trust, mutual respect and real intimacy become impossible.

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<sup>19</sup> Manfred Paulus, *Menschenhandel*, 2014, p. 107.

<sup>20</sup> Der Spiegel, *Bordell Deutschland*. 27.05.2013.

<sup>21</sup> Bundeskriminalamt: *Menschenhandel*. Bundeslagebild 2015. <https://www.bka.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Publikationen/JahresberichteUndLagebilder/Menschenhandel/menschenhandelBundeslagebild2015.html>

<sup>22</sup> Claudine Legardinier und Said Bouamama: *Les clients de la prostitution*, 2006, Chapitre4: Les clients parlent, p. 111-211.

<sup>23</sup> Dr. Ingeborg Kraus: Betrayed Partners and Men with Poisoned Souls: Interview with a Former Sex Buyer in Germany. February 2019. In Dignity: A Journal of Sexual Exploitation and Violence. <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1154&context=dignity>

<sup>24</sup> Dr. Ingeborg Kraus, *Schattenfrauen*, 29.03.2018. <https://www.trauma-and-prostitution.eu/2018/04/09/schattenfrauen/>

The system of prostitution ferments hate! It pollutes human relationships. **A state that legalises the buying of sex, ferments hate among men and women**, and destroys and traumatises relationships and families for generations.

It is also a severe problem for Europe and social solidarity among all European citizens. Germany doesn't seem to have a problem in using the most vulnerable women from the disadvantaged EU-countries, to exploit them sexually and reject them, when they are totally traumatised. People from those countries, when they have the opportunity, ask us, why we are doing this to their girls?

The politicians realised that something went wrong with this law and made small changes. Like trying to correct 10% of the "wrongs" done. Since July 2017 we have a new law called „prostitutes protection law“<sup>25</sup>, where some regulation are being implemented. This is what Manfred Paulus thinks about this law: It is not with a condom that you will fight against international organised crime! The people who made this law have been totally naive! The women who come from abroad and work in the red light district don't get to know the Germany that the Germans know and appreciate. No, they are prisoners of a parallel society that is highly criminal.

These women live in constant fear. Germany, with this law, became the pimp of the most vulnerable women in Europe. **German politicians and the German state bear a historical responsibility in the development of a sex industry that creates thousands of victims of sexual violence daily, and makes enormous profit out of them.**

There is only one way out of this. **We need the Nordic Model Now!**

Thank you!

Dr. Ingeborg Kraus

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.prostituiertenschutzgesetz.info>: Women in prostitution have to register, they are offered to have a medical check-up every 2 years, brothel owner have to get a permission and sexbuyers have to use a condom.

## BIO:

**Dr. Ingeborg Kraus** is a clinical psychologist and expert in psychotraumatology. From 1995 -2002, Dr. Kraus did humanitarian work in Bosnia and Kosovo, especially working with women victims of sexual violence. She assisted in setting up one of the first shelters for women victims of domestic violence in Kosovo. Afterward, she worked 9 years as a psychologist and also as a therapeutic leader in psychosomatic clinics in Germany. Since 2011, she directs a psychotherapeutic counseling office in Karlsruhe/Germany and has treated many victims of prostitution.



Dr. Kraus is a speaker for the abolition of prostitution in Germany, as well as an author of many articles on prostitution, especially about PTSD, traumatic bonding and trauma as a pre-condition in prostitution. In 2013, Dr. Kraus initiated massive advocacy efforts to end prostitution in Germany, including a successful petition to all political parties (<https://karlsruherappell.com/der-appell/>). In 2014, she extended her advocacy work from a government focus, to target also medical professionals. Through her advocacy, Dr. Kraus has established a network of scientists and medical experts (<https://www.trauma-and-prostitution.eu/en/the-appeal/>) united in efforts to research, publish, and educate about the harsh realities of prostitution and the consequences to individuals' health and to society. Dr. Kraus is a co-founder of the alliance *Stop Sexkauf* (Stop Sex Buying) and has launched the international petition addressed to Angela Merkel to abolish prostitution in Germany: <https://www.change.org/p/punish-the-buying-of-sex-abolish-prostitution>