

Dear Minister Grapperhaus,

The Dutch government proposes a new sex work law, the Sex Work Regulation Act (Wrs). I share your concern about human trafficking and violence against sex workers. We are on the same side! Still, I think this law is a bad idea. I am convinced that it will lead to more violence against sex workers. I would therefore ask you to withdraw this law proposal.

I think the law is bad because it will lead to more sex workers working illegally than at present. Illegal sex workers are more likely to be victims of human trafficking and violence. I do not want my colleagues and I to be more likely to become victims! Neither do you.

I fear that more sex workers will work illegally because the law makes demands that many sex workers will not be able to meet:

- Sex workers between 18 and 21 have no choice but to work illegally
- Migrant sex workers without a valid residence permit can only work illegally
- Sex workers who are found not to be sufficiently 'self-reliant' can only work illegally.

They will all be punishable. Criminalisation of sex workers and clients encourages violence against sex workers. We see this every time in those countries where clients have been criminalised.

I am also concerned about the registration of sex workers. All kinds of personal information about me and my colleagues will be recorded in a register. Despite the fact that the law provides guarantees with regard to the security of these data, I fear that they will still become public because of abuse of civil servants or because the security appears is inadequate. In order to avoid this risk, more sex workers will choose to work illegally. And more sex workers risk of abuse and violence.

I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that sex work is work. Like you, we earn our money by using our bodies to provide a service. Free choice of labour is a human right that is guaranteed by the Dutch Constitution. This Sex Work Regulation Act restricts the right to free choice of labour. This is a violation of a human right. That is a country like the Netherlands unworthy.

You and I do not want violence and exploitation of sex workers to exist, and certainly not for them to increase. The Sex Work Regulation Act increases the risk of violence and exploitation of sex workers. It also violates the privacy of sex workers. I therefore urgently ask you to retract the proposed Sex Work Regulation Act.