

# FPAR Information Sheet

**This information sheet outlines ESWA's new access to justice research project.**

The European Sex Workers Rights Alliance ([ESWA](#)) is conducting a new research on sex workers' experience of justice, and access to justice, in Europe and Central Asia.

The research is expected to be published in winter 2023.

## The Project

This research project is a continuation of our [Rights not Rescue](#) programme, which was conducted in 2019 - 2020. ESWA aims to collect and process accounts of sex workers' experience that will provide evidence of the issues and lived experiences that make it difficult for sex workers to access justice (called 'barriers to justice'). Police play a major role in the justice system; this project will therefore focus on policing, and the police's role in sex workers' access and barriers to justice. This research aligns with ESWA's strategic plan ([Objective 5: Increased Access to Justice](#)).

This research project is also an opportunity for ESWA members to build skills around the FPAR research process, including; FPAR methodology, skills in data collection - including how to interview sex workers around complex and sensitive issues - and how to identify potential participants, the ethical issues regarding confidentiality and participant safety, as well as different qualitative data collection methods.

## Access to Justice

*Access to justice* is an umbrella term that represents several interconnected human rights. Fundamentally, access to justice is about the ability of individuals and groups to protect their rights, through two main components; the right to a fair trial, and the right to effective remedy. For many sex workers and other marginalised communities, police can also be an obstacle to access to justice, when they are not direct perpetrators of violence against sex workers.

## Feminist Participatory Action Research

FPAR stands for Feminist Participatory Action Research, and is the methodology ESWA will be using to ensure that our research is sex worker-led and informed by the lived realities of our members.

ESWA's FPAR methodology will be produced and led by our sex working members. Sex workers will be at the forefront of every stage of this research; from its inception, execution and analysis, to its publication, translation and dissemination.

### **All-members consultation**

We will launch an all-members consultation, in which our members will be invited to share their opinions and ideas pertaining to all aspects of the research methodology. This consultation will be used to identify the best practice for a feminist participatory action research, ensuring that the voices and lived experiences of our sex working members are embedded into our methodology and research practice. The results of this consultation, and of this research more broadly, will lead to the development of an official ESWA research methodology.

### **Sub-granting members**

To collect relevant data relating to sex workers' experience of justice, we will fund and sub-grant our members to carry out interviews at national level. The number of grantees will depend on various factors, including members' interests and available budget.

### **Sub-grantee training**

This research project is also an opportunity for sex working ESWA members to build skills around the FPAR research process, including ethical and moral considerations, confidentiality and anonymity processing, and data collection skills. The training will occur in-person over three days.

### **Data Collection and Methodology**

The data collected will be qualitative data, in the form of in-depth interviews with sex workers, of around 1 hour/90 minutes each. The research participants will have been identified by ESWA's national members.

During the first year of the project, the sub-grantees will conduct a pilot study, which includes identifying and interviewing\* 3 sex workers at national level. This will give them the opportunity to experience the data collection process, before the official data collection period starts in the second year. The project will meet at the end of the pilot study, for sub-grantees to discuss the process of data collection. Their reflections and any proposed changes will be added to ESWA's Methodology Guide.

*\*If the sub-grantee organisation is not sex worker-led, then they will be expected to hire sex workers to conduct peer interviews.*

Through this data processing, we aim to gather evidence that clearly illustrates the lived experiences of sex workers' experiences regarding access to justice. This includes barriers to justice, the process of accessing justice, and sex workers' experience within the justice system (both as victims, witnesses and when considered perpetrators of crimes).

### **Confidentiality and Anonymity**

Each sub-grantee organisation will be trained in confidentiality and anonymity processing. Each participant will be anonymised, and given the choice of using a pseudonym of their choice to be included in the final report. The only individuals who will have access to the audio files of the interviews will be; the interviewer, and the transcriber who will translate the interview transcript into English before it will be analysed by the ESWA team. The only individuals who will have knowledge of the identity of the research participants will be the sub-grantee co-ordinator of the project, and the interviewer. Research participants do not have to give their legal name or any legal information in order to participate. Research participants do not have to answer any questions they do not want to, and are free to withdraw their consent at any time, upon which all data related to their interview will be deleted.

### **Data Processing**

The internal ESWA team will process the data, including a subcontracted individual who will transcribe and translate each interview into English, in order for it to be analysed and processed.

The data will be codified and analysed under specific themes relating to justice and access to justice. These themes will emerge from the data itself - what the sex working participants feel relevant to bring to the interview, will inform the shape of the research report.

### **Research Advisory Board**

ESWA hopes to build a Research Advisory Board, in order to receive feedback from researchers and academics about our FPAR, and to network with academic institutions who are invested in sex workers being experts in their own lives. A long-term outcome of this goal is to produce a Research Network, that will foster a more robust dialogue between academics and the sex working communities that are so often the objects of study.

### **Publishing Findings**

We expect to publish our findings in November 2023. Alongside this main research report, we will produce a stand-alone report of the sub-grantees focus group, which will occur at the late stages of the research project. Alongside this stand-alone report, in which the discussion of the sub-grantees methodological experience will be analysed, we will have an artist present, live sketching the focus group, which we hope to exhibit alongside the published report.