




All I want is for my work not to make me a target. For people to listen instead of shaming me. For them to ask what I need instead of telling me who I'm supposed to be.

Elen, sex worker

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year has been a year of challenges and transformation for ESWA. It has tested our resilience, demanded adaptability, and in many ways, clarified the urgency of our work.

Across Europe and globally, the political landscape has grown increasingly hostile. The continued rise of far-right movements has intensified attacks on human rights and bodily autonomy. Civic spaces are shrinking and funding streams, that were already limited, are drying up.

Sex-worker-led organisations have felt this contraction acutely. At a time when support is most needed, resources have become harder to access. Hard-won progress is also being threatened.

In Sweden, the expansion of criminal laws into online spaces sets a dangerous new precedent. In Belgium, anti-rights organisations petitioned the Constitutional Court to annul the law allowing sex workers to work under formal employment contracts. Each action is individual yet connected. A hard reminder of the extent to which legal frameworks shape the living and working conditions of our community.

And not always for the better.

Internally, ESWA has also undergone significant changes. This included a shift in Executive Leadership, the departure of our Senior Policy Officer (following her election to the Czech Parliament) and changes across our Operations and Programmes teams.

Moments like these can destabilise organisations.

They can also reveal their strength.

ESWA responded to these challenges with clarity and purpose. We welcomed new colleagues and began the recruitment process for a new Executive Director. At the same time, our programmatic work continued to grow. This year has seen the conclusion of our flagship CORE programme, the launch of our second BIPOC Academy, and advocacy efforts that saw the voice of sex workers heard on the European and global stage.

This year also saw members organisations across Europe come together to mark the 50th anniversary of the occupation of Saint-Nizier Church — a defining moment in the history of the sex workers' rights.

ESWA's role as a leading voice in research also continued to expand. We published our Gold Standard Guidelines for Safe and Ethical Sex Work Research in Europe alongside new research on access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), social media accountability, and victims' rights. As always, our approach centred on participatory and community-led methodologies to ensure evidence and resulting actions are rooted in lived experience.

It has not been an easy year. But as we look back on the last 12 months, we do so with pride. Even in the face of political hostility, reduced resources, and internal transition, ESWA and sex worker communities have continued to organise, resist, and rise.

To everyone who has joined us, supported us, and been there for us, we want to say thank you. It is your support, our community, and the strength we have found in each other that keeps us moving forward.

We cannot stop now.

As the far right continues its attack on human rights, and genocide and widespread violence target some of the world's most marginalised

communities, the voices of our community are more important than ever before.

We will do everything in our power to make sure they are heard.

We trust that you will too.

With love and solidarity,

YIGIT AYDINALP

Interim Executive Director
(September 2025–February 2026)

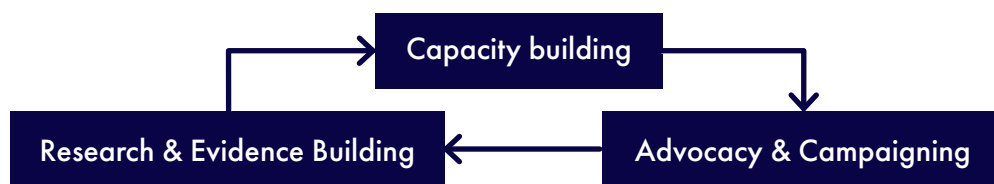


AN INTRODUCTION TO ESWA

ESWA is a sex-worker-led network representing 126 organisations in 30 countries across Europe and Central Asia. Launched in 2002 against a backdrop of increasingly regressive policies and legislation, our vision is of a world where sex work is recognised as work and where sex workers can live their lives free from violence, coercion, discrimination, and exploitation.

To realise this vision, our work is grounded in three interconnected areas: capacity building, advocacy and campaigning, and research. By strengthening sex-worker-led organisations and amplifying community voices in public and policy debates, we don't just ensure that sex workers are heard. We help equip organisations and groups with the evidence they need to make violations of sex workers' rights — and the solutions to them — impossible to ignore.

OUR APPROACH



Strategic objectives

Rights-based legal reform

Social and labour protections

Improved health outcomes

Protecting digital rights

Access to justice

Thematic priorities

Improving outcomes for migrant and racialised sex workers

Fighting for gender equality to secure the rights of women's and LGBTI+ people

OUR FOUNDING VALUES

We recognise sex work as work

We support self-determination & organisation

We oppose the criminalisation & legal oppression of sex work

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2025

1,600 SIGNATORIES

oppose new criminalisation laws in Sweden.

116 MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

represented from 30 countries.

£633,839 RAISED

to mobilise the fight for sex worker rights.

THE FIRST-EVER GOLD STANDARDS FOR SAFE AND ETHICAL SEX WORK RESEARCH ARE PUBLISHED.

THE BIPOC ACADEMY RETURNS

with a focus on racial justice and digital rights.

SEX WORKERS FROM 12 COUNTRIES UNITE

to mark International Sex Workers' Day.

ESWA REPRESENTS SEX WORKERS ON THE EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL STAGE.



SEX WORKERS WILL NOT BE SILENCED

AN UPDATE ON MAJOR POLITICAL CHANGES

Across Europe and Central Asia, sex workers are facing an increasingly hostile political environment. Not only are right-wing and anti-rights movements gaining influence, but laws that claim to protect sex workers by criminalising clients continue to attract political support, despite growing evidence of the harm they cause.

Rather than improving safety, the criminalisation of sex work — in any form — reinforces stigma and systemic bias, pushing sex work deeper into the shadows and forcing people to take increasingly dangerous risks. Despite this, many governments and institutions continue to cling to these failed approaches, with some even working to expand them.

STANDING UP FOR SEX WORKER RIGHTS IN SWEDEN

This year, one of the most damaging developments came from Sweden, where the government passed new legislation ([Proposition 2024/25:124](#)) to make the purchase of custom online sexual content illegal.

Sweden was the first country to criminalise the buying of sexual services in 1999. Since then, this model has been adopted by a number of European countries. This new legislation marks a concerning expansion that carries restrictions into online spaces. Not only does this cut sex workers in Sweden off from a safe and established source of income, it could also set a dangerous precedent: one that other countries may look to follow.

OUR RESPONSE

ESWA and our members responded to the initial proposal immediately. Working closely with sex-worker-led organisations in Sweden, we launched a campaign that would raise their voices, show collective solidarity, and highlight the harmful impact of this legislation.

The media was predictably slow to respond. The public and civil society were not.

A record-breaking 1,600 people signed our [Open Letter](#). Almost overnight, our inboxes filled with messages from people and activists who were ready to stand with us and demand change. Organisations such as Human Rights Watch also came forward to [speak out against the proposal](#) — calling on the Swedish

Department of Justice and Swedish Gender Equality Agency to “reject this misguided law and to build a society where rights, dignity, and safety are upheld for all.”

Still the law was allowed to pass.

→ **1,600+ PEOPLE**
SIGNED AN OPEN LETTER
DEMANDING CHANGE.

AFTER THE VOTE

With less than two months to prepare for its implementation, the impact of this new legislation has been hard and fast. In an instant, sex workers lost clients, businesses, and income that had taken years to build.



We are receiving a flood of emails from sex workers who are scared, angry and uncertain about their future. They're desperate for guidance on how to survive. And what has the government done to help us? Absolutely nothing.

Red Umbrella, Sweden

We will not, we cannot, let them face this situation alone.

On 21 May, ESWA and Red Umbrella Sweden issued a [joint statement](#) condemning the move and started documenting the impact of the new legislation. We also launched an emergency fundraiser to support those at risk, and we will continue to work closely with partners and allies to coordinate next steps.

PROTECTING HARD-WON LABOUR RIGHTS IN BELGIUM

The attack on sex worker rights in Sweden wasn't an isolated incident. At the end of 2024, anti-rights organisations in Belgium petitioned the Constitutional Court to overturn a new law granting sex workers the right to work under formal contracts and access essential health and social protections.

ESWA, our Belgian members, and other organisations are working hard to make sure this pioneering law is allowed to stand.



WATCH ESWA'S CAMPAIGN VIDEO

→ Watch: [ESWA's campaign video](#)

A 50TH ANNIVERSARY TO REMEMBER

On 2 June 1975, a group of over 100 sex workers took over the Saint-Nizier Church in Lyon to demand their safety, dignity, and labour rights. For eight days, their protest shook not only Lyon but the world. What began as a local act of resistance became International Sex Workers' Day.

To recognise this historic moment, ESWA offered sub-grants to help 12 member organisations mark this anniversary in a way that was true to their local context.

The result was a [coordinated day of action](#) that saw sex-worker-led groups across Europe and Central Asia stand louder and prouder than ever before. From demonstrations in Lyon to proposed legislation in Berlin, a fashion show in Amsterdam and art therapy workshops in Ukraine — our message of resistance, resilience, and hope rang loud and clear.



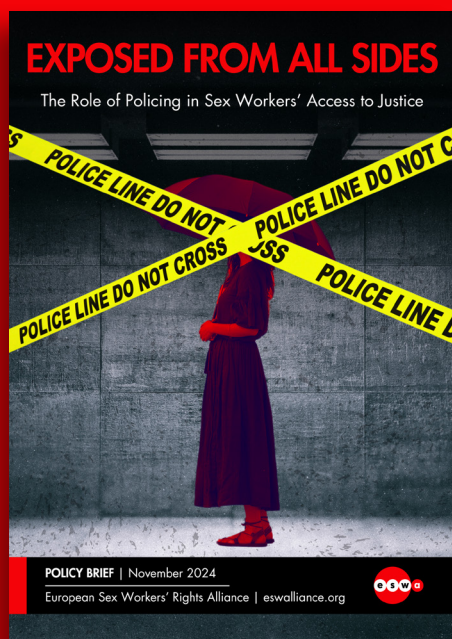
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Today we celebrate 50 years of resistance, 50 years of fighting back, showing up, surviving against all odds. This isn't just any milestone. It's a testament to our strength and our resilience and our refusal to be erased.

Kali Sudra, Board Chair, ESWA



Sex workers from ESWA member CDCP sang in a church in Venice.
www.lucciole.org



ANNOUNCING

POLICY BRIEF: POLICE VIOLENCE AGAINST SEX WORKERS

This new policy brief builds on data gathered through ESWA's groundbreaking report, [Exposed From All Sides: The Role of Policing in Sex Workers' Access to Justice](#), the largest sex-worker-led research project in Europe.

Shedding light on the scale and forms of violence experienced by nearly 200 sex workers, it lays bare patterns of abuse, neglect, and impunity. Published 50 years after the events in Lyon, it stands as a stark reminder of why we continue to stand in solidarity for sex workers' rights.

→ [Read the Brief](#)



ESWA member PIC Amsterdam hosted a sex worker fashion show with [Red Light Icons](#). Photo by Vera Rodriguez: www.verarodriguez.art



Art project by trans sex workers in Ukraine: www.iswd.hplgbt.org



Sex workers write the law in Berlin.



In Brussels ESWA member UTSOPI hosted a performance by Djombo Goddess, a decolonial dominatrix. www.utsopi.be

OUR YEAR IN DETAIL

From capacity building to local and regional advocacy and evidence generation, this year has seen ESWA and its members come together to challenge harmful policies, strengthen collective power, and make the case to advance sex workers' rights.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Change doesn't happen overnight. It is built, purposefully — from the ground up. That's why ESWA is committed to strengthening the capacity of its member groups. Through training, dedicated programmes, and tailored support, we help sex-worker-led organisations build the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to advocate for their communities, shape local policy, and demand their rights.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2025 INCLUDE:

CONCLUDING CORE: THREE YEARS OF COMMUNITY-LED COLLABORATION

CORE is an EU4Health-funded initiative developed by a consortium of 24 partners across 16 countries. Launched in 2023, the project brought community health organisations, harm reduction actors, peer leaders, and researchers together to strengthen community-led responses to long-standing health inequalities and systemic exclusion. All while advocating for their recognition and integration within mainstream health systems.

As co-lead of the capacity building and stakeholder engagement workstreams, this final year saw ESWA:

- **Launch the CORE Capacity Building Toolkit**

This new [living database](#) brings together practical tools and resources for health-focused NGOs, including user guides, e-learning modules, factsheets, and workshop materials. Covering topics from mental health to harm reduction, the aim is to help organisations develop more inclusive, community-led approaches to care and service delivery.

- **Support Local HIV Organisations in Securing Funding**

As part of the [Core Knowledge Hub](#), ESWA co-organised an online workshop, [How to Find Money for Your Local HIV Organisation](#). The session provided partners and community organisations with practical fundraising guidance, creating space to share challenges, exchange ideas and develop solutions inspired by real-world success stories.

- **Move Community-Led Dialogues "From Margins to Mainstream"**

In October, ESWA joined forces with Fédération Parapluie Rouge, a grassroots sex-worker-led organisation, to host a workshop on community-led approaches to health and policy for sex workers in France. Bringing organisations, funders, and members of the French Senate and European Parliament together, the event created an important — and rare — space for open dialogue, collaboration, and connection between communities, policymakers, and institutions.

ADVANCING COMMUNITY-LED HIV PREVENTION THROUGH SCOPE

Former Health Programme Officer Vera Rodriguez was selected as a community expert for [SCOPE](#), an initiative led by the European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG) and designed to strengthen community-led HIV prevention across Europe and Central Asia. As part of a diverse network of community workers, activists, and organisers, Vera shared strategies and insights drawn from both personal and professional experience — helping build a living network of community-led advocacy, learning, and resilience.

A SUCCESSFUL END TO OUR FIRST SPARK FELLOWSHIP

This year also marked the graduation of the first cohort of SPARK fellows. The programme supported 10 community organisers facing multiple forms of marginalisation to strengthen their advocacy skills and policy expertise. Through training, mentoring, and international networking opportunities, fellows deepened their understanding of the issues affecting sex workers' rights and left the programme better equipped to influence policy and drive change in their communities.

SPOTLIGHT

THE RETURN OF OUR BIPOC ACADEMY

Three years after the inaugural event, our BIPOC Sex Worker Academy returned, this time with a focus on racial justice and digital rights.

Over three days, 12 sessions led by sex workers and allies tackled urgent, often uncomfortable conversations. From facial recognition and digital profiling to weaponised policies and the ever-expanding reach of pervasive surveillance tactics, together we explored the very real risks technological advances pose to racialised sex workers and their communities.

At a time when online and offline spaces are

shrinking, the sense of isolation weighs heavy. As such, the BIPOC Academy offered more than information. It also created space for connection, with dedicated time for community care and creative expression giving participants the chance to build the personal and professional networks they need to stay safe.

“Often in activism, there is very little time to stop and think... We are all burned out. Taking space and time to listen to each other and learn more is so important and valuable.”

Ana Ornelas, Programme Officer, ESWA

“I feel like digital rights is something I don't know very well, and it's so full of jargon... I knew the best way to learn about it would be from racialised sex workers, and I can now pass this information on to my communities and my friends.”

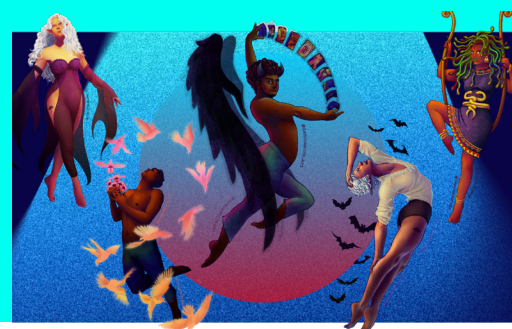
Participant, United Kingdom

→ Explore: [the programme](#)

→ Read: the reflections of [Mirage Allen](#), academy attendee.

Our Second Tech Tarot Card Deck is Published! The second deck of Tech Tarot Cards launched in November 2025. Building on the first set, which introduced nine key issues shaping sex workers' digital lives, this new deck transforms the findings of ESWA's community-led research into accessible, visually engaging tools for learning and advocacy.

→ [Get your copy](#)



ADVOCACY

Advocacy is central to ESWA's work. Whether it's collaborating locally with other sex-worker-led organisations or representing our community in regional and global forums, our approach is strategic, collaborative, and rooted in lived experience.

PART 1: COLLECTIVE ACTION

ESWA is committed to working in partnership with members, partners, and allies to advance shared priorities and make sure sex workers are part of the decisions that shape our lives.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2025 INCLUDE:

AN OPEN LETTER TO META'S OVERSIGHT BOARD

Following the publication of [Sex Workers Belong On Social Media: Recommendations for Platform Accountability](#), ESWA ran a campaign calling on Meta to address ongoing discrimination against sex workers across its platforms. Actions culminated in an [Open Letter](#) highlighting the harms of Meta's content moderation practices and inviting the company to engage with our community to build a safer, more inclusive digital space.

A NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH THE INTERNATIONAL PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION (IPPF)

On World Health Day, representatives from ESWA, SWAN, and our regional members met with members of the European IPPF network in the Netherlands.

Improving access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services for sex workers is a key part of the IPPF's new strategic chapter. In line with this, the meeting aimed to build mutually beneficial relationships between IPPF sexual health providers in North and Western Europe and local sex worker rights organisations working in the region.

As a result of this effort, new partnerships emerged between organisations such as Kolektyw Kamelia and Federa in Poland, PION and Sex og Politikk in Norway, and STAR – The First Sex Workers Collective in the Balkans, and the Health Education and Research Association (HERA) in North Macedonia.

Several joint initiatives are also planned, including an international conference on the impacts of criminalising the clients of sex workers and a Europe-wide effort to gather evidence on trials and convictions in sex-work-related cases. Partners also launched a new collaboration in November 2025, bringing together organisations and allies from across Eastern Europe.

→ Read: [event reflections](#)

→ Watch: [event reflections](#)



THE POLISH LAUNCH OF EXPOSED FROM ALL SIDES

In March, ESWA joined the Polish launch of [Exposed from All Sides: The Role of Policing in Sex Workers' Access to Justice](#), developed in collaboration with our Polish member Kolektyw Kamelia and Krytyka Polityczna, Poland's leading network of progressive journalists.

The event brought together NGOs, activists, and media representatives from across the country. At a time when sex workers' rights remain largely absent from mainstream policy debates, this turnout marks an important step forward and opening to more visible and informed conversations about sex worker rights.



SPOTLIGHT

COLLECTIVE CALLS TO END THE HIV EPIDEMIC

HIV remains a pressing public health issue in Europe, with progress off track to meet UN targets to end the epidemic by 2030. Determined not to stay silent, ESWA has joined a number of collective movements demanding action.

In April we became a founding member of the [HIV Prevention Alliance](#). Chaired by the EATG, the Alliance brings together representatives from EU institutions, academia, civil society, and affected communities to drive a more inclusive, community-led response. Starting with:

- [A Community Declaration](#): calling for meaningful community involvement in the development of clinical HIV guidelines.
- [A Collective Call to Action](#) to end HIV as a public health threat by 2030, with the campaign backed by a white paper, policy brief, and awareness-raising activities.

In October, ESWA attended the European AIDS Conference in Paris — an important opportunity to centre the voice of sex workers in what is typically a more clinically focused space.

The conference created opportunities for ESWA to connect with like-minded organisations, leading to the creation of a new Coalition for European HIV Response. Set to launch in 2026, the initiative will bring grassroots organisations together to strengthen shared learning and collective action.



The main barriers we see are not about refusing care — they're about not knowing PrEP is for you... That's why peer-led workshops are so central in our work. We talk about sexual health inside the same spaces where we talk about hormones. People come for one topic, but they stay for another.

Charlie Cosnier, Board Member



Board Member Charlie Cosnier also used the platform to deliver a [powerful speech](#) raising awareness of the barriers sex workers face in accessing key preventive services, and how sex-worker- and community-led organisations can help close the divide.

PART 2: SHAPING EU POLICY

This past year also brought new opportunities to advocate for the inclusion of sex workers' rights at EU level. As well as submitting evidence and feedback through public consultation processes, ESWA was also invited to join dedicated consultations on the upcoming Gender Equality and Civil Society Strategies — an important step that shows how far our collective advocacy has come.

Below is an overview of ESWA's engagement in EU policy processes over the past year, including key asks and outcomes.

EU GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY (2026–2030)

A framework to embed gender equality across all areas of life, both online and offline, from education and health to work and leadership.

- **Our ask:** To explicitly recognise the experience and realities of sex workers and address the root causes of violence through an intersectional, anti-racist approach. This includes the development of transformative justice models rooted in lived experience and the removal of stigmatising terminology ("women in prostitution") across related legislation, such as the Directive on Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence.
- **Outcome:** In November 2025, the European Parliament published a [report](#) to guide the next EU Gender Equality Strategy. While it acknowledges the exclusion and discrimination faced by sex workers, a failure to involve community members in the drafting process sees contradictions evident throughout the final text — such as the use of harmful language, as well as an emphasis on "existing" programmes.

The final Gender Equality Strategy, to which ESWA will also respond, is expected to be released in March 2026.

→ Read: our [submission](#) and [first response](#)

EU STRATEGY FOR CIVIL SOCIETY (2026–2030)

A strategy to strengthen civil society as a key governance partner by promoting engagement, protecting civic space, and ensuring sustainable, transparent funding.

- **Our ask:** To address the systematic exclusion of sex workers and sex-worker-led organisations from civic space and decision-making by recognising them as key civil society actors. This requires concrete measures to ensure meaningful participation, equal access to funding and support, and safeguards against discrimination.
- **Outcome:** Published in November 2025, the strategy reinforces civil society's role in governance through commitments on engagement, protection, and funding. However, by failing to address the structural exclusion of sex workers and other marginalised groups, it risks reproducing the very inequalities it claims to tackle.

→ Read: our [submission](#)

EU LGBTIQ+ EQUALITY STRATEGY (2026–2030)

A framework to counter growing discrimination, advance equality, and ensure LGBTIQ+ people are protected, empowered, and included.

- **Our ask:** To recognise that many LGBTIQ+ people — especially trans, non-binary and racialised individuals — enter sex work due to structural inequalities and that they face multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination. These challenges must be addressed

holistically, prioritise the involvement and resourcing of sex-worker-led organisations, and ensure equal access to essential health and social services.

→ **Outcome:** Adopted in October 2025, [the strategy](#) strengthens protections and support for LGBTIQ+ communities. However, it does not explicitly recognise sex workers, leaving their lived realities, and the structural discrimination they face, unaddressed.

→ Read: our [submission](#)

EU ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

As EU institutions defer responsibility for tackling poverty to the upcoming Anti-Poverty Strategy, ESWA joined members of the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) to help ensure it delivers. Together we [called on the Commission](#) to adopt a rights-based approach that addresses structural inequalities, centres lived experience, and funds both immediate and long-term solutions.



AN EVER-PRESENT FORCE FOR CHANGE

This year also saw ESWA engage in broader discussions that hold significant implications for sex worker rights, including:

- **Signing a joint [Open Letter](#)** calling on EU Member States to rethink the proposed EU Drug Strategy and Action Plan, which risks sidelining health, harm reduction, and human rights in favour of security and trafficking-focused approaches.
- **Standing alongside 126 civil society organisations** to [speak out against](#) new EU Digital Omnibus proposals that threaten hard-won protections and risk shifting power further towards the interests of Big Tech.
- **Voicing concerns** over proposed amendments to the Party of European Socialists' new resolution, More Feminism = More Democracy. While our [collective intervention](#) saw some of the most damaging amendments removed, the final text fails to meaningfully include sex workers' voices and continues to frame sex work primarily through a trafficking lens.

PART 3: ESWA ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

Local and regional policy will always be shaped by global political shifts. To help make sure the needs of sex workers are factored in to these discussions, this year saw ESWA continue to stand alongside partners such as The Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP) and build its presence in key international decision-making spaces.

CHALLENGING HARMFUL FRAMING IN UN REPORTING

In January 2025, Ms Reem Alsalem, UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, called for input on the addendum to the report “The Concept of Consent in Relation to Violence Against Women and Girls.” ESWA joined a collaboration of civil society organisations, lawyers, and academics in developing a [submission](#) highlighting the risks the current framing and terminology pose, and linking them to similar issues raised during the preparation of the thematic report *“Forms of Sex-Based Violence Against Women and Girls: New Frontiers and Emerging Issues.”*

Building on this, former Executive Director Sabrina Sanchez delivered an oral statement during the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur held during the 59th session of the UN Human Rights Council. We also worked with partners to organise a side event highlighting the dangers of conflating sex work with trafficking and making a clear case for recognising sex work as work.

→ Read: our [reflections](#)



SPEAKING UP AT THE UN COMMISSION FOR THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW)

The 69th session of the CSW created another important advocacy opportunity. As well as taking part in a range of events and panel discussions, ESWA joined forces with CountMeIn!, the IPPF, and ILGA World to organise a side event: [Taking Stock and Holding the Line: A Cross-Movement Dialogue on Bodily Autonomy](#).

→ Read: our [reflections](#)

RESEARCH & EVIDENCE BUILDING

To influence policy, you must do more than make your case. You must prove it. That's why ESWA is committed not just to research and evidence building but to pioneering projects that actively involve sex workers in their design, development, and direction.

Elsewhere in academic and policy spaces, this level of engagement and respect is far from the norm. Too often, researchers rely on outdated methods that exclude sex workers from the research process, misrepresent lived realities, and exploit personal stories. The result is evidence that fails to reflect our lived experience and policies built on assumptions that can do more harm than good.

It is for this reason that 2025 saw us:

LAUNCH THE FIRST GOLD STANDARDS FOR SAFE AND ETHICAL SEX WORK RESEARCH IN EUROPE

A practical resource for sex-worker-led organisations and researchers alike, these groundbreaking guidelines outline the standards and expectations that should underpin all research involving sex workers. The principles are divided into three core areas and are intended as a foundation to be applied, adapted, and strengthened through ongoing dialogue and collaboration in each research context.





Good research will take into account the diversity of sex workers' identities, diversity of different lives, working practices, and the different positions from which sex workers engage in research.

Dr Laura Connolly



→ Read: [the Guidelines](#)

→ Watch: [the launch event](#)

- In countries with partial coverage, registration requirements risk exposing sex workers to further stigma, criminalisation, and even deportation.
- Where PrEP is available, access often remains unequal, with cisgender women, racialised, and undocumented people facing the greatest barriers.

In the face of such challenges, evidence shows that sex-worker-led networks are vital to supporting access and adherence within and beyond their communities.

Launched on International Sex Workers' Rights Day, [the event](#) brought together voices from sex worker communities, policy, and healthcare, including MEP Marc Angel and Dr Viatcheslav Grankov, representing the WHO Regional Office for Europe. At a time when political shifts are reshaping HIV funding and policy landscapes, this show of unity sent a clear message: HIV prevention must remain an urgent public health and political priority.

Other headline reports for the year include:

UNPREPARED: A COMMUNITY REPORT ON ACCESS TO PREP BY SEX WORKERS IN EUROPE

Despite its proven effectiveness, access to PrEP is an ongoing challenge for many members of our community. To help make our case, this new community report offers an unflinching analysis of the social, economic, legal, and cultural barriers shaping access to PrEP in eight European countries.

Findings reveal deep systemic barriers, for example:

- A lack of reimbursement turns this essential medicine into a "luxury" item many sex workers cannot afford.



→ Explore: [the research](#)

→ Discover: [key report findings](#)

SEX WORKERS BELONG ON SOCIAL MEDIA: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PLATFORM ACCOUNTABILITY

Social media helps sex workers build connections, earn income, and access essential health and community information. Yet the discrimination faced offline often extends into online world, where many platforms are working to systemically censor, erase, and surveil sex workers. The latest edition of our Digital Rights series responds with clear recommendations for platforms, governments, policymakers, and other actors to improve accountability without harming our lives and livelihoods.



- Explore: [the research](#)
- Watch: the online launch event

NO PLACE TO CALL HOME: HOW HOUSING POLICIES AND CRIMINALISATION IMPACT MIGRANT SEX WORKERS

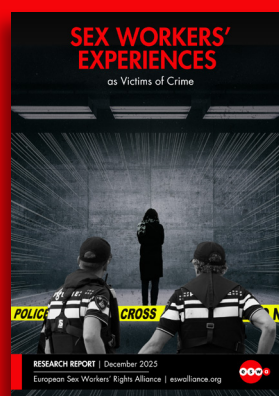
Stigma, discrimination, and criminalisation undermine sex workers' ability to secure stable livelihoods and overall well-being — including access to safe, adequate housing.

For migrant sex workers, as rising nationalism and restrictive migration policies further sideline their needs, these barriers are even more severe. Launched at the FEANTSA Forum in May, this report draws on grassroots evidence to expose the hidden housing crisis and set out clear recommendations to strengthen Europe's policy response.

- Explore: [the research](#)

SEX WORKERS' EXPERIENCES AS VICTIMS OF CRIME

Despite European laws committing to protect all victims of crime, sex workers continue to face major barriers to accessing justice, support services, and legal protection. Building on our landmark study [Exposed From All Sides: The Role of Policing in Sex Workers' Access to Justice](#), this new report reveals systemic failures by law enforcement to protect sex workers who are victims of crime.



- Explore: [the research](#)

DISCOVER OUR DIGITAL RIGHTS SERIES

- [The Impact of Online Censorship and Digital Discrimination on Sex Workers.](#)
- [Contested and Misunderstood: The value of privacy and data protection for sex workers.](#)
- [Conditions Control and Consent: Exploring the impact of platformisation on sex work.](#)
- <https://www.eswalliance.org/labour-rights-advertising>

EVENTS

In addition to our Advocacy & Campaigns work, ESWA has continued to strengthen its presence at events in Europe and beyond — making sure that sex worker voices are represented and heard in key convenings and forums.

SPOTLIGHT

RIGHTSCON, TAIPEI, TAIWAN

Former Executive Director Sabrina Sanchez, Senior Programme Officer Yigit Aydinalp, and former Board Chair Kali Sudhra led a packed and provocative session: Invisible Chains, exposing how artificial intelligence is being used to police, profile, harm and discriminate against sex workers and other marginalised communities.

Structured around **three real-life case studies**, the workshop highlighted the challenges posed by AI technologies and encouraged participants to collaborate on practical ways to mitigate the harms each sex worker faced.

→ Roxy, a Black sex worker and advocate living in Spain

The repeated removal of health and educational content exposed how AI moderation systems reinforce societal biases.

→ Angel, a sex worker and single mother living in the UK

The distribution of non-consensual deepfakes showed the extent to which the abuse of AI technology can devastate lives.

→ Shirley, a Thai trans sex worker living in the Netherlands

Misidentification through biometric age verification systems exposed the discriminatory biases embedded in supposedly “neutral” AI technologies.

By centring interaction and discussion, the session reinforced a vital message: real solutions cannot come from a single power, they must be built collectively by communities, technologists, and policymakers.

→ Read: [event reflections](#)



OTHER EVENTS ATTENDED

APRIL

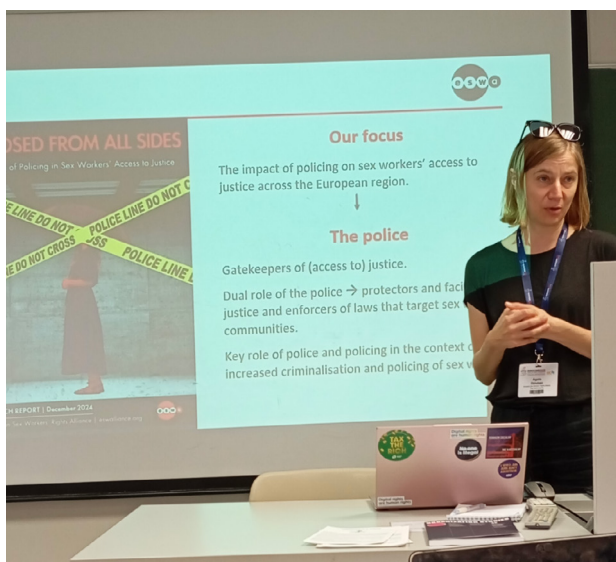
MMS SYMPOSIUM, BERN, SWITZERLAND

Senior Programme Officer Yigit Aydinalp led a session on Sex Work in the Digital Age, exploring how digital platforms enable and endanger sex workers, and how service providers can use social media in a rights-affirming, community-led way.

SEPT

EUROPEAN CRIMINOLOGY SOCIETY CONFERENCE, ATHENS, GREECE

Senior Policy Officer, Irena Ferčíková Konečná, and Agata Dziuban presented findings from our groundbreaking research, *Exposed from All Sides*. Their session not only shared key insights, but also underscored the ethical responsibilities and accountability of research, bringing a vital community perspective to a predominantly academic space.



SUMMER SCHOOL ON MIGRATION & REFUGEE REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH, BERN, SWITZERLAND

Health Programme Officer, Lisa Philippo, delivered a workshop for midwives, gynaecologists, and frontline workers to highlight barriers sex workers face in accessing sexual and reproductive healthcare and how services can become more inclusive and responsive.

OCT

PERSON-CENTRED CARE ACADEMY, PARIS, FRANCE

Health Programme Officer, Lisa Philippo delivered a training on community advocacy for sex workers' rights and met with community and research leaders in HIV care.

NOV

FEMINIST FUTURES, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Hosted by the Greens/EFA and held at the European Parliament, ESWA contributed to discussions on resisting far-right movements and advancing anti-colonial, anti-racist feminist responses that centre sex workers' rights.

DEC

HIV-OUTCOMES, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Held at the European Parliament, this event brought together policymakers, civil society, and advocates to reflect on the future of the EU's HIV response.

GBQMSM ANNUAL NETWORKING MEETING, REMOTE, ONLINE

Communications Officer, Wszebor Sienkiewicz, presented on sex work and trans masculinity, highlighting the important and often overlooked intersections between gender identity, sex work, and access to healthcare and support services.

OUR YEAR: GOVERNANCE

ESWA is a sex-worker-led association based in the Netherlands. Operations are guided by the Board of Directors, with decisions made in collaboration with the Senior Management Team and supported by a core team of three full-time and three part-time staff.

Wherever possible, the ESWA team and board are composed of members of the sex worker community. Within this, we strive to reflect the diversity of our movement by including people with a wide range of lived experiences and perspectives, such as trans sex workers, people of colour, working mothers, and migrant sex workers. This diversity strengthens our work by grounding it in lived experience, deepening our connection to the communities we serve, and ensuring an intersectional approach.

STAFFING CHANGES

This year marked a major period of transition for the ESWA team. Over the last 12 months, we said goodbye to Executive Director Sabrina Sanchez, Senior Policy Officer Irena Ferčíková Konečná, Operations Officer Iva Jovović, and Health Programmes Officer Vera Rodriguez.

Congratulations to Senior Policy Officer Irena Ferčíková Konečná on her election to the Czech Parliament. We will miss you, and wish you the best of luck with your political career!

To guide the organisation through these changes, Senior Digital Programmes Officer Yigit Aydinalp stepped into the role of Interim Executive Director — working closely with the Board of Directors and senior staff to lead the recruitment process for a new Executive Director.

We are also excited to welcome a wave of new talent to the team, including:

- Lisa Philippo as Programme Officer, Access to Health (Netherlands/France)
- Rafailia Varonou as Operations and Finance Officer (Greece)
- Elizabeth McGuinness as Policy Officer, Access to Justice (Ireland/UK)
- Ana Ornelas as Programme Officer on Digital Rights (Brazil/Germany)

UPDATE FROM OUR GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ANNUAL TEAM MEETING

Since becoming an association in 2022, ESWA has convened its voting and non-voting members each year for its General Assembly.

Held online on 10 July, this year's General Assembly provided an opportunity for the ESWA Board, Executive Director, and Operations Officer to update members on the organisation's activities, projects and budget from the past year, as well as plans for the year ahead. The meeting also gave members a chance to share their views and help shape the direction of ESWA's work.

Members approved the organisation's annual work plan, budget, and financial reports for the coming year. The General Assembly also marked the formal appointment of Olivia Green (SWAG) to the board.

The General Assembly is preceded by our annual team meeting. Held in Barcelona, the meeting focused on reviewing and approving budgets and work plans, discussing strategic priorities, and preparing for the year ahead. It also provided valuable time for reflection, collaboration, and relationship-building —

helping to strengthen ESWA as an organisation and ensure it is well positioned to respond to emerging challenges and to advance the fight for sex worker rights.

A NEW STRATEGIC PHASE

Finally, 2025 also marked the final year of ESWA's current Strategic Plan. Over the past year, we undertook an extensive consultation process with staff, board members, allies and our wider membership to reflect on our progress, identify future priorities, and consider how best to navigate an increasingly hostile political landscape.

The final Strategy [launched early in 2026](#), and is rooted in collective conversations, lessons learned, and a shared commitment

to strengthening sex-worker-led organisations across Europe and Central Asia.

Together, these changes signal not only a new chapter for ESWA but a renewed investment in the future of our movement.



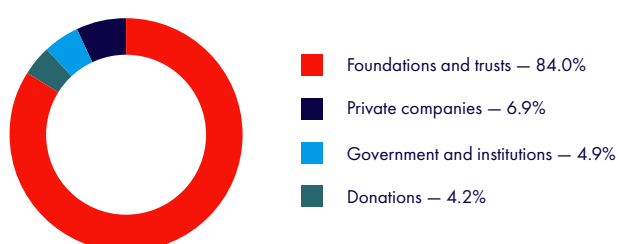
→ Explore:
[Strategic Plan](#)



FINANCE

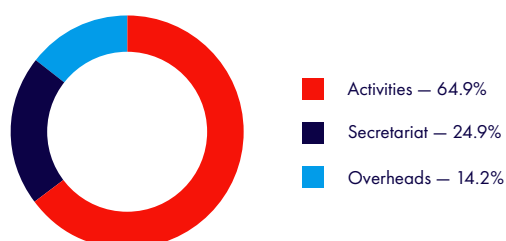
Despite operating in a time of shrinking financial resources, ESWA's income for 2025 held strong — totalling €633,839 and representing a 25% increase on the previous financial year. Levels of expenditure also held steady at €521,775.

INCOME

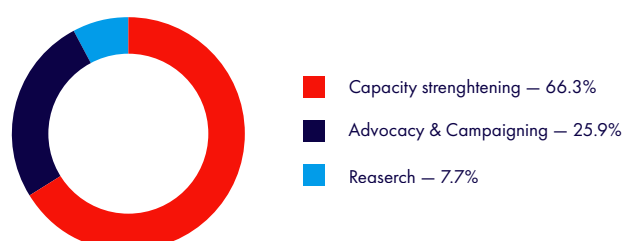


EXPENDITURE

Division of expenses



Activities divided over Strategic Approaches



Despite the successes of the past year, we know that shifts in the global funding landscape — particularly for HIV-related work — will present significant fundraising challenges moving forward. These pressures are compounded by a broader trend towards more risk-averse funding, alongside declining support for gender equality, women's rights, and other movements working to advance social justice.

To mitigate this risk, fundraising will remain an organisational priority, with ESWA working to create efficiencies and share learning and pool resources with partners, supporters, and allies wherever possible.

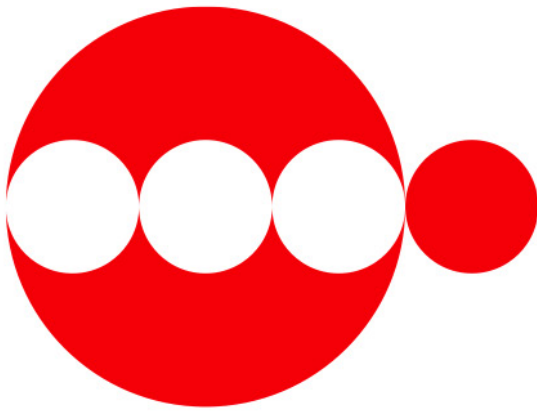


As an organisation supporting communities that have long faced — and continue to face — widespread discrimination and exclusion, resources have never come easily.



We know that when we are strategic, resourceful, and united, we have the power not only to endure these challenges but to push back against them: achieving change against the odds and moving ever closer to the future sex workers and their communities deserve.

Lisa Philippo, Deputy Director, ESWA



european sex workers rights alliance

ESWA

European Sex Workers' Rights Alliance

Eerste Helmersstraat 17 D * 1054 CX

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

www.eswalliance.org

info@eswalliance.org

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