

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

2005-2015

**MARKING 10 YEARS OF SEX WORKERS' RIGHTS
ACTIVISM AND ADVOCACY IN EUROPE**





ABOUT ICRSE

The International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe (ICRSE) is a regional advocacy network of 84 organisations and individuals in Europe and Central Asia. The core aim of ICRSE is to ensure that the voices of sex workers in the region are heard, listened to and respected. We strive to raise awareness about the social exclusion of female, male and transgender sex workers in Europe and Central Asia; to promote the human, health and labour rights of all sex workers at community, national and regional level; and to build alliances with key partners, including sex workers and their organisations globally, NGOs and other civil society organisations and key players at the level of EU policy and decision-making.

ICRSE opposes all forms of criminalisation of sex work and strongly disputes the conflation of sex work with trafficking. We aim to raise awareness of the harmful impact of the conflation of sex work with trafficking on sex workers' lives and seek to put forward a labour rights' perspective of sex work, whereby the labour, health and human rights of all sex workers are recognised, protected and fulfilled by national, regional and international laws, policies and programmes.

ICRSE supports sex workers' right to self-determination and self organisation. Sex workers can and do effect change; solidarity among ICRSE members will ensure that the needs and voices of female, male and transgender sex workers will be heard and addressed equally.

This ICRSE Annual report outlines ICRSE's latest projects, programmes and achievements contributing to our strategic aims as a regional advocacy network for sex workers' rights.



ICRSE'S MISSION, VISION AND CORE VALUES

OUR VISION:

ICRSE's vision is of a world where sex work is recognised as work; where all sex workers are respected and their rights upheld; and where gender, racial, social and economic equality and freedom of movement are a reality and enable individuals to start, continue or leave sex work safely, and free from violence and coercion.

OUR MISSION:

ICRSE is a network of sex worker organisations and their allies that work together to support the development of national and international law, policy and practice, which respects and upholds the human, health and labour rights of sex workers throughout Europe and Central Asia.

OUR CORE VALUES:

ICRSE and its members:

- Recognise sex work as work
- Support sex worker self-determination and self-organising
- Oppose the criminalisation of sex work

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS:

ICRSE membership is composed of organisations and individuals working or living in Western, Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. ICRSE organisational members are sex worker-led collectives and associations, service providers working directly with sex workers and other organisations supporting sex workers' rights. Individual members are sex workers, academics, human rights activists, feminists, and trade unionists. The governance structure of ICRSE ensures the network is led by sex worker-led organisations and sex workers themselves.



2015 – ACHIEVEMENTS

2015 marked the 10th anniversary of the creation of ICRSE, which formed as the organiser of the the European Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labour and Migration (15 - 17 October 2005, Brussels, Belgium). This significant conference was attended by 120 sex workers and 80 allies from the region who developed and endorsed ICRSE's founding documents: the Declaration on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe, Sex Workers in Europe Manifesto and our Recommendations.

2015 marked as well the 40th anniversary of the occupation of the church of St Nizier in Lyon, France by sex workers. This event is considered as the symbolical birth of the sex workers' rights movement in Europe and the 2nd of June is celebrated in many communities and countries across the region as Sex Workers' Rights Day.

During this significant year, the ICRSE network successfully increased its organisational capacities, extended our "reach" to sex workers through various activities, capacity building efforts in country and the production of advocacy resources, and strengthened our membership and alliances with other social justice movements in the European region.

This Annual Report lays out how ICRSE worked in diverse areas in order to achieve our core aims as laid out in our Strategic Plan 2011-2014:

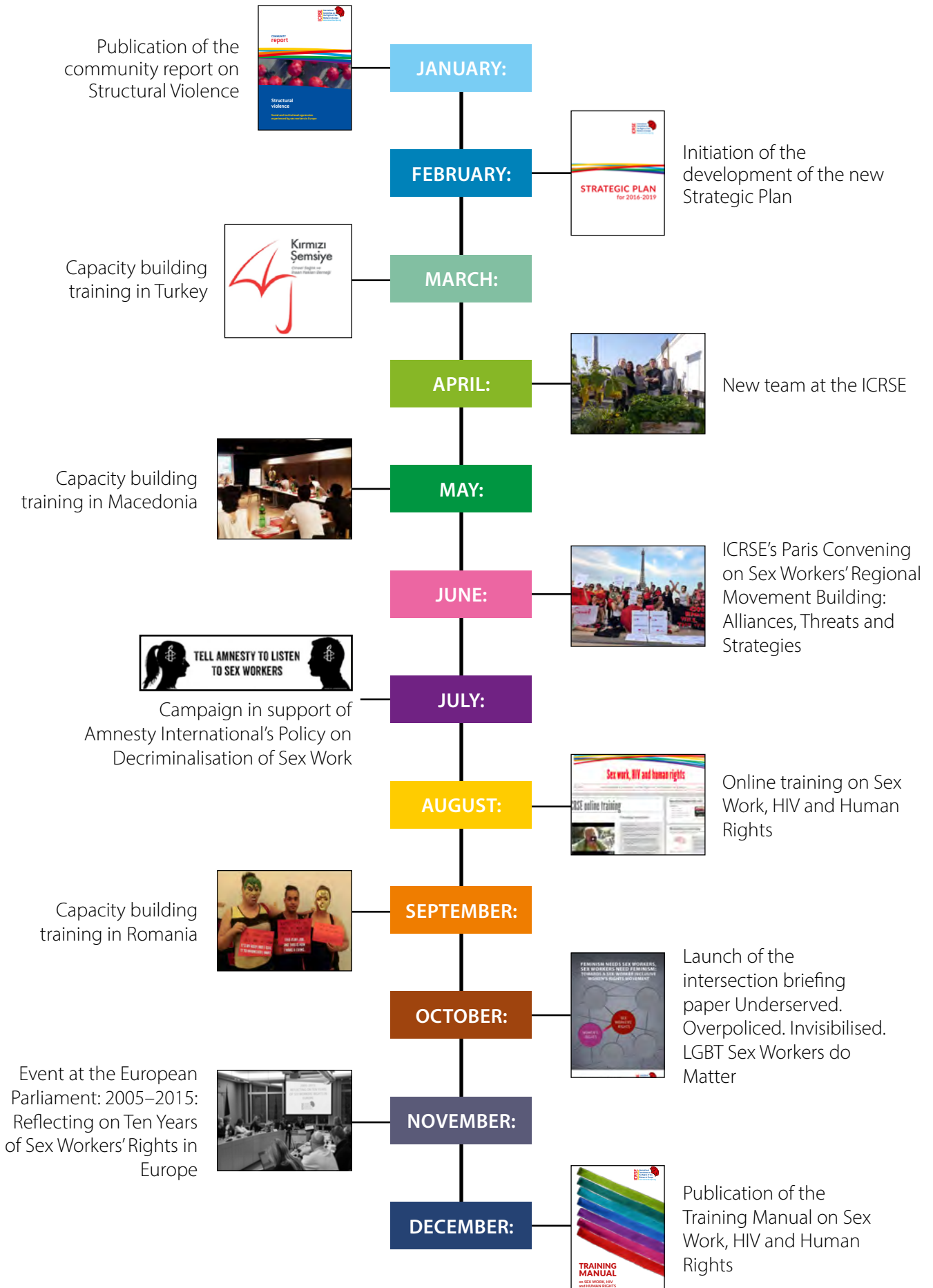
Aim 1: To create a sustainable organisation providing leadership in European sex worker activism.

Aim 2: To challenge policy and legislative barriers that prevent the fulfilment of sex workers' human and labour rights.

Aims 3: To establish ICRSE as an influential body in the European policy forum.

Aim 4: To build a movement of and for sex workers in Europe – building capacity for activism and advocacy.

A GLIMPSE OF ICRSE IN 2015:





AIM 1: CREATING A SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION PROVIDING LEADERSHIP IN EUROPEAN SEX WORKER ACTIVISM

In 2015, ICRSE strongly developed its capacities thanks to several successful funding applications. These generous grants allowed ICRSE to increase the number of staff and consultants with the development of a Secretariat based in Glasgow, UK and the hiring or continued employment of several consultants based in France, Poland and Germany. ICRSE also worked in collaboration with external consultants for the development of our new Strategic Plan 2016-2019 and for the organisation of our Seminar held at the European Parliament in December.

Funding Grants:

ICRSE would like to thank the following funders for their financial contribution and support to our 2015 activities:

- The Red Umbrella Fund, the first global fund guided by and for sex workers;
- Robert Carr Civil Societies Network Fund through a Consortium with other regional networks of sex work projects and led by the Global Network of Sex Work Projects;
- Open Society Foundations

In order to implement our Strategic Plan and related activities, ICRSE hired/continued working with several dedicated and passionate sex workers and human rights activists and professionals.

ICRSE Board Members:

Anastacia Ryan, SCOT-PEP, Scotland, ICRSE Co-convenor

PG Macioti, Hydra, Germany, ICRSE Co-convenor

Borce Bozinov, STAR STAR, Macedonia, Treasurer

Stasa Plecas, SWAN

Kate McGrew, SWAI, Ireland

Secretariat:

Luca Stevenson remained Coordinator, responsible for planning and coordinating ICRSE's activities, programs and resource development. Luca also worked closely with the ICRSE Board in strengthening the governance structures of the network, ensuring transparency in decision-making and accountability. Luca also progressed in his role as coordinator to manage and coordinate the work of an increasing number of staff and consultants, whilst remaining responsible for fundraising, and activities related to increasing and strengthening the membership. Luca also coordinated and co-facilitated a training on Sex Work, HIV and Human



Rights in Bucharest, Romania in partnership with SWAN and Carusel.

George Lewis joined ICRSE as Financial Officer and enabled ICRSE to develop strong and transparent financial systems.

Yigit Aydin joined ICRSE in 2015 as Administration Officer responsible for maintaining day to day administrative, financial and communication services including engaging with ICRSE membership in the approval of new member applications.

Personnel:

Agata Dziuban continued her work as Policy Officer, responsible for the development of community reports on key issues related to sex workers' rights. In 2015 Agata also coordinated the capacity building programme on Sex Work, HIV and Human Rights, facilitated several training sessions, including two online trainings, and contributed to the development of ICRSE's Training Manual on Sex Work, HIV and Human Rights.

Thierry Schaffauser and **Boglarka Fedorko** joined ICRSE's team as Advocacy and Campaign Officers responsible for building alliances with other social movements and NGOs in particular in the fields of Labour, LGBT and Migration. Thierry and Boglarka developed our first Briefing Paper on The Intersection of Sex Workers' Rights and LGBT Rights and participated in many key-events and conferences as well as facilitating trainings in Serbia and France.

Each staff member of ICRSE is also a member and activist of a national sex workers' rights organisation or collective in countries such as France, Hungary, Poland, Turkey and UK., bringing their own and direct understandings of issues faced by sex workers at national level to the regional work of ICRSE.

ICRSE is also thankful to Bruno Selun and Terry Connolly at Kumquat Consult (<http://www.kumquat.eu>) who supported our network in organising its Seminar - Reflecting on 10 years of Sex Workers' Rights in Europe - at the European Parliament and to Dimitar Spasenoski who developed in consultation with our members our new Strategic Plan 2016-2019.

ICRSE benefited extensively from the exceptional breadth of expertise, knowledge and dedication to sex workers' rights that each consultant brought to their work.

Increasing membership

In 2015, twelve organisations based in Belgium, North Cyprus, Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Serbia and Turkey joined ICRSE bringing its membership to a total of 82 organisations. 21 individual activists also joined ICRSE membership in 2015. The list of organisation members of ICRSE can be seen here: <http://www.sexworkeurope.org/node/464>



Organisational Strengthening

- ICRSE held its Board meeting in Porto and participated in a meeting with local sex workers and allies (09/15).
- ICRSE held a three-day staff and consultants meeting in Berlin to coordinate future campaigns and alliance building with other movements (10/15).

Communication and Increasing visibility of members and strengthening the voice of sex workers in the region

ICRSE continued to fulfil its role as a regional network facilitating the sharing of information by our members through our list-servs, website and social media, where news, events, statements and resources, such as community reports, advocacy tools, statements and videos, are regularly uploaded. www.sexworkeurope.org

Our members communicate and share information through different platforms, including a listserv and closed groups on Facebook. ICRSE is also in the process of launching a listserv for academics and researchers.

ICRSE communicates with the public through social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as YouTube channel, and publishes a regular newsletter sent to all member organisations, other stakeholders and interested individuals. Our statements and resources are often shared by other networks and organisations including SWAN (Sex Workers' Rights Advocacy Network in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia), NSWP (Global Network of Sex Workers Projects), INPUD (International Network of People who Use Drugs), Correlation – European Network Social Inclusion & Health, and AWID (Association for Women in Development), as well as national sex worker collectives and civil society organisations.

In 2015 ICRSE published on its website and social media a total of 16 news reports and statements, thus increasing the visibility of our members and supporting their advocacy at national and local level. These reports related to sex workers' rights, advocacy and activism, different challenges and forms of oppression experienced by sex workers in Europe and Central Asia, as well as the intersections between sex workers' rights and the rights of LGBT communities.

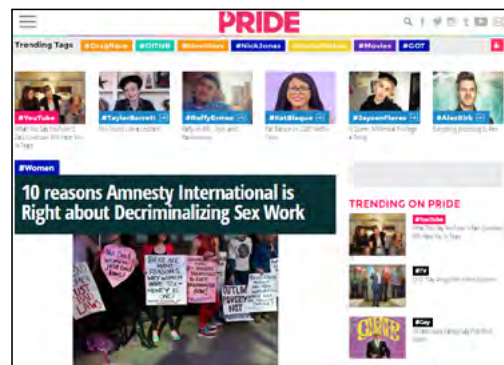
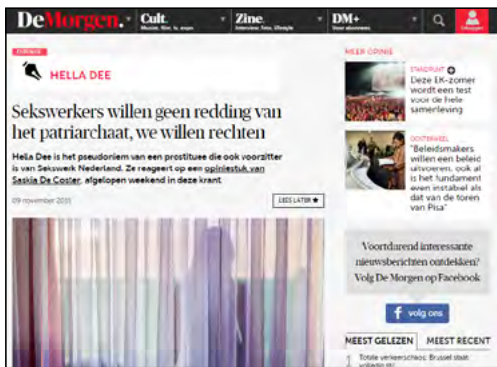
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/ICRSE/105375937644>

<https://twitter.com/sexworkeurope>

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEJQn5D57Y_e-hXjQK-jYaw



Examples of ICRSE and our members in the media 2015:





AIM 2: TO CHALLENGE POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE BARRIERS THAT PREVENT THE FULFILMENT OF SEX WORKERS' HUMAN AND LABOUR RIGHTS AND TO ESTABLISH ICRSE AS AN INFLUENTIAL BODY IN EUROPEAN POLICY FORUMS

In 2015, ICRSE embarked on a two-year campaign to strengthen our collaboration and partnership with other social justice movements, European networks and rights-based organisations, with the aim to effectively challenge policy and legislation at national and regional level that harm sex workers. To do this effectively, ICRSE started developing a series of briefing papers that highlight the intersection of sex workers' rights with other key communities, including the right of women, LGBT, migrants and labour rights. These briefing papers contributed to the forming of many significant partnerships and relationships with other rights-based organisations and movements. To extend influence, ICRSE worked across many issues to engage at these intersections, including the areas of health, LGBT, migrant and labour rights, migration and trafficking, and in broader forums such as academia and cultural activism.

Campaign in support of Amnesty International's Policy on Decriminalisation of Sex Work

ICRSE coordinated an effective regional campaign to support Amnesty International's Resolution and draft policy calling for the decriminalisation of sex work, which was tabled for adoption at their International Council Meeting, 6-11th August 2015. A letter drafted by ICRSE was signed by 243 organisations including Sex Workers' Rights Advocacy Network in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SWAN), Human Rights Watch, Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW), La Strada International, Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), the International Community of Women Living with HIV (ICW), and Transgender Europe. More than 800 individuals including 100s of sex workers and researchers experts on sex work and human rights also signed the letter (available [here](#)).

ICRSE's campaign was also widely quoted in numerous media (see list of media above). ICRSE Coordinator and Policy Officer co-wrote an article in the Guardian "Amnesty must stand firm on support for decriminalising sex work" (available [here](#)).




Bringing Sex Worker Issues to the Table | Building alliances and fostering collaboration on key policy issues

ICRSE continued to build fruitful alliances with other rights-based organisations and collaborated through participation in many events organised by other regional networks and national organisations working in the field of human rights, LGBT rights, migrants' rights and other related fields. The increased collaborative efforts of ICRSE also included a strengthened relationship with the Sex Workers Rights' Advocacy Network in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SWAN), its sister network in the region. ICRSE's staff co-facilitated sessions during a three-day community mobilisation training dedicated to sex workers and sex worker collectives from Central European countries and the Balkans. The training, organised by SWAN and co-facilitated by SWAN and ICRSE staff, took place in Budapest on 6-8th December 2015 with the participation of sex workers from Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, Serbia and Slovakia.

Additionally, several allies and civil society organisations, including La Strada International (European Network Against Trafficking in Human Beings), PICUM (Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants), Doctors of the World, as well as RELEASE, Legal Emergency & Drugs Service from the UK, participated and held presentations at the ICRSE's Paris Convening on "Sex Workers' Regional Movement Building: Alliances, Threats and Strategies" in Paris, France, on 4-6th June 2015.



Participants of the ICRSE Paris Convening protesting in front of the Eiffel Tower, 6th June 2015, Paris, France; credit: Sebastian Köhn



ICRSE (staff and Board members) participated in and coordinated various events, conferences and trainings in several countries in the region, showing solidarity with other networks and fostering collaborative and alliance building efforts in the following key areas:

Community mobilisation and advocacy

- ICRSE organised a three-days Convening on Sex Workers' Regional Movement Building: Alliances, Threats and Strategies with 40 sex workers and allies, 4th – 6th June 2015, Paris, France. <http://www.sexworkeurope.org/news/general-news/statement-following-icrse-paris-convening-regional-movement-building-june2015>
- ICRSE participated in the conference on sex workers' rights in Turkey organised by Red Umbrella Sexual Health and Human Rights Association and UNFPA, 13th-15th March, Ankara, Turkey.
- ICRSE coordinated an open event at the European Parliament to launch its 10 years report on sex workers' rights in the region, 19th November 2015, Brussels, Belgium. <http://www.sexworkeurope.org/news/general-news/2005-2015-reflecting-ten-years-sex-workers-rights-europe>
- ICRSE addressed sex workers' self-organisation and demands at "Cercle culturel de Commission Européenne", November 2015, Brussels, Belgium.
- ICRSE participated in the conference on sex work and feminism coordinated by Prostitutas Indignadas, 16th-17th December 2015, Barcelona, Spain. <https://prostitutasindignadas.wordpress.com/2015/11/10/feminist-meeting-alliances-sex-work-16th-17th-dec/>
- ICRSE participated in the conference against violence against sex workers, 17th December, Ankara, Turkey.
- ICRSE participated in a three-day training on media and community mobilisation organized by SWAN with sex workers from Croatia, Albania, Poland, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Serbia, 6th-9th December 2016, Budapest, Hungary. <http://swannet.org/en/content/training-sex-workers-community-mobilization-and-media>

Health

- ICRSE organised 6 regional trainings on HIV, sex work and human rights in France, Serbia, Romania, Macedonia, Turkey.
- ICRSE participated in the WHO/UNAIDS meeting on Advancing the PrEP implementation strategy, 21st-23rd March, Geneva, Switzerland.
- ICRSE led a workshop on sex workers' human rights and access to health and justice at the School of Tropical Medicine, April 2015, Antwerp, Belgium.
- ICRSE participated in a workshop on HIV/STI and sex workers' self organisation by DStiG Deutsche STI-Gesellschaft, November 2015, Cologne, Germany.
- ICRSE participated in a panel on HIV/STI prevention programmes for sex workers at the National AIDS Conference, 2nd December 2015, Warsaw, Poland.



Labour

- ICRSE participated in the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) working group on undocumented workers' rights, October 2015, Brussels, Belgium.
- ICRSE presented on organising precarious workers at Global Labour Institute's International Summer School, July 2015, Manchester, UK. http://global-labour.net/iss15_organising_informal_workers/

Academia:

- ICRSE continued its collaboration with European Cooperation on Science and Technology (COST) with its Action "Comparing European Prostitution Policies: Understanding Scales and Cultures of Governance" (ProsPol). ICRSE will publish a chapter on sex workers' self-organising in Europe and Central Asia in a COST resource Assessing European Prostitution Policies (to be published in 2016 in Routledge series Interdisciplinary Studies in Sex for Sale) and participate actively in ProsPol working groups on sex work policy.
- ICRSE participated in the ProPol conference "Troubling Prostitution: exploring intersections of sex, intimacy and labour", 17th-18th April 2015, Vienna, Austria. <http://prospol.eu/is1209/index.php/events/vienna-conference-2015>
- ICRSE participated in the ProsPol meeting, 21st-23rd September 2015, Porto, Portugal. ICRSE coordinated a panel of sex workers at the Porto conference on the issues of "collaborative governance" with members of sex workers' collectives from Germany, Netherlands and Scotland.
- ICRSE participated and coordinated a panel on sex workers' rights and social justice with the Glasgow University Gender Forum, Glasgow, UK.
- ICRSE participated in a panel discussion on sex work policies at the Warsaw University, 15th November 2015, Warsaw, Poland.

LGBT rights

- ICRSE participated in the Rainbow Rose General Assembly (LGBT Socialists and Democrats LGBT group) and led a workshop on LGBT sex workers to inform Rainbow Rose policy, 11th July 2015, Berlin, Germany.
- ICRSE participated in a round table with LGBT organisations and our member SCOT-PEP relating to a decriminalisation Bill in Scotland, October 2015, UK.
- ICRSE co-facilitated a workshop at International Lesbian and Gay Association Europe Conference on LGBT sex workers' rights and launched a briefing paper on the issue, 30th October 2015, Athens, Greece. <http://www.sexworkeurope.org/news/general-news/underserved-overpoliced-invisibilised-lgbt-sex-workers-do-matter>



Migration and trafficking

- ICRSE participated in an international symposium on organised crime and security; trafficking and sex work organised by ISA Toennisstein Kreis, Cologne, Germany (11/15)

Human Rights

- ICRSE participated in Amnesty International (AI) Germany round-table prior to the vote of the AI AGM on decriminalisation of sex work and took part in follow up calls with AI regarding the launch of their policy and research, October 2015, Berlin, Germany.
- ICRSE held a workshop on sex workers' rights for AI Poland, 4th August 2015, Warsaw, Poland.

Cultural activism

- ICRSE coordinated a meeting with sex workers and staff members of SWAN and ICRSE on cultural activism and "changing the narrative" with Open Society Foundation, 7th and 8th October 2015, Berlin, Germany.

2005-2015: REFLECTING ON TEN YEARS OF SEX WORKERS' RIGHTS IN EUROPE

Ten years ago, the Declaration on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe was launched in the European Parliament. Signed by 120 sex workers and 80 allies from 30 European countries, it identified the human, labour and migrant rights that international law grants to all, including sex workers.

In 2015 the International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe decided to mark the declaration's 10th anniversary by organising an international seminar on sex workers' rights and launching a community report "Nothing about us without us! Ten Years of Sex Workers' Rights Activism and Advocacy in Europe", reflecting on the ten years of sex worker rights movement in Europe and Central Asia.

On the 30th of November 2015, ICRSE hosted a panel discussion at the European Parliament, in Brussels, Belgium, to consider the growing evidence against criminalisation of sex work and the past ten years' positive and negative developments in relation to sex workers' rights. Among the attendees were representatives of the European Commission, Permanent Representations, members of the European Parliament and civil society groups, such as Transgender Europe, the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe), Stop AIDS Alliance, Médecins du Monde and Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM).

The event featured inputs from several sex workers and allies, including Luca Stevenson, ICRSE Coordinator (listen to his talk [here](#)); Boglarka Fedorko, a representative of Transgender Europe (TGEU) and Communication Officer at SZEXE, Hungarian sex worker collective (listen to her talk [here](#));



Thierry Schaffauser, a long standing sex workers' rights activist from STRASS, trade union of French sex workers, and ICRSE Advocacy Officer; as well as Pye Jakobsson, the president of the Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP) and the co-founder of Rose Alliance, the Swedish sex worker organisation (listen to her talk [here](#)). The panel discussion was moderated by Anastacia Elle Ryan, ICRSE's Co-Convenor and co-founder of Umbrella Lane, a sex worker-led project in Scotland.

The final words from the panel came from Marisa Matias, Member of European Parliament from the European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) and leading figure of the Left Bloc party in Portugal. Taking example from Portugal, where austerity measures had a profound effect on communities, Matias reaffirmed her support for the self-organisation of sex workers and the needs for member states to strengthen social benefits rather than looking at punitive measures to "end demand or abolish sex work".

Read more [here](#).



Marisa Mattias, MEP and Anastacia Ryan, ICRSE Co-convenor



Pye Jakobsson, NSWP President and Co-founder of Rose Alliance, Sweden



Members of sex workers organisations Espace P and UTSOPI, Belgium and Luca Stevenson, ICRSE Coordinator



AIM 3: TO BUILD A MOVEMENT OF AND FOR SEX WORKERS IN EUROPE – BUILDING CAPACITY FOR ACTIVISM AND RESOURCES

Developing the capacities of our members: ICRSE's capacity building programme on Sex Work, HIV and Human Rights

One of the main ICRSE's achievements in the development and strengthening sex workers' movement in Europe and Central Asia was the community-led capacity-building programme on "Sex Work, HIV and Human Rights" carried out by ICRSE with the support of the Robert Carr Civil Society Network Fund. This innovative and multifaceted project lasted for two years and aimed at providing individual sex workers and sex worker collectives knowledge and skills to advocate for sex workers' right to health and actively engage in the HIV/STIs response. The capacity-building programme consisted of a series of regional, national and online community trainings focusing on the following issues:

- Sex workers' human and health rights.
- Work-related risks and other – social, structural and economic – factors contributing to sex workers' vulnerability to HIV globally and in the European region.
- HIV-related prevention, testing and treatment opportunities for sex workers in the European region and barriers to sex workers' access to these HIV-related services in Europe.
- Community empowerment approach to HIV prevention among sex workers.

The ICRSE's capacity-building project was initiated in 2014 with a regional training course on "Sex Work, HIV and Human Rights" held in Budapest, Hungary, on 17-21 October 2014. This regional programme successfully brought together 22 sex workers from eight European countries – France, Macedonia, Ireland, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey. In 2015, leaders of five national sex worker collectives that participated in the Budapest training were supported by ICRSE in sharing knowledge and energy from the course by conducting context-sensitive workshops for their communities. As a result, sex workers in five European countries – France, Macedonia, Serbia, Romania and Turkey – were able to take part in community-led national training programmes tailored to their needs and realities.

The first of the national training sessions was organised in Ankara, Turkey, on 12-13 March 2015, by the Turkish sex worker collective Kırmızı Şemsiye (Red Umbrella Sexual Health and Human Rights Association) and ICRSE. Owing to this, 20 sex workers of all genders from different parts of the country, sex work settings and socio-economic backgrounds had the opportunity to share their experiences, opinions and concerns with respect to sex workers' rights and HIV vulnerabilities in Turkey. They not only identified the main human rights violations experienced



by members of their community, especially trans sex workers facing severe oppression and discrimination in the country, but also mapped many advocacy strategies that they could collectively use to improve sex workers' living and working conditions.

The training course in Turkey was followed by a community workshop in Skopje, Macedonia, co-facilitated by STAR-STAR, the only sex worker-led collective in the country, and ICRSE. This workshop, which took place between 31 May and 2 June 2015, brought together 15 female, male and trans sex workers from different Macedonian cities, working in various sex work settings. They all saw it as a great opportunity to learn more about the barriers sex workers face when willing to exercise their right to health in Macedonia and possible strategies to challenge these. One of the key topics discussed during the session was sex workers' involvement and leadership in addressing HIV vulnerabilities in their community. Through different activities and training exercises, participants were provided with the skills to advocate for sex workers' rights and access to HIV-related services.



ICRSE/STAR-STAR Training in Skopje, Macedonia, 31 May and 2 June 2015. Copyright: STAR-STAR

The third training course on "Sex Work, HIV and Human Rights" was held in Bucharest, Romania, by ICRSE and Carusel, a non-governmental organisation providing HIV prevention programming for sex workers in Romania. Since the efforts to develop a sex worker-led organisation have so far not been fully successful, this programme was one of the very first opportunities for sex workers in the country to come together and discuss issues directly affecting their life, safety and health. Thus, between 31 August and 4 September, over 20 sex



workers of all genders had the chance to learn about their rights, also with respect to HIV, the legal framework governing sex work in Romania, and the history of sex workers' engagement in the response to HIV across Europe and globally. The workshop triggered great energy and passion in the sex worker community in Romania and encouraged sex workers to write a letters of complaints to both Ministry of Health and Minister of Justice listing their demands and expectations.



ICRSE/Carousel Training in Bucharest, Romania, 31 August and 4 September 2015. Copyright: ICRSE

The fourth national training course was organised in Belgrade, Serbia, between 2 and 6 October 2015, by Sloboda Prava (Equal Rights), a sex worker-led group, and ICRSE. Gayten-LGBT, a LGBT advocacy and service provider organisation, also contributed by holding presentations on trans-specific issues, including on the rights of trans people and trans-specific health care. Fifteen sex workers of all genders from Belgrade participated throughout the event, including trans sex workers and Roma sex workers from various sex work settings and socio-economic backgrounds. The topics in focus were barriers to accessing HIV-related services, including the criminalising legal environment, arbitrary arrests by the police and lack of available services and organisational capacities to provide community-based outreach. Participants also discussed possibilities for countering abusive police practices and intra-community violence, explored ways to document human rights violations, and mapped potential allies in promoting sex workers' rights and legal reforms in the country.



The last national community training course on “Sex Work, HIV and Human Rights” took place in Toulouse, France, on 1–3 October 2015, thanks to the collective efforts of the French sex workers’ union STRASS and ICRSE. The training brought together around 15 sex workers of all genders, from different cities across the country, and gave them a chance to discuss matters including opportunities and barriers to sex workers’ engagement in the design and implementation of community-led HIV prevention programming. The three-day programme ended with a public meeting attended by around 100 people, including sex workers, representatives of different political parties, trade unions and civil society organisations. During the meeting, programme participants raised awareness about sex workers’ rights and health needs, advocated for the decriminalisation of sex work, and presented the different strategies undertaken by STRASS to support community mobilisation and strengthening in France.



ICRSE/STASS Training in Toulouse, France, 1–3 October 2015. Copyright: STRASS

Finally, to reach out to sex workers who might not be able to participate in national meetings or to those who wanted to reinforce their knowledge, and to enable cross-regional communication and knowledge-exchange, ICRSE used the internet as an additional training space. This resulted in the development of two online training courses on “Sex Work, HIV and Human Rights”, open to all sex workers living and working in Europe and Central Asia, and using the internet. Development of this sex worker-only e-learning space not only gave sex workers a chance to follow different thematic modules and watch training videos at the time and place most convenient to them, but it also enabled them to share their experiences and engage in discussions with peers they would probably otherwise never get in touch with.



In the course of the capacity-building project ICRSE has also created a training manual on Sex Work, HIV and Human Rights to support individual sex workers and sex worker collectives in organising and facilitating participatory training sessions for their peers and communities willing to engage in advocacy for sex workers' rights.

<http://www.sexworkeurope.org/resources/training-manual-sex-work-hiv-and-human-rights>

Development of resources

In 2015 ICRSE has published several resources, all which have been uploaded online and distributed among our member organisations and allies:

Underserved. Overpoliced. Invisibilised. LGBT Sex Workers do Matter. Intersection Briefing Paper

On the 30th of October 2015, ICRSE launched its first briefing paper on the intersection of sex workers' rights with LGBT rights at the Conference of the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA Europe) during a workshop titled "Supporting the rights of LGBT sex workers". This briefing paper is the first of a series of resources which will give sex workers, activists from other social movements and policy makers the tools to explore the intersection of sex workers' rights with other rights and social struggles such as those connected with LGBT people, women, workers, migrants and health.

To access and read the Report, click [here](#) or on the cover below.





This briefing paper explores the diverse experiences and realities of LGBT sex workers and the intersection of LGBT rights and sex workers' rights. It also calls upon the LGBT movement to build an alliance with sex workers and their organisations and actively support sex workers' rights and the decriminalisation of sex work.

Training Manual on Sex Work, HIV and Human Rights

On the 1st of December, the International AIDS Day, ICRSE has launched its first training manual on Sex Work, HIV and Human Rights that aims at supporting sex worker collectives in engaging in HIV response across the European region. This training manual consists of detailed descriptions of the five training modules designed by ICRSE (Human Rights and the Fundamental Right to Health, HIV Vulnerabilities of Sex Workers in Europe, HIV Prevention, Testing and Treatment – Opportunities and Barriers for Sex Workers, Community Empowerment Approach to HIV Prevention for Sex Workers, Advocacy and Activism for Sex Workers' Rights), as well as tips for facilitating the training course and assuring participants' confidentiality. It can also be used as a toolkit for organising advocacy campaigns, as well for developing an agenda of sensitising workshops, educational training courses, and awareness-raising meetings for medical personnel, service providers, outreach workers, law enforcement agencies, and allies interested in broadening their knowledge on sex workers' rights and health vulnerabilities.

To access and read the Report, click [here](#) or on the cover below.





Nothing about us without us! Ten Years of Sex Workers' Rights Activism and Advocacy in Europe

In 2015, ICRSE has developed and launched a community report to mark the tenth anniversary of the Declaration on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe, published during the European Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labour and Migration organised in Brussels by ICRSE back in 2005. "Nothing about us without us!" report documents last ten years of the sex workers' movement in Europe by highlighting the different achievements, struggles and engagements of sex worker-led organisations and regional networks, as well as their contribution to the advancement and strengthening of sex workers' rights in Europe and Central Asia. Reflections on the developments of the sex workers' movement are also accompanied by the analysis of the different trends and changes in legal frameworks governing sex work, social policies and social attitudes affecting sex workers' lives, rights and working conditions in Europe and Central Asia that took place in the decade following the Brussels conference.

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A Significant Year....

2015, the year marking the 10th anniversary of our organisation as well as the 40th anniversary of the occupation of the church of St Nizier in France was an important year for our network which saw its capacities and its reach greatly increased. Committed to our core values and working towards our aims, ICRSE proved that through community spirit and mobilisation, sex workers can and do affect change. In the face of continued legal oppression and social exclusion of sex workers in our region, ICRSE and its members continue to organise and strengthen one another in our joint fight to make the human, health and labour rights of sex workers of all genders a reality. ICRSE wishes to thank all our members and allies who have engaged with our 2015 activities and made the network vibrant and strong as we move into 2016.

International Committee for the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe (ICRSE) Financial Summary 2015

INCOME		137,218 €
EXPENDITURE	PERSONNEL:	78,765 €
	ACTIVITIES:	42,756 €
	OVERHEADS:	1,625 €
	TOTAL:	123,146.8 €



Sincere thanks to Open Society Foundations, Robert Carr Civil Societies Network Fund and The Red Umbrella Fund for their financial support.



www.sexworkeurope.org
info@sexworkeurope.org

