

## **Imprint**

Task Force "Prostitution"

(as a subgroup of the Task Force "Human Trafficking")

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## **Sexwork-Info**

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## 1. Offering sexual services as a job

This brochure addresses persons who want to provide sexual services or are already providing sexual services.

## "Prostitution" - "Providing sexual services"

In this brochure the phrase "providing sexual services" is intentionally used more often than the word "prostitution". As a provider of sexual services you are offering a service, not yourself or your body. You are legally earning your living. The term "providing sexual service" indicates that you are doing a job for which you get paid for.

## "Sex work" - "Providing sexual services"

As well as the phrase "provider of sexual services", in Germanspeaking countries you may also find the term "sex work". Both definitions indicate that they are gainful occupations.

## 2. Counselling and information

Some counselling centers in Austria offer help and advice especially for providers of sexual services. Besides, they try to improve their working conditions and living conditions.

## Who can go for counselling?

If you are a provider of sexual services, want to become one or were one before, you can go for counselling

- regardless of your working status (legal or illegal) for example working without the obligatory health check (see chapter 8)
- regardless of your country of origin or your right of residence

#### What is offered?

- legal information and advice, counselling concerning health issues or social issues – face to face, via phone or via E-Mail
- psychosocial care in case of a private crisis
- counselling at your working place (outreach work)
- counselling and information in different languages
- attendance to public authorities, administrative offices, doctors etc.
- individual support, course offers and/or leisure activities
- immediate support if you are a victim of human trafficking

All the mentioned proposals are FOR FREE, every conversation is CONFIDENTIAL and by request you may remain ANONYMOUS! All the addresses can be found in chapter 12.

## Working legally in Austria – an overview

There are different legal conditions concerning providing sexual services, depending on the federal state you want to work in.



- in each federal state you can offer sexual services legally in licensed brothels (for example walk-in-brothels, sauna clubs, bars, massage brothels, clubs). In Vorarlberg, there is currently no licensed brothel. Therefore, you cannot work legally in Vorarlberg.
- in some federal states you are allowed to offer your services at the home of your customer ("home visits")
- "working in the street" (= soliciting in the street) is only permitted in Vienna but there are some restrictions considering working time and workplace. Especially in residential areas soliciting of sexual services in the street is prohibited. For the exact provisions please visit the link: https://www.wien.gv.at/verwaltung/prostitution/
- please notice that there are also different federal laws concerning the age limit, the obligatory registration procedure and local restrictions

## Requirements:

- 18 years of age, in some federal states 19 years of age
- legal workplace see chapter 4
- legal residence see chapter 5

## **Necessary steps**

- in the federal states Burgenland and Vienna you first have to report that you want to start working: in Vienna you have to register at the registration office of the police. In Burgenland you have to register at the municipality of the county you want to start working in
- getting your first obligatory health check-up at the responsible local health office. When the results are in, you will get a photo identification card (medical check-up card, in German it is called "Gesundheitsbuch", "Karte" or "Deckel"). After that you have to have your medical check-up regularly. Each check-up will be listed in your medical check-up-card see chapter 8
- in case of self-employment you have to register at the Social Insurance for Self Employed ("Sozialversicherung der Selbständigen", SVS) – see chapter 9
- in case of self-employment you have to register at the responsible tax office see chapter 10

## 4. Legal workplaces

In each federal state there are different obligations and restrictions you have to respect. Please get all the information you need in due time – either at a counselling center or at the authorities.

## Working in a brothel

Providing your sexual services is only allowed in authorized brothels – regardless of the labeling of the workplace (walk-in-brothels, sauna clubs, bars, studios, clubs, massage brothels, aroma temple,...).

When working (soliciting or actually performing sexual services) in an unauthorized workplace – even if you have a valid medical check-up card ("Karte" or "Deckel") – you risk getting fined.

## "Working in the street" – soliciting sexual services

Soliciting customers in the street is only allowed in Vienna. Please notice the limitations as to time and place. Especially in residential areas soliciting customers in the street is forbidden. You can find the exact provisions on the web: https://www.wien.gv.at/verwaltung/prostitution/. Please notice that ithroughout it is strictly forbidden to perform sexual services in the street or other public areas!

## "Working in an apartment"

In Austria it is forbidden to provide sexual services at your own apartment. But in some federal states it is allowed to provide sexual services at your customers' place.

## Working at an escort agency

In compliance with certain requirements it is permitted that escort agencies arrange contacts between a customer and a provider of sexual services.

 Please note! Regardless of your workplace – a brothel, the street, ... – it has to be your own decision whether you take a customer, what kind of services you provide and what you charge for those services (see chapter 6).

# 5. You are from another country than Austria

## Requirements for providing sexual services:

- legal residence in Austria
- residential registration ("Meldezettel") in case you are not daily commuting between your main residence abroad and your workplace in Austria; even if you are only staying for a few days you have to register your residence in Austria.

## Are you a citizen of the European Union (EU) or of the European Economic Area (EEA)?

- as a citizen of one of the EU or EEA states you have free access to the Austrian labor market. This means you are not limited in getting employed or to be self-employed
- if you intend to stay in Austria for longer than three months you need a special certificate of registration – in German it is called "Anmeldebescheinigung". You can get it at the municipal authorities ("Magistrat") or the district authority ("Bezirkshauptmannschaft") where your residence is registered

## Are you a "third-country national?"

If you are not a citizen of the EU or the EEA you are a "third-country national". Please inquire about the conditions for getting a working permission in Austria.

- as a tourist you have no working permission
- if you have a legal residence status in another state of the EU (for example a permanent residence card of Spain) your working permission might not be extendable to Austria.

## 6. Rights and tips

#### Wherever you work it is your decision:

- which clients you accept
- · which services you offer

## Nobody is allowed to put pressure on you concerning those decisions!!

## The following is prohibited in Austria and LIABLE TO PROSECUTION:

- nobody is allowed to force you into providing sexual services!
- nobody is allowed to force you into accepting a customer!
- nobody is allowed to force you into offering services you don't want to perform!
- nobody is allowed to force you into working without a condom!
- nobody is allowed to take pictures of you without your permission or to make unauthorized advertising without your permission!
- nobody is allowed to take away the payment you receive!
- nobody is allowed to take away your passport or your medical check-up card ("Gesundheitsbuch", "Deckel" or "Karte")!
- nobody is allowed to threaten you or your family!

## Tips for working safely

- before you start working decide on the sexual services you want to offer
- build a network with your colleagues or stay in contact with them via phone to increase your level of safety; if you are working in the street tell your colleagues where you are exactly going with your customer. They then can take down the address

- and the license plate (number); If you are paying home visits give your colleagues the exact address you are going to
- · do not get into a car with more than one customer
- do not get into a heated discussion with a customer when you are alone. Try to get some help from your colleagues or the staff of the brothel; if you are working at an escort agency you can cancel the visit
- do not sign any document, which you don't understand
- keep your original documents with you for example your passport, your registration of residence ("Meldezettel"); if you have to, only give away copies of your documents

If you need help do not hesitate to call the police (phone number 133) or a counselling center. The addresses can be found in the last part of this brochure in chapter 12.

# 7. Health and providing sexual services

## **Physical health**

In order to get health check-ups for free or at a reduced prize you need to have **health insurance** (see chapter 9).

## **Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)**

The best way to protect yourself against STDs is to use condoms. There are different ways of getting an infection. You can also get infected by performing oral sex or anal sex without protection.

## How to use your working materials correctly

- make sure that the condom has a valid expiration date and is stored correctly
- the condom has to be put on correctly; make sure to press out the air of the tip of the condom so that it cannot break
- limit the risk of a broken condom by using water-based or silicon-based lube
- never put on two condoms at once. By doing that you are actually raising the risk of a broken condom
- make sure you are the one to put on the condom, not the customer. Assure yourself that the condom is on before starting having actual intercourse
- changing the condom is important, especially if you are switching from anal sex to vaginal sex
- if you want to work while you are on your period, use soft-tampons (in German it is called "Mensturationsschwämmchen").
  Doctors don't recommend working while you are having your menstruation because there is a higher risk of getting an infection

- if you are using sex toys make sure to sanitize them before using them again. Additionally use a condom.
- for protection while having oral sex you can use condoms or a dental dam made out of latex.

## How can you prevent getting pregnant?

A condom is not a 100% perfect protection from an unwanted pregnancy. To make sure, use additional protection (like the pill, an IUD or the shot). To get more information see your gynecologist or ask the doctors when getting your health check-up (see chapter 8).

In case the condom broke and you didn't use additional protection you can take "the morning after" pill. To effectively prevent a pregnancy you have to take the pill within 72 hours after the incident. You can get the "morning after" pill at the local pharmacy without prescription.

#### Mental health

Providers of sexual services often face stigmatization and discrimination. Those two factors and the work itself can be a burden. Therefor you can use the free services of the counselling centers. Talk about it in confidence and on request you may remain anonymous!

## 8. Regular health check-up

Before you are allowed to provide sexual services you have to have your first obligatory medical check-up. By doing so the authorities can guarantee that you don't have any STDs (sexually transmitted disease).

At least once every six weeks you have to get this check-up done (in German it is called "Kontrolluntersuchung").

The first check-up includes a pap smear and blood test. If the results show no infection you will get a photo identification card (medical check-up card, in German it is called "Gesundheitsbuch", "Karte" or "Deckel"), which is used as a confirmation of your health check-up. You need to carry it with you while you are working. In case of a control you need to show it to the officers.

A pap smear is done at every health check-up; the blood test has to be done at least once every twelve weeks.

You can get the obligatory check-up at the local health authorities. They are **for free**. If you get charged, you can get the money back. In this case, please turn to a counselling center.

Please note that these obligarory health check-ups are not the same as a medical check-up at your gynecologist. They don't include a cervical smear. If you want to have a gynecological or urological check-up, please consult specialists directly.

To make sure that you don't suffer from tuberculosis please visit your doctor once a year to get an X-ray of your lungs. In some federal states this check-up is obligatory.

## 9. Social insurance

If you are working in Austria you need to have **a valid insurance**. What kind of insurance you need, depends on your working conditions. Please contact a counselling center to get more information on that topic.

## A. Insurance in case of self-employment

If you are working **self-employed** you are responsible for getting insurance. In this case the **Social Insurance for Self Employed** ("Sozialversicherung der Selbständigen", SVS) is the right one for you.

**Please note!** After you started working you **have to report** that fact to the insurance company SVS within a month – regardless of the amount of your earnings.

## a. Earnings above the income limit

If your annual income out of self-employment is more than € 5.830,20 (state of affairs in 2022) you have to have insurance at the Social Insurance for Self Employed ("Sozialversicherung der Selbständigen", SVS) – regardless of any additional income you may have besides your income out of self-employement.

The social insurance includes **health insurance**, **accident insurance** and **pension insurance** and a private precaution for retirement.

You have full insurance coverage from day one of your selfemployed work.

If your annual income is below the income limit, you can quit your insurance. If you don't pay the fee, you'll be in debt.

## b. Earnings below the income limit

If your annual income out of your self-employment is less than € 5.830,20 (state of affairs 2022), you still have to report to the insurance company SVS that you have started working! But in this case you can choose whether you want to have insurance or not.

## c. The "Opting-In" insurance

If you have an income below the income limit, the Social Insurance for Self Employed (SVS) has a special, cheap insurance to offer. It is called "Opting-In" and you get full coverage as soon as the form for the "Opting-In"-Insurance has been submitted to the insurance company SVS.

The "Opting-In" includes **health insurance and accident insurance**, but no pension insurance. Currently the payment for the "Opting-In"-Insurance is about € 43,68 per month (state of affairs in 2022). The payment is due once every three months (€ 131,04). You can also arrange a monthly payment.

If you decide to quit insurance make sure to do it in written form. Otherwise additional costs will arise. If you want to take a longer break from work you don't have to quit insurance immediately, but you can write a letter to the insurance company so that your insurance is interrupted for that intended period of time.

## d. Cooperation of the tax office with the social insurance company

The income tax statement (in German it is called "Einkommenssteuererklärung"), which you hand in at the tax office at the end of the year, will also be sent to the insurance company SVS! With the statement of your income, the SVS will calculate your obligatory payment for the insurance and they will also compare it to the payments which you already made to them. If you forgot to get insurance at the SVS you have to pay them back (probably even for the years before) – plus penalty payment!

## B. Insurance through the operator of the brothel

If you provide services, which are according to an employment (for example working at a bar) and your working conditions are those of an employment (for example because you have been told at what time to work) the operator of the brothel is responsible for your insurance and your tax payment. The brothel operator is obliged to get you insurance at the local insurance company (in German it is called "Österreichische Gesundheitskasse", ÖGK) and to report your earnings to the tax office. But this applies only as long as you work in this specific brothel.

Make sure to get a **confirmation** from the operator about the insurance at the local insurance company (ÖGK). If the insurance procedure is completed, you will get an **E-Card** which you need to carry with you in order to get your health check-ups for free.

## 10. Taxes - Tax office

It depends on the working conditions whether you work employed or self-employed as a provider of sexual services. For further information please contact the counselling centers or the tax office in your area.

## A. Self-employment:

If you are working self-employed you are responsible for paying taxes. This means that you have to give your customers a receipt and send your income tax report and your insurance payment to the authorities. Additionally you have to keep your cash accounting in check and you need to take note of your revenues and expenditures (Einnahmen- und Ausgabenrechung).

**Please note:** Laws for this topic are very complex: Before taking up work please arrange yourself an appointment at a counselling center to get the exact information you need!

## a. Tax limits number I + II, which indicate that you have to pay taxes

Tax limit number I – in case you are only working self-employed: In this case you have to pay taxes in Austria if you have an annual income of € 11.000 and more (state of affairs in 2022).

#### Calculation of your taxable income:

#### Earnings from providing sexual services

- minus insurance payments to the Social Insurance for Self Employed (SVS)
- minus costs you had because of your work

#### = Earnings (Profit)

- minus special expenses (for example: donations, payments for a tax consultant)
- minus exceptional costs (for example: costs you had because of child care or because of an illness)
- minus a special reduction in case you have children (in German it is called "Kinderfreibetrag")

#### = Income

 Tax limit number II – in case you are working self-employed and employed: In this case you have to pay taxes if you have an annual income from working self-employed of more than € 730 (state of affairs 2022) and if your total annual income is higher than € 12.000 (state of affairs in 2022).

#### b. Tax number

Within one month you have to report to the tax office that you started working. Additionally you have to ask for your own tax number.

To complete these tasks you have to fill out the form "Verf. 24" which the tax office has to confirm with stamp – only then your application has been handed in correctly. Make sure to get yourself a copy of the stamped form. If there is a tax related inspection, show your copy.

Which tax office is responsible for you depends on your place of residence in Austria (check your residential registration form - "Meldezettel"). If your place of residence is not in Austria, the tax office is responsible where you work most of the time.

But even if you got a stamp on the form "Verf. 24", this doesn't mean that you get a tax number. Usually a tax number is given in cases where the annual income will be higher than the tax limit number I (if you only work self-employed) or the tax limit number II (in case of additional income).

#### c. Value added tax - VAT

If your annual turnover (=sum of your earnings from self-employment) does not exceed € 35.000, than you don't have to pay VAT. Please get some information on that topic **before** you get your tax number.

#### d. Income tax statement

Once a year you have to submit your income tax statement to the tax office. If you decide to submit a hardcopy form you will have a deadline until the 30th of April. If you submit it online, you will have time until the 30th of June.

If you don't provide an income tax statement or if the officials suspect that you made a false statement, the tax office has the possibility to estimate the amount of your income. The consequences can be a higher tax payment or even a criminal proceeding against you in tax matters!

If you need help in making your income tax statement you can turn to a tax consultant office. Ask for the costs of their service beforehand!

#### e. The duty of giving your customers a receipt

If you are working in a brothel or if you are paying home visits (see chapter 4) you have to give each customer a receipt, which is noting your **cash-income**. This duty comes without further consideration of the amount of income you have. Please make sure to keep a copy of that receipt as proof for the taxes authorities!

If you work in the street (see chapter 4) you don't have to give out receipts if your annual income is below a total of € 30.000.

## f. Cash register

If your **annual turnover is more than € 15.000** you have to use a cash register (in German it is called "Registrierkasse") to have proof of all your cash earnings – but only in case your cash earnings are more than € 7.500. With the cash register you have to register any fee you are charging (in cash) and additionally give your customer a receipt about it.

If you are working in the street (see chapter 4) you only have to use a cash register if your annual turnover is more than € 30.000.

## g. Required accounting records

Make sure to keep **cash account** on all your earnings! Keep a copy of every receipt you hand out to your customers for seven years!

Make sure to keep every bill in the original – if it was a **work-related payment** (for example: rent for your workplace, fees for the Austrian economic chamber, condoms, costs for driving, medical costs for the health check-up, payments for the insurance company SVS etc.). The operator of the brothel also has to give you a receipt for everything he charges you, in case you paid cash. Keep the bills for seven years!

If you can't or don't want to collect all your bills, you still have the possibility to declare some expenditure. In this case there is a 20% **flat rate** which you can take into account. Additionally you can include every payment to the insurance company. Both will minimize your own profit for which you will have to pay taxes.

## h. If the brothel operator claims to pay taxes for you

Please contact a counselling center in this case! There are important things to consider, so you don't have any disadvantages!

Please note: In any case, you need your own tax number

## B. Income tax through the brothel operator

If your working conditions correspond to a dependent employment (for example because you have been told at what time to work) the brothel operator is responsible for your icome tax. The brothel operator is obliged to forward your income tax (in German it is called "Lohnsteuer") to the tax office. But this applies only as long as you work in this specific brothel (see chapter 9).

# 11. What to do in case of a police inspection

If there is a police inspection you have several rights, but also some duties.

## Rights of the police

- the police is allowed to verify your identity. If you don't have the Austrian citizenship you have to carry an identification card with you or near you (for example: your passport) and show it to the police on request
- always carry your personal medical check-up card ("Karte" or "Deckel") with you when you are working. If you are working in Vienna make sure to have the confirmation of the registration at the police station with you as well
- the police is also allowed to verify your residence registration ("Meldezettel")

## Your rights

- if you get the feeling that you are treated unfairly, ask for the duty number of the police officer
- do not sign any document you don't understand or you don't feel is right!
- if there are language barriers, ask if you can get a translation;
  if you are under examination as a victim or as a suspected person you have the right to get an interpreter
- if you receive a penalty you have the right to raise an objection within 14 days. Then the accuracy of the penalty notice will be checked again

## 12. Important Addresses

## A. Counselling for persons who offer sexual services

## **Burgenland**

#### **SOPHIE** - Counselling center for female sexworkers

Oelweingasse 6-8, 1150 Wien

Tel.: 01 / 897 55 36

E-Mail: sophie@volkshilfe-wien.at

www.sophie.or.at

Instagram: @sophie.beratungszentrum

Twitter: @SophieBeratung1

#### Carinthia

#### Aids Hilfe Kärnten - Counselling center for sexworkers

Tel.: o660 / 53 54 282 E-Mail: sexworkinfo@hiv.at http://hiv.at/sexworkinfo/

#### **Lower Austria**

## **SOPHIE** - Counselling center for female sexworkers

Oelweingasse 6-8, 1150 Wien

Tel.: 01 / 897 55 36

E-Mail: sophie@volkshilfe-wien.at

www.sophie.or.at

## **Upper Austria**

## **LENA** - Counselling center for people, who provide or have provided sexual services

Steingasse 25, 4020 Linz Tel.: 0732 / 77 55 08-0

E-Mail: lena@caritas-ooe.at

www.lena.or.at

## **MAIZ** - autonomous center from female migrants for female migrants

Scharitzerstraße 6-8/1. Stock, 4020 Linz

Tel.: 0732 / 77 60 70 E-Mail: sexwork@maiz.at https://cupiditas.maiz.at Instagram: @maiz sexwork

#### Salzburg

## PiA - Information and counselling for female sexworkers

Sterneckstraße 31, 3. Stock (Business-Boulevard), 5020 Salzburg

Tel: 0664 / 254 44 45

E-Mail: c.nagl@frau-und-arbeit.at

https://www.frau-und-arbeit.at/index.php/beratung/streetwork-pia

## Styria

## **SXA** - Information & counselling for female sexworkers and multipliers in Styria

Lendplatz 38, 8020 Graz Tel.: 0316 / 71 60 22

E-Mail: office@frauenservice.at

https://www.frauenservice.at/beratung/sxa

## **Tyrol**

#### iBUS - counselling and support for sexworkers in Innsbruck

Schöpfstraße 19, 6020 Innsbruck

Tel.: o66o / 475 73 45 E-Mail: ibus@aep.at https://www.aep-ibus.at/ Instagram: @ibus.aep

## Vorarlberg

Here are no counselling centers available. Please turn to a counselling center in any other federal state.

#### Vienna

## **LEFÖ/TAMPEP** - Information, counselling and prevention of health issues for female migrants who work as a sexworker

Kettenbrückengasse 15/4, 1050 Wien Tel.: 01 / 581 18 81 oder 0699 / 122 33 102

E-Mail: tampep@lefoe.at

www.lefoe.at

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/lefoe1985/

## **SOPHIE** - Counselling center for female sexworkers

Oelweingasse 6-8, 1150 Wien

Tel.: 01 / 897 55 36

E-Mail: sophie@volkshilfe-wien.at

www.sophie.or.at

## **Counselling center for sexual health** - counselling and assistance for people who work in prostitution

Thomas-Klestil-Platz 8/1, 1030 Wien

Tel.: 01 / 4000 877 44

E-Mail: sozialberatung-prostitution@ma15.wien.gv.at www.wien.gv.at/gesundheit/einrichtungen/sexuelle-gesundheit/sozialberatung-prostitution.html

#### B. Other addresses in Vienna

### Registration office of the police in Vienna

Landespolizeidirektion Wien Deutschmeisterplatz 3, 1010 Wien

Tel.: 01 / 313 10 211 80

## **Center for sexual health** - performance of the obligatory health check-ups

Thomas-Klestil-Platz 8/1

Eingang Schnirchgasse 14, stairway 1, 1030 Wien

Tel.: 01 / 4000 -877 68 oder -877 69

www.wien.gv.at/gesundheit/einrichtungen/sexuelle-gesundheit/index html

# Medical department of the authority concerning sexual health and prostitution - execution of the check-up-card and confirmation of the check-up

Thomas-Klestil-Platz 8/1, 2nd floor, 1030 Wien

Tel.: 01 / 4000 -877 65

E-Mail: gesundheit@ma15.wien.gv.at

www.wien.gv.at/gesundheit/einrichtungen/sexuelle-gesundheit/index.html

## C. Social Insurance for Self Employed (SVS)

#### **Contact in Austria**

Tel.: 050 808 808

https://www.svs.at/cdscontent/?contentid=10007.846416&portal=

svsportal

#### D. Tax offices

#### Addresses of the tax offices can be found

https://service.bmf.gv.at/service/anwend/behoerden/

## **Emergency numbers**

**Women's help line** - nationwide available in case you are victim of violence: crisis intervention and re-assignment to counselling centers in Austria, 24 hours, anonymous, for free

Tel.: 0800 / 222 555 www.frauenhelpline.at

Women's emergency number Vienna - nationwide available in case you are victim of violence: crisis intervention and counselling in Vienna, 24 hours, anonymous, for free

Tel.: 01 / 71 71 9

www.wien.gv.at/menschen/frauen/beratung/frauennotruf/

**LEFÖ/IBF** - Center for intervention in case you are a victim of women's' trafficking

Help and emergency housing for victims of women's trafficking

Tel.: 01 / 796 92 98 E-Mail: ibf@lefoe.at www.lefoe.at

24hours - Helpline in case of human trafficking (police)

Tel.: +43 677 613 434 34

E-Mail: menschenhandel@bmi.gv.at or/and

humantrafficking@bmi.gv.at

Police 133 Ambulance 144 Fire brigade 122

