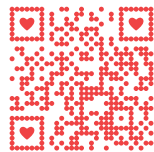


What are sex workers actually asking for?

- **Full decriminalisation of sex work, with protection from discrimination and vilification and sustainable funding** for sex worker peer education and community development.
- **Meaningful inclusion of sex workers in debates** on pornography, consent, sexual violence and online safety. Sex worker voices and expertise should also be included in comprehensive relationship and sexuality education.
- **Feminist, SRHR and anti-violence organisations to reject anti-rights narratives**, publicly support sex workers' rights, and ensure our voices and leadership are included in campaigns and policy processes.
- **Digital, education and online safety policies that protect children without censoring sex workers**, queer people or SRHR information.
- **International and national human-rights mechanisms to centre sex worker-led evidence**, and to resist attempts by anti-rights actors to promote criminalisation and censorship.

LEARN MORE ABOUT ANTI-RIGHTS

This guide provides insights into anti-rights movements, how they operate, and practical strategies to counter their impact.



NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US.

Sex workers want **rights now**.



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Sex workers want **rights now**.

What are anti-rights narratives?

Anti-rights movements aim to roll back human rights, including sex workers', LGBTQI+ and sexual and reproductive health rights. They claim to protect women and children while pushing stigma, criminalisation and surveillance.

Anti-rights narratives about sex work describe sex work as inherently harmful, immoral or criminal. They deny our agency and promote criminal laws, censorship and “rescue” approaches that undermine our safety and rights. These narratives appear in porn, sexual violence and consent debates. Sex work and porn are blamed for violence, ignoring power, criminalisation and poor relationships and sexuality education.

Anti-rights actors hijack conversations on porn, violence and consent

Framing their work as “protecting children”, “ending violence against women” and promoting “healthy masculinity”, anti-rights actors push anti-sex worker policies under the guise of rights and safety. Research shows anti-rights networks deliberately co-opt feminist and human-rights language to gain access to United Nations (UN) spaces, governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and then use that influence to weaken gender justice and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) commitments from the inside. Tactics include:

- Presenting criminalisation and “end demand” laws as feminist responses to violence against women, ignoring evidence they increase harm.
- Framing censorship of porn, online content and sexual education materials as “child protection.”
- Misusing human rights frameworks to argue that states are “obliged” to suppress all sex work, while sidelining sex worker-led evidence and human rights standards that support decriminalisation.

In Australia, Collective Shout and Women's Forum Australia campaign against porn and sex work, and are embeded in conservative religious networks. Consent ambassadors Daniel Principe and Chanel Contos talk about “the harms of porn” and frequently collaborate with or promote anti-rights actors. Academic work by figures like Michael Flood, who promotes the “end demand” model and states that sex work is “incompatible with gender equality”, is widely used to frame porn as a driver of sexual violence. These actors do not engage with sex workers as rights-holders, portraying us as both a threat and victims, erasing our expertise and leadership in consent, health and violence prevention.

The real, harmful impacts of anti-rights narratives about sex work and porn.



Research from sex worker-led organisations and public health bodies shows that criminalisation, licensing and repressive policing increase violence and sexually transmissible infection (STI) and HIV risk, while decriminalisation and peer-led programs improve safety, health and access to justice.

On the map: local and global anti-rights narratives



Anti-rights campaigns target online sexual expression via “online safety” rhetoric, leading to the censorship of sex workers, sexual and reproductive health, harm reduction and LGBTQI+ content.

Tightly connected networks lobby for stricter online controls while presenting as non-partisan or “pro-child” and “pro-women”. At the same time, they promote “end demand” models and argue that sex work is among the “most serious threats” to women's equality, rejecting sex work as work and calling for punitive approaches. These positions feed directly into anti-sex worker

policies and make it harder for sex workers to be seen as partners in ending gender-based violence.

Globally, anti-rights networks—including abolitionists, some anti-trafficking groups and religious conservatives—oppose SRHR, LGBTQI+ and sex workers' rights, sharing funding, tactics and “women's rights” framing. UN Special Rapporteur Reem Alsalem calls sex work a “system of violence”, promoting “end demand models” despite evidence of harm. Her 2024 report sidelined sex worker input and misrepresented human rights frameworks. These attacks on rights and anti-gender mobilisation undermines democracy and civic space.