

Implementing the Prohibition of Prostitution Consumption Law Evaluation Study Report

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Abstract

Introduction

The 2019 Prohibition of Prostitution Consumption (hereafter, the law) was published in January 2019 and came into effect in July 2020 as a five-year temporary order. Prostitution is defined as sex services that include physical contact. The objective of the law is to “bring about the reduction of prostitution by prohibiting the consumption of prostitution, as part of a combined strategy that includes education and a public information campaign, as well as the expansion of treatment and rehabilitation options for individuals in prostitution”. In January 2019, the government adopted Resolution 4462: “Implementation of the Recommendations of the Inter-ministerial Team for Reducing Prostitution Consumption”, which provides budgets to help individuals in prostitution as well as programs for consumers of prostitution.

The Study that Accompanied the Implementation of the Law

The Prostitution Consumption Prohibition Law specified that a study would be conducted to examine its implementation and impact. The study, which began in November 2020 and ended in May 2024, was conducted under the responsibility of the Research Division at the Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs (hereafter, Ministry of Welfare), with the support of the Chief Scientist's Office at the Ministry of National Security. The study was conducted by the [Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute](#). The study examined the implementation and impact of the law in four areas: police enforcement; individuals in prostitution and the services offered to them; prostitution consumers; education and information for the public and public opinion.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were to examine the impact of the law and Government Resolution on the extent of prostitution in Israel, on its consumption, and on individuals in prostitution.¹

¹ This impact cannot be isolated from the effects of other processes that took place in Israel at the same time, including COVID-19 and the Israel-Hamas war. Moreover, the three-year duration of this study is insufficient for examining the Law's long-term impact on the extent of prostitution. Therefore, the researchers are cautious with regard to conclusions regarding the Law's direct or indirect effects.

Methodology

Surveys

- Public attitudes surveys (2021, 2024).
- Prostitution consumption survey among Israeli men (2021, 2024).
- Survey of professionals in services for individuals in prostitution (2021, 2024).
- Survey of participants in the alternative program workshops, before and after participation.

Administrative Data Analysis

- Fines issued by the Israel Police in 2021-2023 and data on the individuals fined.
- Data on participants in the Alternative Program.
- Data on service users in programs provided by the Ministry of Welfare (2020-2023) and the Ministry of Health (2019-2022).
- Analysis of Google search terms related to prostitution used in 2013-2024 from the Google Trends website in order to examine trends in the demand for prostitution.
- Semi-structured in-depth interviews with 34 individuals in prostitution, 64 professionals in related services, 30 police officers, and five prostitution consumers.
- Mapping services for individuals in prostitution.
- Analyzing documents related to the law and its implementation.

Findings

Law Enforcement

No budget was dedicated to the law's enforcement, and it is funded using existing resources and based on the police's capability and priorities. Enforcement was approved in December 2020, and began in practice in the second half of 2021, when policymakers promoted the issue with the senior professional staff in the police. From the start of enforcement until the end of 2023, 5,091 fines were issued.

Over the years, enforcement levels fluctuated, with a downwards trend, and in 2023 enforcement was minimal. Most of the enforcement activities were conducted in central Israel, and 97% of the fines were issued by only three police stations (in south Tel Aviv, Rishon LeZion and Kiryat Haim), so that in most areas there was

no enforcement to speak of. According to police definitions of prostitution venues, most fines were issued in brothels. Most (89%) of the fines were issued for the offense specified by the law of 'being in a place used for prostitution in order to consume prostitution', and the rest for actual consumption. About half the fines were not paid on time.

All police officers interviewed expressed the view that the law would not eliminate prostitution, but most agreed with its rationale, emphasized the importance of enforcing it, and argued that the law's enforcement and their very presence at prostitution sites helped reduce prostitution consumption there. The police officers explained that the law was part of the overall effort to reduce prostitution, together with the enforcement of related offenses and the closing of brothels. They mentioned several difficulties in enforcement, including the lack of personnel and dedicated resources, and the difficulty of establishing an evidentiary basis in discreet sites, as well as locating and reaching these sites. Individuals in prostitution who referred to police enforcement of the law said that their relations with the police were still complex, but some noted early signs of improvement.

The Law's Influence on Individuals in Prostitution and the Services for Them

The law has had a certain impact on the lives of many individuals in prostitution. Some experienced a loss of income, others benefitted from new options for change and for leaving prostitution, partly due to new and expanded services. Moreover, some of the individuals in prostitution reported that the law enhanced their feeling of being protected.

In a survey conducted in 2023 among professionals in services for individuals in prostitution, 72% supported the law, whereas 26% believed it would have a negative effect on their clients. Only 13% believed the law would reduce prostitution.

Individuals in prostitution have a wide range of needs, some of which serve as barriers for leaving prostitution, such as the need for a steady income and housing, emotional difficulties and difficulty in accessing benefits. The services for individuals in prostitution have expanded following Government Resolution 4462, mainly those provided by the Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of Health, but also by the Ministry of Justice, and unique interventions have been developed and adjusted to the needs of this population. At the same time, the number of service users has grown. Interdepartmental and interorganizational collaborations have also expanded. Nevertheless, there is still a shortage of services, and some populations are inadequately served by those available. Among other things, additional services are required for men in prostitution, the services need to be deployed more widely across the country, and financial, housing, and employment supports need to be expanded,

particularly for transgender individuals. Finally, there are barriers to providing the available services, including administrative hurdles and a shortage of professionals specializing in unique populations.

Prostitution Consumers

The 2024 survey found that Jewish men aged 18-70 reported higher rates of consuming prostitution services compared to 2021. The increase was evident both in five-year rates (12.2% vs 9.2%) and in single-year measurements (9.0% vs 7.1%, comparing the year before the Israel-Hamas war to the year before COVID-19). We analyzed data from Google Trends to examine the trends in the demand for prostitution, continuously and in the longer term. It was found that following the passing of the law in the Knesset in late 2018, there was a decrease in the relative search volume for terms related to prostitution. It was also found that subsequent fluctuations in the extent of searches were related to changes in the number of fines issued by the police, and that from the middle of 2022 onwards, searches increased, consistent with the decrease in enforcement. Nevertheless, in general, the extent of searches from July 2022 until the end of data collection in April 2024 remained lower than the pre-legislation.

Prostitution consumption surveys indicate that the consumers belong to all social groups and are diverse in terms of education and geographical area. About 40% of consumers are “active”, i.e., have consumed prostitution more than once in the year before the survey. The most common site for prostitution consumption is “discreet apartments” (small brothels located in private apartments used by one or several people in prostitution). The most common reason is that it’s “the easiest way to have sex”. About one fourth replied that they were not interested in stopping. About a quarter of consumers reported that they had not heard about the law, and another 40% reported being aware of it but not influenced by it. Nevertheless, about 20% of consumers reported that following the enactment of the law, they stopped consuming prostitution or reduced their consumption.

Prostitution consumers who are fined may avoid paying the fine by attending the alternative program provided by the Adult Probation Service, which includes a psychoeducational workshop. In 2021-2023, only 109 individuals participated in the program, of which 79 (86%) completed it successfully. The program includes three group meetings and two individual sessions with a probation officer. According to a survey conducted among the participants, the workshop had some influence on their attitudes to prostitution, individuals in prostitution, and the consumption of prostitution. In addition, sex addicts, who are a subpopulation of prostitution consumers require a long-term therapeutic intervention currently provided in two centers funded by the Ministry of Health.

Public Education and Opinion

The law emphasizes the importance of public information campaigns in changing societal attitudes to prostitution.

Several ministries are active in this area: the Ministry of Justice has held digital campaigns to raise awareness of the law; the Ministry of Health holds workshops for youth and professionals on healthy sexuality and risks; the Ministry of Welfare provides the Turning Point project for youth at risk, focused on education for sexuality and preventing entrance into prostitution; the Ministry of Education has developed programs for students and staff on healthy sexuality and identifying risk situations. In addition, third-sector organizations are involved in related information and lobbying campaigns, workshops, educational programs, and training for professionals. In public opinion surveys conducted in 2021 and 2024, we found that 61% of respondents are aware of the law, with the rate of those familiar with the law being lowest among young adults and the Arab population. Most participants in this study suggested that current public information activities are insufficient and ineffective.

About 70% of the respondents in the public opinion surveys conducted in 2021 and 2024 supported the law – a significant increase compared to 2008 (26%) and 2016 (39%). ²A comparison of the 2021 and 2024 surveys conducted in the period under study indicates no significant changes in attitudes towards the law or prostitution in general. Despite broad support for the law, the public is skeptical regarding its effectiveness. Thus, about 20% believe the law will reduce the number of prostitution consumers, whereas only 5% expect the law to reduce the scale of prostitution in Israel. Nevertheless, more than 80% viewed prostitution as offensive to human dignity and men's attitudes toward women. Gender gaps are evident in public attitudes: women tend to support the law more strongly, to view prostitution as offensive, and to believe that women in prostitution want to leave it and need help to do so. Interviews with both individuals in prostitution and professionals point to the importance of public education in changing attitudes.

Main Recommendations

Social change is a gradual and long-term process. Legislation is not enough to reduce prostitution consumption, change behavioral norms and enable individuals to leave prostitution if they want to. Enforcement, public education, prevention and treatment are also essential. The following are some of the study's recommendations on these interrelated areas:

- **Enforcement:** We recommend expanding and intensifying enforcement, removing the existing barriers to enforcement, and adding training for police officers.
- **Consumers:** We recommend directing public education efforts at potential consumers, encouraging persons fined to participate in the alternative program, and intensify efforts to identify sex and prostitution addicts.

² See the [National Survey](#) (Santo & Carmeli, 2016), and [Shilo et al. \(2020\)](#).

- **Services:** We recommend continuing to expand and adjust the services designed to help individuals leave prostitution, particularly in the areas of financial, employment and housing support; to include individuals in prostitution in planning interventions; to continue promoting interservice collaborations; to reach out to new service users; and to develop and retain experience-based professional knowledge.
- **Public education:** We recommend directing informational efforts at the entire Israeli public, as well as creating dedicated campaigns for specific audiences. We also recommend conducting additional studies to examine the long-term effects of the law.

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Law Prohibiting Consumption of Prostitution and Government Resolution 4462

The 2019 Law Prohibiting Consumption of Prostitution (hereafter, the Law) was passed in January 2019 and came into effect in July 2020 as a five-year temporary order. Prostitution is defined as sex services that include physical contact. The objective of the law is to “bring about the reduction of prostitution by prohibiting the consumption of prostitution, as part of a combined effort that includes education and a public information campaign, as well as the expansion of treatment and rehabilitation options for individuals in prostitution, in recognition of the offensive characteristics of prostitution and the damages it entails”. The prohibition of the consumption of prostitution rather than prohibition of providing it – the Nordic model – is based on the view that individuals in prostitution are the victimized party and should be helped in leaving prostitution. This approach includes expanding support and treatment services for individuals in prostitution, while reducing demand by punishing consumers and conducting public education campaigns to effect a change in societal norms.

The law specifies two criminal prohibitions: (1) Prohibition of the consumption of prostitution; (2) Prohibition of being present in a place used, whether fully or partly, for acts of prostitution, with the intent of consuming prostitution.¹ The punishment for these offenses is a fine, as specified in Article 61(a)(3) of the Penal law. In addition, the law specifies that this offense is administrative, as defined in the 1985 Administrative Offenses Law, carrying a fixed administrative fine of NIS (New Israeli Shekels) 2,000 (~\$550). In case of a repeat violation, the fine is doubled to NIS 4,000. According to Article 15 of the Administrative Offenses Law, and under circumstances specified in the Attorney General's guidelines, a criminal investigation and indictment may be considered. The person fined has the option of replacing the fine with participation in the “alternative program” – a psychoeducational program designed to promote understanding of the damages of prostitution and prevent recidivism.

¹ For the second prohibition, the law has specified a rebuttable presumption, according to which a person found in a venue the main use of which is for acts of prostitution will be considered as intending to consume prostitution. This presumption means that it is enough for the police to provide evidence to the effect that a venue's main purpose is acts of prostitution (or a “prostitution site”, as referred to by the police) for the burden of evidence to shift to the defendant, who would have to prove that they were not in the venue in order to consume prostitution.

The law is the outcome of the work of an interministerial team formed in 2016 to examine ways of reducing the consumption of prostitution in Israel. Led by the Ministry of Justice, the team including representatives of the Israel Police, Ministry of National Security, Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs (hereafter: Ministry of Welfare), and the Ministries of Health, Education, Finance, and Social Equality. The team's recommendations were submitted in December 2017 and included the creation of an inter-ministerial program to develop and expand interventions and rehabilitation services for adult and minor women, men, transgender men, and transgender women in prostitution (hereafter, individuals in prostitution).

In January 2019, the government passed [Resolution 4462](#): "Implementation of the recommendations of the inter-ministerial team for reducing prostitution consumption" (hereafter, the Resolution). The government provided 30 million NIS per annum to implement the Resolution (approximately 8 million USD).

Since November 2021, the Head of the Unit for Coordination of the Fight against Human Trafficking at the Ministry of Justice (hereafter, Government Coordinator) has led an interministerial team that acts to implement the Resolution (hereafter, Interministerial Team). This team oversees the implementation of the Resolution and budget utilization, coordinates the activities of the various ministries, and promotes partnership with civil society organizations.

2. The Evaluation Study

2.1 Objective

The law specifies that a study must be conducted to examine its implementation and effectiveness. Its [explanatory preamble](#) states that this is one of the reasons for defining the law as a five-year temporary order. According to the Resolution, the study is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Welfare's Research Division, with the support of the Chief Scientist's Office at the Ministry of National Security. The study was carried out by the [Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute](#) (hereafter, Brookdale Institute), and was led by a steering committee with representatives from all of the ministries on the inter-ministerial team.²

The study examined the law's implementation and effectiveness in four areas:

1. **Enforcement:** Preparations and training for enforcing the law; enforcement activities undertaken and fines issued; difficulties the police face in enforcing the law.
2. **Individuals in prostitution and services provided to them:** The law's impact on individuals in prostitution; changes in services provided; and challenges and barriers in service provision.
3. **Prostitution consumers:** The law's impact on the extent and patterns of consuming prostitution; participation in the alternative program instead of paying the fine and the impact of the workshop provided; and treatment of addition to sex and prostitution.
4. **Public education and attitudes:** Campaigns to educate the public about the law and prostitution; changes in public attitudes to the law and to prostitution.

² The Steering Committee was chaired by the director of Ministry of Welfare's Research Division. Other members were representatives of the Ministry of National Security – Chief Scientist's Office, Legal Counselling; of the Ministry of Justice – Unit for Coordination of the Fight against Human Trafficking at the Social Division, Department of Counselling and Legislation (Criminal Justice), State Attorney's Office; of the Ministry of Welfare – Rehabilitation, Support and Prevention Administration, Out-of-Home and Community Divisions, Senior Division of Adult Probation Service, Welfare Employment Division; of the Israel Police – Human Trafficking Unit; of the Ministry of Health – Public Health Services; and of the Ministry of Education – Counseling Services Division. Additional representatives were occasionally invited as required.

2.2 Method

The study began in November 2020 and ended in May 2024. Its data sources are as follows.

2.2.1 Surveys

Public Opinion Survey

This survey included questions about attitudes to various aspects of prostitution, familiarity with the law and opinions on the law. The survey was conducted online through the iPanel research platform that administers surveys among registered members who respond for nominal payment. The survey was administered in Hebrew and Arabic.

The first measurement was conducted in November 2021, among a representative sample of 803 19-70-year-olds (405 women and 398 men; 641 Jews and 162 Arabs).

The second measurement was conducted in April 2024, among a representative sample of 804 18-70-year-olds (414 women and 390 men; 618 Jews and 186 Arabs).

The overlap between the respondents in the two measurements was minimal: 39 (5%).

Representativeness: Both samples were representative of the Israeli population in terms of age, gender, population group) and area of residence.

The questionnaire included questions written especially for this survey, as well as questions and scales from previous surveys on public attitudes on various aspects of prostitution, including the Ministry of Welfare's National Survey (Sento & Friedman, 2015), and the Public Behaviors and Attitudes Survey (Shilo et al., 2020).

The data collected in the two measurements were compared using appropriate significance tests (e.g., t and χ^2 tests, and Pearson and Spearman correlations).

Survey of Prostitution Consumption by Israeli Men

This survey was administered in two stages. First, respondents were asked whether they had consumed prostitution during the five years preceding the survey. Those who answered affirmatively were directed to an in-depth questionnaire about their prostitution consumption such as frequency, location, motivation, willingness to stop and the law's effect on consumption habits (hereafter, Consumption Patterns Questionnaire). The survey was conducted through iPanel, in both Hebrew and Arabic.

The first measurement was conducted in September-October 2021, about a year after the law became effective. The sample included 5,757 18-70-year-old men – 5,437 Jews and 320 Arabs. The Jewish sample met the representativeness requirement in terms of area of residence and three age categories: 18-24-year-olds, 25-34-year-olds, and 35+-year-olds. A total of 506 men reported having consumed prostitution and completed the Consumption Patterns Questionnaire. The data reported by the Jewish respondents of this questionnaire will be presented in Chapter 5. The respective data reported by Arab respondents will not be presented due to the small number of questionnaires.

The second measurement was conducted in March-April 2024. This questionnaire was administered to all participants in the first measurement, apart from Jews living in communities bordering on the Gaza Strip (due to the war) and participants who were over 70 at the time of the second measurement. Overall, 2,444 of the 5,757 participants in the first measurement participated in the second as well (42% response rate) – 2,364 out of 5,437 Jews (43%) and 80 out of 320 Arabs (25%). The second sample was complemented by 439 additional respondents (347 Jews and 92 Arabs) who had not participated in the first measurement. The small number of Arabs who completed the Consumption Patterns Questionnaires prevented data analysis and these data are not presented.

Additional data on sample size and representativeness as well as respondent characteristics are presented in Appendices A-1 and A-2.

Survey of Professionals in Services for Individuals in Prostitution³

This survey was designed to learn about the services for individuals in prostitution and their development over the course of implementing the Resolution. The online survey was distributed through service directors to their entire staff. The professionals were not obliged to participate, but their directors were asked to encourage them to do so.

The first measurement was conducted in May-June 2021 (117 respondents). The response rate is unknown due to lack of precise information about the number of service employees who received the survey.

The second measurement was conducted in July-August 2023 (221 respondents; 81% response rate). This measurement also included lawyers and professionals from organizations that provided services independently and were not contracted by the government, such as Argaman – the Israel Sex Workers Alliance and Trans Israel.

³ The term “professionals” refers to all roles in services for individuals in prostitution, even without professional certification, as in the case of instructors and house mothers).

The two measurements were compared to identify changes in service provision. The significance of the differences was assessed using t and χ^2 tests.

Before and After Questionnaires for Participants in the Alternative Program

These questionnaires were designed to learn about the enforcement of the law and the alternative program from the points of view of workshop participants, as well as to examine the impact of the workshop on them. Participants were also asked about their experience with the police when they were fined. Questionnaires were administered to the participants of the workshop's fourteen classes of three sessions each, from March 2022 to October 2023.

The first questionnaire was administered to participants before the assessment meeting with the probation officer, or during the first workshop session ($N = 70$). The second was administered at the end of the third and last session of the workshop - ($N = 71$). Study participation was voluntary; the response rate was 89%-90%. The questionnaire forms were collected in sealed envelopes to maintain confidentiality. Since some of the questionnaire forms were received without a file number, it was impossible to compare the participants' responses in the two measurements using dependent sample tests, as planned. Therefore, the responses to the two questionnaires were compared using independent sample tests (t and Mann-Whitney). Open ended questions were thematically coded using the ATLAS.ti software.

2.2.2 Administrative Data Analysis⁴

Fines and fine recipients: Data was provided on 5,091 fines in 2021-2023. Data on individual fine recipients from 2021-22 were obtained from the police in encrypted form, preventing identification.

Alternative Program participants: The Adult Probation Service provided data on fine recipients who requested substituting the fine with the alternative program (109 individuals). 92 of them were accepted to the program and 79 of them completed the workshop.

⁴ Administrative data was provided by government ministries for the purpose of this study subject to the required approvals and according to the ministries' data sharing policies. The administrative data used in this study refer to enforcement activities, fine recipients, alternative program participants, and health and welfare service users.

Users of the services supervised by the Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of Health: Once a year, both the Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of Health provided data on all service users (see Table 1). These included age, gender, marital status, number of children, place of residence, duration in prostitution, health status, psychiatric background, substance abuse, and type of treatment provided.

Table 1: No. of service users for whom Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of Health administrative data were obtained

Year	Ministry of Welfare	Ministry of Health
2019	-	201
2020	1,334	242
2021	2,493	352
2022	2,533	547
2023	2,782	-

Some of the service users are registered in more than one service, so that the total number of records is higher than the total number of service users. The Ministry of Welfare's data were reported individually, whereas the Ministry of Health's data were reported in aggregate, for each service and for the different categories, preventing us from presenting a detailed picture of all Ministry of Health service users.

All survey and administrative data were completely anonymized.

2.2.3 Google Search Data Analysis

Data were extracted from the Google Trends website using the Hebrew equivalents of three search terms selected after consulting with experts, prostitution consumers, and individuals in prostitution: "prostitutes", "escorts", and "discreet apartments". Data were extracted for every month from January 2013 to April 2024. The data were obtained after normalization with reference to all Google searches during that month, followed by conversion to a 0-100 scale, and they represent the relative extent of searches at a particular time in relation to the period examined. To compare the extent of search in different periods, linear regression, and Pearson correlations were used to examine the relation between the extent of search and the number of fines imposed by the police three months earlier (see Section 5.2 for further detail).

2.2.4 Semi-Structured In-Depth Interviews

Interviews with Individuals in prostitution

Between January 2021 and July 2023, we held in-depth interviews with 34 individuals who were currently in prostitution or had been previously. The participants interviewed included 27 women, five transgender women, and two men. Twenty-six were Jews and eight were Arabs.

The interviewees were recruited through the welfare and health services and aid organizations, through a notice posted on social media, and through the participants (snowball sampling). The participants were paid NIS 150 (~\$40). The interviews were conducted face-to-face, apart from a few interviews conducted via Zoom or by phone – at a time and place convenient for the participant. The participants' confidentiality was strictly protected, and care was taken to ensure informed consent. The interviews dealt mainly with the impact of the law as perceived by the participants, with their experience with the police and service system, and with the types of assistance they or others in prostitution needed. The participants were not asked about the reasons that led them to prostitution or about their experiences in prostitution, but some of them chose to talk about these topics.

Interviews with Professionals

From January 2021 to February 2024, 66 interviews were held with 60 professionals employed in government services and aid and advocacy organizations. (Six professionals were interviewed twice). In addition, a group interview was held with directors of the Ministry of Welfare's therapeutic services for adolescents and young adults in prostitution.

Professionals in the following organizations were interviewed:

- Departments dealing with prostitution in the Ministries of Welfare, Health, Labor, Education, Justice, and in the National Insurance Institute (NII)
- Welfare and health services, including those provided by municipalities and NGOs
- Advocacy organizations
- Civil society organizations combatting prostitution

Interviews with Police Officers

Thirty police officers were interviewed, including a regional police chief, four station chiefs, three intelligence officers, seven patrol officers, three commanders and a deputy commander from staff units, and members of patrol and urban patrol units.⁵ These interviews included:

- Fourteen individual interviews with officers in headquarters and regional units and with commanders and police officers in police stations.
- Two group interviews in police stations – eight officers in each group.

Interviews with Prostitution Consumers

Five male consumers were interviewed, including three who were fined and chose to participate in the alternative program, and two who had not been fined. The interviews were held over the phone or via Zoom.

2.2.5 Mapping Services for Individuals in Prostitution

In 2021 and 2023, we mapped all services (facilities, interventions and programs) for individuals in prostitution provided by the Ministries of Welfare, Health, and Justice and the NII. The information was provided by the officials responsible for prostitution and the professionals dealing with prostitution in the relevant ministries, as well as by service directors. The information included service characteristics and geographical distribution, capacity, target populations, as well as information about the opening of new services or the expansion of existing ones. In 2021, 42 services were mapped, and 50 services were mapped in 2023 (see Section 4.4 for further details).

2.2.6 Document Analysis

We analyzed documents, protocols and position papers related to the law and its implementation, from the years 2020-2023.

2.3 Consultation for the Study

The study was accompanied by several advisors:

1. Academic and professional advisors – Prof. Giora Rahav, Dr. Ye'ela Lahav-Raz, and Inbal Faran-Perah
2. Statistical consulting – Dr. Dimitri Romanov
3. Experts by experience - two women, one currently and one previously in prostitution. Each represented a different approach to the law: one supported it and the other opposed it.

⁵ No further details are provided in order to protect the interviewees' anonymity.

2.4 Ethics

The study, and each of the research instruments, were approved by the Ethics Committee of the Brookdale Institute, which addressed issues related to privacy protection and information security. Prior to being interviewed and completing the questionnaires, the participants signed an informed consent form or expressed their consent vocally. To protect their privacy, identifying details were removed from administrative files, and all questionnaire forms were submitted without identifying details or with coded identifiers if necessary. The interview recordings and transcripts were saved on the Brookdale Institute's secure server. Pseudonyms are used in quotes appearing in this report, and some personal details have been modified to protect the participants' privacy.

2.5 Limitations

1. Prostitution is a hidden phenomenon that defies direct measurement. ⁶Changes in the extent of prostitution consumption were examined using an online self-report questionnaire, which is subject to social desirability bias. Moreover, the sample of participants in online surveys for pay could be biased.
2. The study was too short to examine the long-term influence of the law on the extent of prostitution, especially since changes in this area depend on changes in societal norms.
3. COVID-19, the terrorist attack of October 7, 2023, and the ensuing Israel-Hamas War – all of which took place while the study was conducted – affected prostitution consumption and individuals in prostitution, and it was not always possible to isolate the impact of these events from that of the law and its implementation.
4. The point of view of individuals in prostitution is based on in-depth interviews conducted with 34 individuals who do not represent the entire population.
5. It is impossible to infer from the administrative data on individuals in prostitution to the entire population of individuals in prostitution since the former represent only service users. Moreover, it is impossible to infer from the data on fined prostitution consumers to the entire population of consumers because the former represent only consumers fined in enforcement sites.
6. While the research team depended on administrative data of government ministries, in some cases the data sought were not provided, or were only partially provided.

⁶ Due to methodological and budgetary reasons, the Steering Committee decided not to repeat the quantitative survey conducted among individuals in prostitution in the National Survey of Prostitution in Israel ([Sento & Carmeli, 2016](#)), and find other ways to assess the extent of the phenomenon.

7. The attitudes of police officers presented in the study are based on interviews with 30 police officers, mainly from the stations and areas that have been enforcing the law in practice and have relevant experience. Therefore, while diverse, the attitudes reported here are not representative of all police officers in the Israel Police.
8. The findings based on Google searches have several limitations. First, the extent of Google searches is an indirect indicator of the demand for and the consumption of prostitution. This approach assumes that using search terms related to prostitution expresses an interest in its consumption (see explanation in [Levi-Zohar et al., 2023](#)), but it may be that some of the searchers for the terms examined do not represent an intent to consume prostitution. Second, the Google Trends website provides information on searches made using the Google search engine alone and does not provide information on searches using other online tools, such as Telegram.

3. Enforcement

In this chapter, we examine the police's enforcement of the law. First, we address police preparations to enforce the law. Next, we address the extent of enforcement and police officers' perceptions regarding the law and the difficulties in its enforcement. Finally, we discuss the views of individuals in prostitution regarding the police's enforcement of the law.

Information sources for this chapter: Interviews with police officers; interviews with individuals in prostitution; interviews with prostitution consumers; police administrative data for 2021-2023; and document analysis.

3.1 Background

The law came into effect as a temporary order in July 2020, accompanied by the [Attorney General's guidelines](#) stating that the new offence (the consumption of prostitution) would be prosecuted as an administrative offense. The Attorney General instructed that, while enforcing the law, individuals in prostitution are to be treated with the requisite sensitivity, while protecting their autonomy. It was also determined that the Israel Police institute practices for police officers' conduct regarding individuals in prostitution while enforcing the law, to prevent further harm to them during the enforcement.

3.1.1 Lack of Budget

When the law was approved and the Resolution was made, it was decided that enforcement would be carried out with the currently available budgetary resources, according to the police's priorities and capabilities. Therefore, no dedicated budget was allocated to the police to prepare for enforcement, train police officers, or create dedicated positions for coordinating this issue, let alone the enforcement itself.

3.1.2 Preparations for Enforcement

The preparations were led by the Head of the Human Trafficking Unit together with other police officials. They were completed in 2019-20, at a time when the police were already overworked due to COVID-19 and additional challenges. The preparations included:

- **Writing Procedure No. 300.25.01 – “Enforcing the Law Prohibiting the Consumption of Prostitution”, of the Operations and Policing Division and the Division of Interrogation and Intelligence (hereafter, the Enforcement [Procedure](#)).** The Enforcement Procedure includes an operational concept, guiding principles for enforcement of the law, areas of responsibility in enforcement, and detailed instructions for its execution.

- **Training.** About 10,000 patrolmen, detectives and investigators were trained using online learning software that included an exam; some 1,000 phone receptionists were trained; and a small number of police officers underwent a full week of training on human trafficking and prostitution.
- **Establishing a technological infrastructure** to impose fines, follow up on them, and supervise enforcement. The police officers use tablet computers for collecting testimony, for interrogation under caution, and for issuing fines. They also have a barcode for the [Kol Zchut](#) NGO website which provides information about the services for individuals in prostitution which they can share with those they encounter at the site.
- **Establishing and operating a monitoring team** led by the Consulting and Legislation (Criminal Justice) Department at the Ministry of Justice, together with the Coordination Unit, Israel Police, Ministry of National Security, the State Attorney's Office and other agencies as required. The goal of the team is to provide legal answers to questions and problems related to the enforcement of the law and the regulations.

3.1.3 Division of Areas of Responsibility at the National Level for the Enforcement of the Law by the Israel Police

The responsibility for enforcing the law was assigned to the Intelligence Division through the National Detection Officer. Coordination of activities with other government ministries was assigned to the Investigation Division through the head of the Human Trafficking Unit. Finally, responsibility for administrative fines for prostitution consumption was entrusted to the Policing Division through the Patrolling Section.

3.2 Enforcement Policy

The law went into effect in July 2020 and its enforcement was approved by the Minister of National Security in late December of that year. Significant enforcement began only in mid-2021, when the ministry instructed the senior professional ranks in the police to instruct units to intensify enforcement. In practice, enforcement was carried out in a few select areas in certain police districts, subject to the policies of the station and regional commanders.

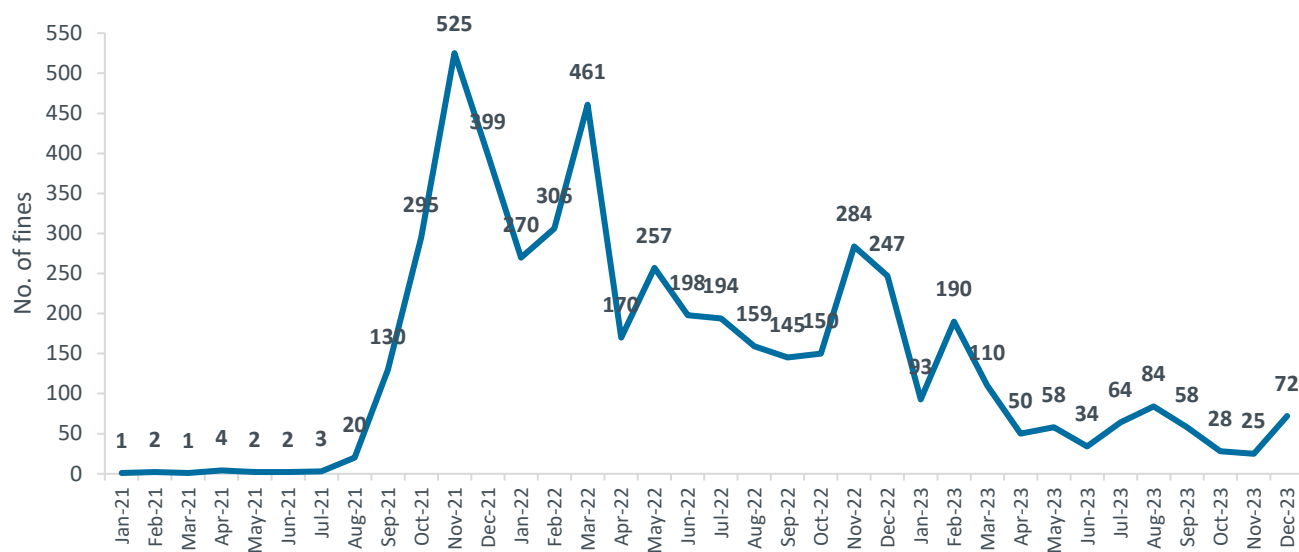
From 2020 through 2023, the position of head of the Human Trafficking Unit remained vacant, and the unit's staff was replaced twice. The findings of this study point to the loss of organizational knowledge and slow implementation of enforcement of the law due, among other things, to the lack of operational continuity in the unit charged with coordinating the law's implementation by the police.

3.3 Extent of Enforcement and Characteristics

3.3.1 Number of Fines

According to police data, in 2021-2023 the police imposed 5,091 fines: 1,384 in 2021, 2,841 in 2022, and 866 in 2023. As seen in Figure 1, in the first half of 2021, few fines were imposed. In the second half of that year, enforcement of the law intensified, reaching a peak in November; after which it fluctuated; most of the enforcement was carried out in 2022 and in 2023 enforcement was limited. The interviews with police officers indicated that there were diverse reasons for the reduced enforcement in the various locations. These included closing prostitution sites by order of district commanders or the courts, prioritizing other assignments, and even an order from police headquarters to minimize enforcement given the difficulty in establishing evidentiary proof that certain venues actually served as prostitution sites, something which requires considerable resources and intelligence work.

Figure 1: The number of fines imposed by the police nationally by month, 2021-23



During 2021-2023 most of the enforcement was conducted in central Israel. Thus, 86% of the fines were issued in the Central and Tel Aviv Districts, 13% in the Coastal District, and only 1% in the other districts. As shown in Figure 2, 97% of the fines were issued by only *three police stations* – the Sharet Station in southern Tel Aviv, the Rishon LeZion Station, and the Zevulun Station in the Haifa Bay area. Only four fines were issued in Jerusalem,

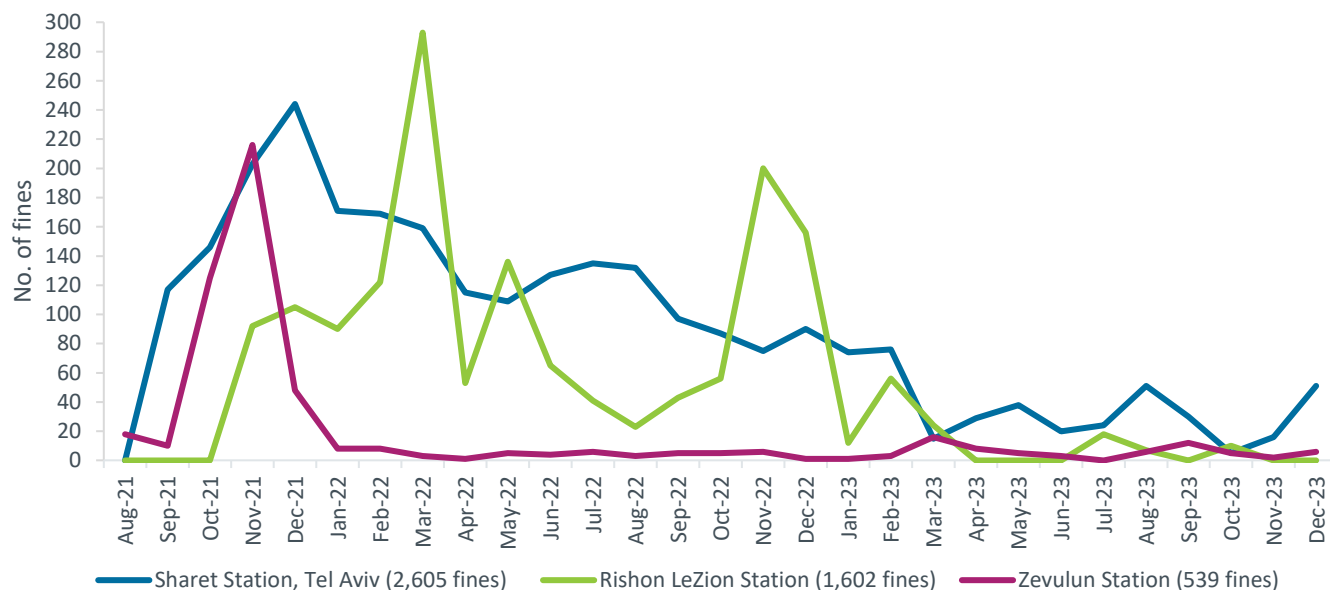
and only 13 in the Southern District, including only one in Eilat, a resort city where multiple prostitution sites are known to operate.



I don't know where they enforce this law, no idea, but you're welcome to see for yourself. We have a brothel that's a trafficking center – everybody knows it, I've never seen a cop there... Fines have never been given there. I haven't seen anyone get fined. I'm always in the neighborhood – I've never seen a man being fined". (Ministry of Health Outreach Clinic employee, Feb. 2023)

In practice, 98% of the fines were given by patrolmen and police officers and members of the Operations and Policing Division, and only 2% were given by detectives, investigating officers and members of the Border Police.

Figure 2: The number of fines imposed by the three main enforcing stations by month

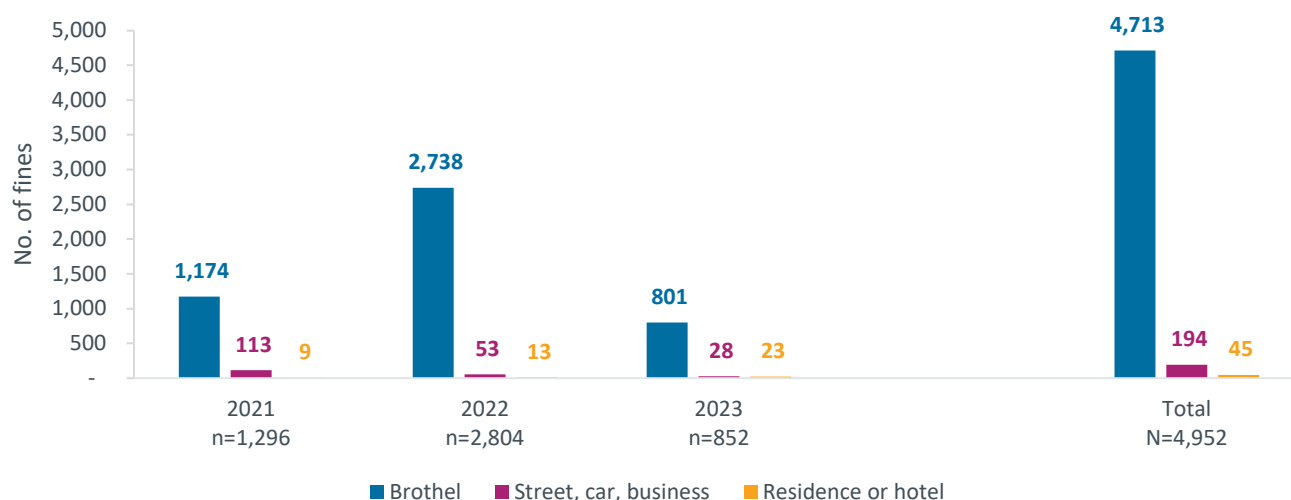


Of the 5,091 fines imposed in 2021-2023, 227 (4%) were double fines given to *repeat offenders*: 2 in 2021, 145 in 2022 and 80 in 2023.

3.3.2 Sites of police enforcement

Figure 3 presents the number of fines issued by type of site each year. As indicated, 95% of the fines (4,713 fines) were imposed in **brothels**, including spas and massage parlors acting under a legal guise, in which prostitution occurred. Another 194 fines (4%) were issued in **open sites**, such as on the street, in a car or in a parking lot, and the remaining 45 (1%) were issued in **private homes or hotels**. In 2023, the number of fines issued in the open sites dropped from 113 (9%) in 2021 to 28 (3%). Police officers explained this was a result of enforcement activities which reduced prostitution in open sites.

Figure 3: The number of fines imposed by type of prostitution site - 2021-23



3.3.3 Type of Offense

Two offenses are defined in the law – “consumption of prostitution ” (hereafter, “the first offense”) and “being present in a venue used for prostitution in order to consume prostitution” (hereafter, “the second offense”). As mentioned, in the case of the second offense, the mere presence at the venue presumes that the intention is to consume prostitution (see fn. 3). Figure 4 presents the number of fines given in 2021-2023 for each of the two offences by enforcement site. As indicated in the figure, only 538 fines (11%) were given for the first offense, whereas 4,414 (89%) were given for the second.

The interviews indicate that the option of fining suspects for the second offense has enabled the police to enforce the law on a larger scale, particularly in brothels defined as such by the police (4,255 fines, or 90% of

the fines given in these sites were for the second offense). Note that in 73% of the cases in which fines were imposed in homes and hotels (45 fines), the second offense was used, although these places are not mainly used for prostitution. Enforcement in homes and hotels relied mostly on intelligence or on complaints to the police emergency hotline, some of which authorize the police to enter and search the place without a warrant. Compared to the other sites, in the open sites relatively more fines were issued for the first offense (68, 35%).

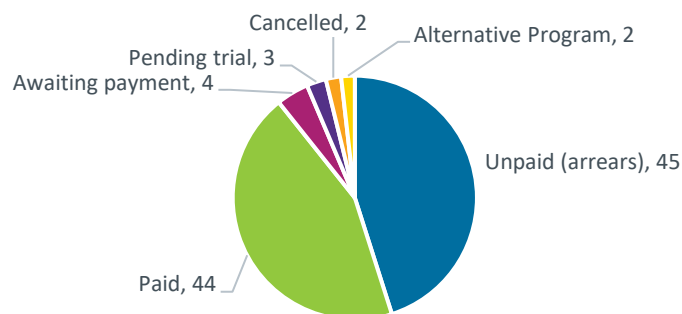
Figure 4: The number of fines by offense type and enforcement site



3.3.4 Fine Payment

By the end of 2023, 44% of the fines issued had been paid; 4% awaited payment within the time allowed (150 days); 45% had not been paid on time and included late payment charges. For three percent of the fines, the recipients requested a trial, but by late 2023, no indictments had been filed. In only 2% of cases, the people fined chose to attend the alternative program. Finally, only 2% of the fines had been cancelled by the police (mostly for the second offense), usually due to lack of evidence.

Figure 5: Fine payment status by end of 2023 (N = 5,091; in %)



There are statistically significant gaps between population groups in fine payment rates. Young adults (aged 18-25) paid their fines more frequently (54%) than individuals over 25. Among Israeli citizens, 53% paid their fines, compared to only 19% of undocumented migrants. Table 2 presents the rate of payment according to the offenders' age, civil status and marital status.

Table 2: Fine payment by offender characteristics (N = 5,091; in %)

	Fines paid	Fines not paid
Age***		
18-25 (n = 1,343)	54	46
26-34 (n = 1,682)	36	64
35+ (n = 2,060)	44	56
Unknown (n = 6)		
Total N = 5,091	44	56
Civil status***		
Citizen (n = 3,798)	53	47
Non-citizen (n = 1,293)	19	81
Total N = 5,091	44	56
Marital status***		
Married (n = 1,141)	60	40
Widowed (n = 17)	53	47
Single (n = 2,442)	48	52
Divorced (n = 406)	42	58
Unknown (n = 1,085)	20	80
Total N = 5,091	44	56

*** $p < .001$

3.4 Police Officers' Perceptions of the Law and the Phenomenon of Prostitution

This subsection presents the main findings from interviews with 30 police officers, mainly in the police stations and regions that have enforced the law and have relevant experience. The perceptions presented are diverse but cannot be considered representatives of the entire police force.

3.4.1 Perceptions of the Law

The police officers interviewed for this study expressed positive views about the law and its rationale. Most viewed the consumption of prostitution, in most situations, as severe and wrongful exploitation of individuals in prostitution.



Enforcement... must send a clear message to those intent on exploiting women. The customer exploits her. It's not her fault. She needs to receive support, he needs to be taught a lesson" (patrol officer, June 2023).



In entering the brothel, we certainly prevent rape and solicitation to use drugs and a million other things" (patrol officer, August 2023).

3.4.2. Perceived Impact of Enforcement of the Law on Reducing Prostitution

All participants stated that in their view, the law would not eliminate prostitution. Still, most argued that enforcing the law, and their very presence at the sites reduce the activity. They argued that prostitution was persistent, and had to be dealt with tenaciously, or it would resume and even grow. In particular, the police officers mentioned the importance of their presence at all sites, including hidden sites such as apartments and hotels, highlighting the challenges of locating and entering them.



The state doesn't really want to deal with it. It shifts the burden to the last link in the chain – if you want, you can [be in prostitution], if you don't, don't. If there is a station commander who cares, he will take it to the extreme; while another station commander cares mostly about car theft, and he would act on that. If the state wants, it has the tools. When the state wants do deal with something, it knows how" (police officer, February 2024).

The participants emphasized that the law is only one of a range of tools available to the police in its overall effort to reduce prostitution, the main tool being the closure of brothels. Some of the examples provided were joint activities of the police and central and local authorities, such as the Tax Authority, The Law Enforcement and Collection System Authority, and municipal business licensing departments that have shut down brothels, particularly those operating under the guise of legitimate businesses, such as massage parlors.

Participants argued that economic sanctions against the "big profiteers" – brothel owner, pimps and owners of properties used for prostitution – represented the most effective measures. Offenses related to prostitution, under articles 199, 201-203, 203b, and 204-205 in the Penal Code are considered "source offenses" according

to the 2000 Prohibition of Money Laundering Law, enabling the use of legal measures to seize and confiscate property related to money laundering offenses. Moreover, according to the 1969 Criminal Procedure (Arrest and Searches) Ordinance [New Version], property may be seized and confiscated during criminal procedures. Nevertheless, it appears the use of these tools is minimal, and there it is necessary to clarify how these tools available to the enforcement system are to be used.



At the moment, what we're dealing with is women who are not interested in complaining, and customers who are not interested in complaining, and those who benefit from all that are the business owners, whom we don't touch. And the State Attorney's not with us. Ultimately, we must uproot this phenomenon. And the root is not the whore, pardon my French, nor is it the customer. They are a byproduct of whoever coordinates this event, and we don't touch him. We also don't have the tools to touch him". (Police officer, February 2024)

Another important issue raised by the police officers was that enforcement by the police is a "last-ditch" response, insufficient to create the changes the law is focused upon. In their view, what is required is a combined effort of prevention and treatment activities from the legal, social, educational and rehabilitation perspectives.

3.4.3 Perceived Impact of the Law on Prostitution Sites

According to the police officers, for several decades prior to the law, and since its implementation, prostitution sites have changed. These changes were due to socioeconomic processes, as well as to police actions to close brothels and strip clubs prior to the law. The changes include the shift of prostitution advertising to the internet and the migration of prostitution activity itself to hidden sites and "discreet apartments" such as private homes, rented apartments, hotels and "rooms by the hour". These sites are dynamic and move from place to place, and it is more difficult to enforce the law in them, making individuals in prostitution working in them more exposed to abuse, as reported in interviews with individuals in prostitution and service professionals. The interviews with police officers indicate that enforcement continues to push prostitution to hidden sites. Moreover, the prostitution consumption survey conducted for this study indicates that indeed, about half of the consumers reported that they consumed prostitution in discreet apartments (see subsection 5.3.2, "Prostitution Consumption Characteristics").

3.4.4 Perceptions Regarding Additional Effects of the Law

The police officers who, in the course of their job, operate in prostitution sites and are familiar with the complex reality, shared insights and concerns regarding the law's implementation:

- When enforced, the law manages to reduce the consumption of prostitution by normative, law-abiding citizens, but does not deter criminals and undocumented migrants, which could exacerbate the risk to individuals in prostitution. A similar theme was raised in interviews with individuals in prostitution and with the service professionals.
- Enforcing the law adds complexity to investigations of prostitution-related criminal offenses. Since the law changed the status of the consumer from a witness at the scene to an offender, the consumer has no interest in cooperating with the investigation, since testifying is self-incriminating. This does not mean that the new situation does not enable the investigation of offenses related to prostitution, but it does mean that such investigations have become more complex, requiring additional resources that are not always available to the police.

3.4.5 Perceptions Regarding Prostitution and Individuals in Prostitution

The police officers interviewed repeatedly said that they were adamantly opposed prostitution related offences which they saw as wrong, such as the exploitation of minors in prostitution, pimping and coercion, and exploiting individuals who are addicts or in other types of distress. Nevertheless, they did say that they often met women in prostitution who stated that it was their own choice and even complained that the police officers were “interfering” with their business. In such cases, the police officers found it difficult to view the consumption of prostitution as abusive toward the women and felt that treating all individuals in prostitution as victims, as in the law, was out of touch with reality.

“ In most cases they want to work. And to be left alone. There are two kinds of brothels here. One is controlled by a criminal, and [another] where you have five adult women who say that they want to work... “Let us work”. They’re there of their own free will”. (Patrol officer, August 2023)

“ He [the police officer] meets a woman in prostitution who does not convey “I’m a victim”. And she’s even angry at the police officer for interfering with her work and all the other implications of this encounter. Ten minutes previously, he met a woman whose husband... beat her up [and now she’s] battered, crying, little children at home screaming... Police officers meet victims in the classic sense of the term... It is a fact that it’s very hard for the police officer to make this shift in his thinking - between a victim he sees right in front of him and a woman who is angry him, may even beat him, for interfering with her work. You need to understand that”. (Police officer, May 2021)

There are different kinds of prostitution sites – some visible (on the street or in visible brothels) and some hidden (private homes, discreet apartments or hotels). In the open sites, the abuse of individuals in prostitution is usually visible, whereas in the hidden sites, their abuse is not always visible. The police officers who are more exposed to the visible abuse of individuals in prostitution clearly express the need to help them leave prostitution. Nevertheless, all police officers, without exception, indicated that the current services are incompatible with the needs of individuals interested in leaving prostitution, and that these had to be expanded and better tailored to their needs.

“ When we’re talking about “rehabilitation”... that’s condescending. Who are we to say what her rehabilitation looks like? What kind of rehabilitation does she need, anyway? What does she want or not want to do? That’s the way she sees things. She laughs at me when I talk to her about rehabilitation. “Do I want you to rehabilitate me? Who are you to talk to me about rehabilitation?” (Police officer 1, October 2021).

“ OK, what does rehabilitation mean? You caught her at work, you gave her an evening class, you taught her to be an air-conditioner technician? Does she have the option of doing anything else? Rehabilitation means take NIS 3,000 a month from the National Insurance Institute and sit at home? Is that rehabilitation? Take NIS 300 worth of food stamps. Is that rehabilitation? What can our country give?” (Police officer 2, October 2021)

“ She needs to receive a service package that will enable her to manage, to go out, to have a place to live, so she won’t have to live in a dump with rats and mice and cockroaches. She needs to live like any normal citizen, in a decent apartment.... She needs to have a respectable job, that will enable her to make ends meet, to pay her bills, to breathe some air, to be able to travel and see the world like anyone else.... If I can travel to Greece for a weekend with the family, she deserves it too, and not because she makes illegal money and lots of it, from something that leaves her with nothing but scars. She needs rehabilitation that will enable her to do so. It means to rally as many organizations as possible. The state can do it really well. It can do it for all of the foreign investors, to do it also for those who are here. No doubt. It can do it for those who go and serve in the army reserves, [making sure] their employers receive benefits. It can do it also for those who will promote her rehabilitation.... From universities, seriously, because it’s impossible to think that today, if I’m a prisoner, I can go study in the Open University, and she cannot, because she doesn’t have that option. Let her. Why not? If the state invests in that, it will eliminate [prostitution], and I think it will not only eliminate it, it will be a global breakthrough”. (Patrol officer, June 2023)

The distinction made by the police officers between the types of prostitution and the levels of harm experienced by individuals in prostitution may be indicative of their awareness of the complex reality. Alternatively, it may be indicative of their ignorance regarding the harm involved in life in prostitution, even in situations that may seem to be less severe, and of the circumstances leading individuals to prostitution and making it difficult for them to leave it. Perhaps this can be explained by insufficient training provided to police officers in this area.

3.5 The Law's Enforcement According to Individuals in Prostitution

In interviews with individuals in prostitution, they were asked about their contacts with the police and about their experience with enforcement activities. Most of them either witnessed enforcement themselves or heard about it from their friends. The interviews suggested that their relations with the police were complex, based mostly on suspicion and distrust. Most participants, particularly transgender women and women in addiction, experienced disrespectful and even denigrating attitudes.

“ When I used to live in Tel Aviv, I was arrested several times. After the law, I don't see any improvement when it comes to the police. I wasn't arrested, but they were disrespectful, they talked dirty. Once, one of them called me a whore... What we need most of all is to be protected. I've seen girls beaten to pieces, who nearly died. I'm a victim, and the police does nothing". (Elizabeth, active in prostitution, April 2023)

Some of the individuals in prostitution, particularly transgender individuals, reported some improvement in their sense of being protected by the police following the law and the enforcement activities, and spoke about being able to resume street prostitution given the realization that the police officers would not arrest them.

“ After the law, attitudes have improved. They pay more attention, less disrespect. Not everyone, one in every... They've improved. (Ayelet, active in prostitution, April 2023)

Nevertheless, the distrust is still deep, so that quite a few individuals in prostitution still fear the encounter with the police – they fear being harassed or beaten up. Moreover, some of them also reported that after the law came into force, they were experiencing disrespectful or violent enforcement.

“ Did you ever get to see enforcement? I got to see it. They curse and bad-mouth. (Nuseiba, active in prostitution, April 2023).

The interviews held in 2023 show early signs of different attitudes. Some said that their treatment by the police improved, whereas others suggested that disrespectful attitudes continued. For example, use of body cameras during enforcement in a way that violated police guidelines.

3.6 Difficulties and Barriers in Enforcing the Law

3.6.1 Shortage of Human and other Resources

The Human Trafficking Unit in the Investigations Division is comprised of only two police officers, who have the sole professional responsibility for human trafficking and related offenses, including prostitution. The unit provides training, oversight and monitoring, supports police officers in the field, and maintains contact with other government agencies, with an emphasis on investigatory activities. In the area of prostitution, the unit focuses on administrative enforcement through the closing of brothels, which is implemented mainly by investigation and patrol officers. Given the small size of the unit and its multiple and diverse tasks, it appears that there is a need for a dedicated referent for prostitution in the unit to handle issues related to prostitution and enforcement of the law, and to supervise enforcement and training (see Subsection 3.2 for additional details).

Another difficulty in enforcement regards the understaffing of the police force.

3.6.2 Establishing the Evidentiary Basis for Enforcement in Hidden Sites

The law criminalized the consumption of prostitution, as well as being in a venue used fully or partly for prostitution to consume prostitution. It also determined the presumption whereby a person found in a venue used mainly for prostitution will be deemed as intent on consuming prostitution, unless proven otherwise. This presumption is designed to relieve the burden of proof of actual consumption of prostitution in situations where there is enough evidence that the venue is used mainly for prostitution, as in brothels. Nevertheless, according to the police officers, building the evidentiary basis that the place is used mainly for prostitution is challenging, particularly given their limited resources. Prostitution sites are usually hidden or disguised, preventing the police officers from seeing the consumption of prostitution with their own eyes. Therefore, in the hidden sites, such as discreet apartments or brothels operating under the guise of legitimate massage parlors, the police officers must enter the site in order to establish the evidence. According to the officers, entering and searching the sites in order to establish evidence is difficult, since it requires a warrant unless there are certain conditions specified in the [Criminal Procedure \(Arrest and Searches\) Ordinance](#). Obtaining a warrant from the court order requires advance investigations and preparations requiring resources often not available to the police.

3.6.3 Directing Individuals in Prostitution to Services During the Enforcement

The police officers interviewed stated that during enforcement, their main attention is devoted to enforcement activities vis-à-vis the consumers, so that usually they have no opportunity to offer individuals in prostitution information on available services, and that they do so mainly in cases where they identify distress.

3.6.4 Avoiding Enforcement

Police officers in the stations that have gained experience in enforcing the law suggested that brothel operators, property owners as well as individuals in prostitution have come up with a wide range of ruses to avoid enforcement. These include stationing a lookout outside the venue, creating an opening through the walls to enable consumers to slip away, or instructing the consumers to claim that they are there for a “massage” rather than sex services.

3.6.5 Undocumented Migrant Consumers

The interviews with police officers as well as the data on fines imposed suggest that, for the most part, undocumented migrant consumers are not affected by the law – they are either unaware of it or are not deterred by enforcement (only 19% pay the fines). While 25% of all fines were issued to undocumented migrant consumers, the large number of fines among this population is affected by the fact that most of the enforcement took place in southern Tel Aviv, where their numbers are disproportionately high.

3.7 Summary

No additional budget was allocated to enforcing the law, and enforcement relies on available police resources, capabilities and priorities. Enforcement was approved in December 2020 and began in the second half of 2021. From the beginning of enforcement to the end of 2023, 5,091 fines were imposed. Over the years, enforcement levels fluctuated, with a downward trend, and in 2023 enforcement was limited. Most enforcement activities were carried out in central Israel with 97% of the fines imposed by only three police stations, and there was hardly any enforcement in most parts of the country. Most fines were imposed in brothels; most (89%) of the fines were for being in a venue used for prostitution; and 11% for actually consuming prostitution. Nearly half the fines were not paid, and late fees were added to them.

All police officers interviewed stated that the law would not eliminate prostitution, but most agreed with the law’s rationale, emphasized the importance of enforcement and argued that enforcement, combined with their very presence at prostitution sites did reduce activity in those sites. The police officers explained that the law was part of the overall handling of prostitution, together with the enforcement of related offenses and the closure of brothels. They raised several difficulties in enforcing the law, including shortage of staff and dedicated resources and the difficulty in establishing evidence in the hidden sites, such as discreet apartments and hotels.

Individuals in prostitution interviewed about the law’s enforcement stated that their relations with the police remained complex, but some indicated signs of improvement in police attitudes and their own trust in police officers.

4. Individuals in Prostitution and Services for Them

This chapter examines the impact of the law on individuals in prostitution and the changes in the service system designed to assist them following the Resolution.

Information sources: Interviews with individuals in prostitution; interviews with service directors and staff; service and intervention mapping; a survey of service staff at two points in time; and administrative data on service users from the Ministry of Welfare and Ministry of Health.

4.1 The Impact of the Law on Individuals in Prostitution

We learned of the impact of the law on individuals in prostitution mainly from in-depth interviews with 34 individuals in prostitution, currently or in the past. The interviews indicated that the law did have some impact on the lives of many individuals in prostitution. For some, it led to economic difficulty, whereas for others it enabled them to leave prostitution, among other things through the support services.

4.1.1 Attitudes of Individuals in Prostitution Towards the Law

Most of the interviewees supported the law. They believe that the law is socially significant in that it states that prostitution harms most of the individuals involved and that given a real alternative they would not be involved in prostitution. A young woman described how the law affected her awareness at the time she was in prostitution:

“ I needed someone or something to stir things up a bit. And it also aroused considerable public discussion, which also... made me try to think about it for a moment, hearing women's testimonies, all kinds of things that somehow filtered in, which was part of the public discourse about the law. Other women spoke about the difficulty". (Elisheva, formerly in prostitution, May 2022)

A similar attitude was expressed by a woman who worked mainly as an escort and found it difficult to quit, despite having realized the negative effects of prostitution. In the interview, she addressed the commonly heard claim that the law against prostitution consumption was being promoted by female activists and politicians far removed from the world of prostitution.

“ I was like, “don't mess with my life and don't tell me what's good for me. That's patronizing, and I don't need the responsible adult savior; and stop underestimating me". Until I realized that asking for help did not mean underestimating me, relying on others for help is OK". (Or, currently in prostitution, March 2023)

Nevertheless, some felt that the law still did not have considerable impact:

“ First of all, increase the fine. Now it's a joke. The more it hurts the pocket, the more their heart would hurt". (Avital, currently in prostitution, April 2023)

On the other hand, following the law, some individuals became more aware of their right to decide about their body, including their right engage in sex work, and were angry at the state's interference.

“ I want you to convey the message – that individuals will go on working in prostitution, law or no law. Even if there is a law, we will work in prostitution. It's our body and we decide whether to work or not. If I want to go on working, I will". (Nuseiba, currently in prostitution, March 2023)

4.1.2 Main Impacts of the Law as Reported in the Interviews

Economic impacts. Many individuals in prostitution reported that the law affected their income, particularly immediately after the law came into effect, as well as following significant enforcement operations, which deterred consumers. This difficulty was exacerbated by the fact that the law entered effect soon after the COVID-19 social distancing restrictions, which made life extremely difficult for them. It is difficult to separate the effects of the law and the pandemic, which together caused economic pressure for many individuals in prostitution. One of the women in prostitution described how enforcement affected the number of callers:

“ When it's quiet on the phone, I immediately go into the online news and see. They're afraid, they have wives at home, they don't want [to go out]. Most are afraid that if they get caught, their family will fall apart". (Bar, transgender woman in prostitution, June 2022)

Changes in prostitution sites. The most prominent change in prostitution sites is the transition from open to hidden sites, particularly to discreet apartments. According to the women in prostitution, the professionals and the police officers who were interviewed, this began prior to the law, due to other changes, such as the social distancing restrictions during COVID-19 and the increased use of the internet for advertising and searching for prostitution, including on WhatsApp and Telegram groups.

“ At first when the law began – I don't think, I'm certain of it – work in the big places wound down. Individuals were afraid to come. I don't know the street, but only the large discreet apartments. The law was passed and work wound down, and then two things happened. Girls started working alone – in pairs or completely alone, independently. And homeowners

offered smaller apartments that were also discreet apartments, with the apartment registered on the girl's name... Say if he had a large apartment with five, six rooms... then he would start [offering] small apartments. To bypass the law. (Elinore, Currently in prostitution, January 2022)

Still, the effect of the law on the different prostitution sites was particularly felt in the months when there was significant enforcement. For example, when police officers in Tel Aviv were active in storefront locations used for prostitution, the consumers stopped coming for a while. A similar thing happened following raids on massage parlors and brothels in other cities. Enforcement activities encouraged the women to work in rented apartments or in rooms rented by the hour, where the police found it more difficult to enforce the law, as mentioned.

“

Q: Was there any change in the past two years?

A: More are working in apartments. When I started working here, there were a lot more girls working on the street". (Elizabeth, currently in prostitution, April 2022)

A service director also reported the transition to apartments, away from the public gaze:

“

In the trans community I definitely see how many women we used to meet on the street, To my mind, there were not there of their own free will but did not stop working, because they wanted to make a living, and each one made her own decisions on how to make her living. But what we definitely saw was that many of them moved to working from home, moved to entertaining at home, so that in fact what the law achieved was to remove prostitution from public space – out of sight, out of mind. So, these women actually became more transparent than they used to be". (service director, January 2023)

Another active site is the "moving site" where a woman is taken to different locations throughout the night, such as a hotel or the consumer's home, by a taxi or a driver who waits for her. This "mobility" trend has been growing for several years now, and apparently it is not necessarily related to the law, although the law did contribute to it. The surveys conducted for the present study among prostitution consumers in 2021 and 2024 did not indicate any change in the sites where prostitution was consumed during those years. Thus, it may be that these changes had actually taken place before the law.

Some of the individuals chose to work independently and advertise themselves on various websites. They have been less affected by the law since their activity is hidden from view. Nevertheless, the interviews suggest that such a "business" is difficult to run, since the woman is required to advertise, market her services, work in prostitution and collect the money.

In addition to these sites, online webcam prostitution continues to develop. This “site” does not involve physical contact with the consumer but is harmful in different ways. For example, the individuals in prostitution are unable to control the dissemination of pictures and videos online. Moreover, to compete in this area, they are required to film themselves performing increasingly extreme acts. As in other hidden sites, the individuals in this site experience extreme loneliness.

“ My friend works in prostitution, and I don't think she'd leave. I told her, “try cameras”, and she said, “I tried, and it felt more difficult for me mentally. There [at OnlyFans], I have to talk to them, I don't have the energy to talk. Every other man who enters tries to convince you to meet. It's a slippery slope leading to prostitution. It's very tempting for young women and it's very dangerous” (Irit, Previously in prostitution -, February 2022)

Prostitution consumer Omer had this to add:

“ Everything that involves providing sexual services for pay is prostitution. Whether you meet or you don't. I'm more of a meeting person, but I've tried cameras as well”. (November 2022)

The Ministry of Welfare collected data on the sites in which the service recipients had been active in prostitution. In 2022, 5% of the service recipients were active in webcam prostitution, and 4% were on OnlyFans, a content service for subscribers. In 2023, this rate increased – 9% in webcam prostitution and 7% in OnlyFans. The frequency of the use of these venues drops with age. Note that the data is partial, as data on prostitution sites was available for only about half of the service users.

Effects on personal safety. Some individuals in prostitution said that the law strengthened their sense of security when facing the consumers, since they realized that due to the law, the police would not arrest or harm them, whereas the consumers were now the offenders.

Q: What was the impact of the law?
A: There was a discussion among all the girls.... On the one hand, work slowed down, and it was a bummer. On the other hand, it was good because it reduced individuals' [consumers'] “over”-confidence a little bit, with the “over” attitude. When a person goes into the back room all the monsters come out” (Batia, transgender woman, CP, March 2023)

Together with the stronger sense of safety, various participants repeatedly shared that they felt more exposed to consumers' violence in discreet apartments than in brothels.

“ He punched me here and I also got hit by the wall, I saw stars. If we worked in a larger apartment, then there would be a security guard, and it would not have come to this”.
(Elinore, currently in prostitution, January 2022)

In the interviews held in 2023, some of the participants, including transgender women, reported that they would rather go back to working on the street. They felt safer in public spaces, where they could call on a friend for help. There were also professionals working with transgender women who reported that for some of them working at home was more dangerous than working on the street.

“ There's something protective about the street. He doesn't go into her home. She chooses whether to get in the car. If anything goes wrong, there's someone who can hear her”. (NGO employee, January 2023)

Other women reported that the law made them less safe by deterring normative consumers whereas those who were not afraid of breaking the law kept coming. Moreover, women in street prostitution reported that some of the consumers were aware of the fine, but undeterred by it.

“ Why a law against prostitution consumers? It simply brings the bad guys. It keeps away the quiet and good guys. Those who are not afraid are the worst populations”. (Bar, transgender woman, CP, June 2022)

4.2 The Law's Impact According to Professionals

Most professionals in services for individuals in prostitution consider that the law is important and can have an impact if it is enforced systematically and accompanied by a public education campaign.

“ Q: Is there anything else you would like to add about the issues raised in the survey?
A: I believe in this law, but the implementation isn't really happening, and a job half done in this case can cause huge damage”. (2023 survey)

In the 2023 survey of professionals 72% supported the law. With time, however, their expectations of the law's ability to make a difference decreased (see Appendix B). In 2023 only 13% of professionals believed the law would reduce prostitution, compared to 26% in 2021. Moreover, in 2023, only 26% of professionals believed the law would have a negative effect on individuals in prostitution, compared to 34% in 2021. This trend may be attributed to the high expectations from the law when it was passed, together with the complex reality in which it was implemented. It may be that some of the professionals believe in the law and act out of hope for real change

but are aware of its limited effects given the inconsistent enforcement and the lack of public education efforts.



Q: Do you think the law should continue?

A: Definitely. Some populations are still transparent. Perhaps it would have to be refined down the road, but the social statement and taking individuals out of the darkness and into the light – that's gold". (Service director, July 2023)

4.3 Needs and Barriers in Leaving Prostitution

In addition to reducing the extent of prostitution, the law also aims to help individuals leave it, by expanding and tailoring the services for them. Our interviews with individuals in prostitution and professionals point to the complexity of leaving prostitution as well as the basic needs, which, if left unmet, make leaving prostitution very difficult:

1. The need for a stable source of income which allows basic survival during the process of leaving prostitution and finding a new source of income that is stable and sufficient. The interviews indicated that the financial need was the most urgent, and the main barrier to leaving prostitution.



Sometimes I work in prostitution on the street, particularly when I need money, and my National Insurance allowance does not cover my expenses. I get a NIS 3,900 disability allowance, and it's not enough for me. I need to pay a NIS 2,000 rent, and the apartment is completely unfurnished and I need to buy furniture; I need medicine, bus fare, food, clothing, to pay the city taxes, and more". (Abir, transgender woman, CP, May 2023)



I'm terribly afraid of poverty because I grew up without food. I don't want to go back to the days when I had nothing to eat. I'm afraid of poverty – I'd rather die and not live in poverty". (Efrat, CP, June 2021)



I know the state is trying to help but they must understand that it [prostitution] is not out of choice. Nobody gets up in the morning telling herself, I feel like it. One doesn't think rationally about what's right and wrong, but how to survive. You do it because there's no food in the fridge or money for the bus". (Amal, currently in prostitution, March 2023)

2. Lack of job market skills. Many individuals in prostitution lack the knowledge and skills and occupational experience required for today's labor market. They do not always have a permanent address or bank account. Moreover, they need to explain the "hole" in their resume, and they are afraid their past in prostitution would

become exposed. The participants also talked about having to acquire proper economic habits and find a job suitable to their individual abilities and preferences

“ If individuals work in prostitution, helping them out of it all of a sudden would be difficult. They're not used to work, they're used to making money". (Fatima, transgender woman previously in prostitution, June 2022)

“ I'll never tell at work or individuals I know about prostitution, I'll tell them about sexual abuse, which is easier and makes more sense, but not about the prostitution. There is still a huge and frightening taboo". (Orly, previously in prostitution, April 2022).

3. Mental difficulties. Many individuals in prostitution cope with complex post-traumatic stress, which burdens them in all areas of life, including being able to work at regular jobs. Moreover, some fear meeting former consumers, which could act as a trigger.

“ I worked at the supermarket as a cashier, and suddenly a customer arrived who recognized me [from prostitution] and talked. He has a business in the diamond exchange [district], and he said, I know her, she used to work there". (Bracha, transgender woman, previously in prostitution, June 2021)

The need for emotional support and therapeutic and social services was raised by all. Our interviews with individuals in prostitution suggested the need for a sense of belonging, which was particularly important for many individuals who are not in touch with their families, have no support systems, and are overburdened by the social stigma and loneliness.

“ Maybe that's the real need. They're lonely... simply to survive life alone. I think there's a lot of loneliness among our women, which is one of their biggest problems". (Health Ministry service employee, February 2023)

4. Housing. Many individuals said that they had entered prostitution, among other things, because they needed housing. The problem reemerges in the process of leaving prostitution. NGO's try to provide rent assistance as an emergency support or as part of rights take up, but the process is lengthy and not always sufficient, so that housing remains a major barrier.

“ Some women have nowhere to live. They start working in [prostitution] in order to have what to eat and where to live. I see it and it's sad. They need to be able to live". (Safaa, PP, April 2023)

5. Legal entanglements and difficulty in accessing public benefits and entitlements. Many individuals leaving prostitution struggle with debts, criminal records, debt enforcement processes, and difficulties in realizing their medical, mental health and housing rights – all major barriers to leaving prostitution.

6. Medical needs. Many women find it difficult to care for their health and need support and mediation in obtaining consistent medical treatment, undergoing periodic checkups and accessing psychiatric, dental, and addiction treatments as required.

In the 2023 survey ($n = 221$), professionals ranked the emotional-psychological area and the realization of rights as the service users' dominant needs (88% and 84%, respectively). Next in order of importance were material-economic needs (74%), housing needs (64%), and health, employment and addiction needs (56%, 53%, and 43%, respectively). Without economic and emotional support, individuals who want out of prostitution would find it difficult. Indeed, many participants suggested that going back to prostitution was always an option.

4.4 Services for Individuals in Prostitution



I think that today, whoever is in prostitution knows there are options. Even if she does not go [for help], even if it's still difficult for her, and clearly, she'd need a lot of time, and even if she doesn't know everything, she already knows that there is help. She knows it's something that's not hidden, that it's known, that it's talked about". (Service director, July 2023)

This section describes the changes in the services offered to individuals in prostitution following the Resolution. These changes were designed to expand and improve the services for the complex needs of the diverse population of individuals in prostitution. The interministerial team monitored the implementation of the Resolution and the expansion of services and made decisions regarding transferring excess budgets to the services. This enabled expanding existing services as well as offering new services in a variety of areas and disciplines.

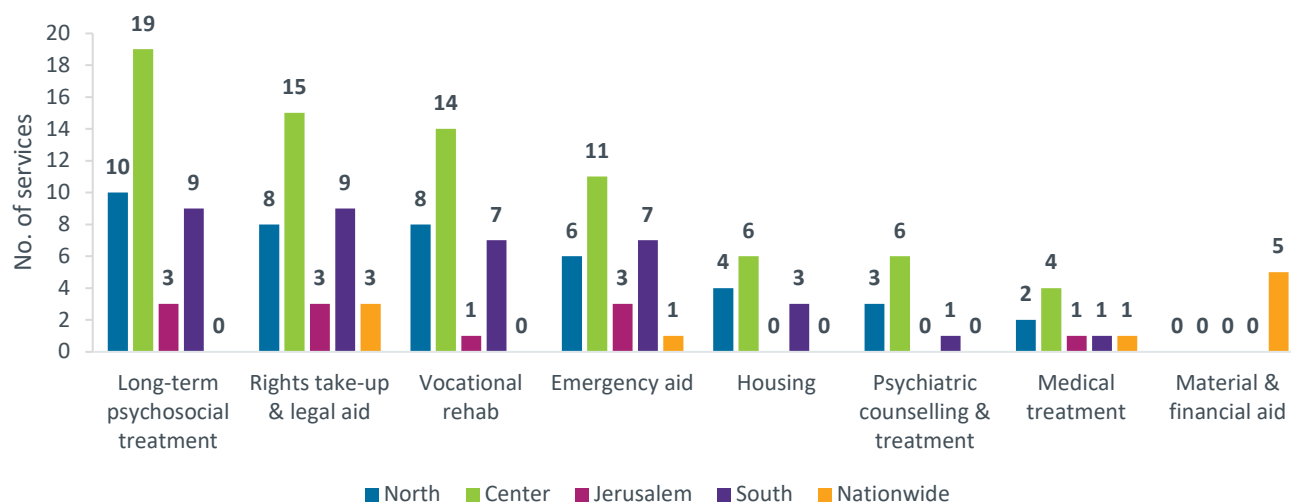
The description of services and the data on service users below refer only to services funded by the State as part of the Resolution and does not include services provided by third-sector organizations funded by donations without government support.

Most services are provided by the Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of Health. As seen in Figure 6, the main service areas are long-term psychosocial treatment, which is the most common area; assistance in accessing public benefits and entitlements and legal assistance; vocational rehabilitation; emergency assistance; temporary

housing/shelter;⁷ psychiatric counselling and treatment; medical treatment; and economic assistance. In addition, dedicated services have also been developed in the Ministry of Justice and the NII.

In all our interviews with individuals in prostitution, they said they were familiar with the available services, and many also benefitted from them at various stages of their lives. Figure 6 shows that many of the services, in all areas, are concentrated in central Israel, with few in the Jerusalem area. In 2021 42 services were included in the analysis, a number that increased to 50 in 2023; in other words, eight services for individuals in prostitution were added following the Resolution⁸ (see Appendix D, Figure D-1).

Figure 6: Number of rehabilitation and treatment services for individuals in prostitution in 2023, by type and district



4.4.1 Referral Sources and Outreach

In both surveys, the professionals were asked about *sources of referral* to their services. Figure 7 suggests that from 2021-2023, there was an increase in the reported rates of referral from each source. The leading source in 2023 was “word of mouth” (82%):

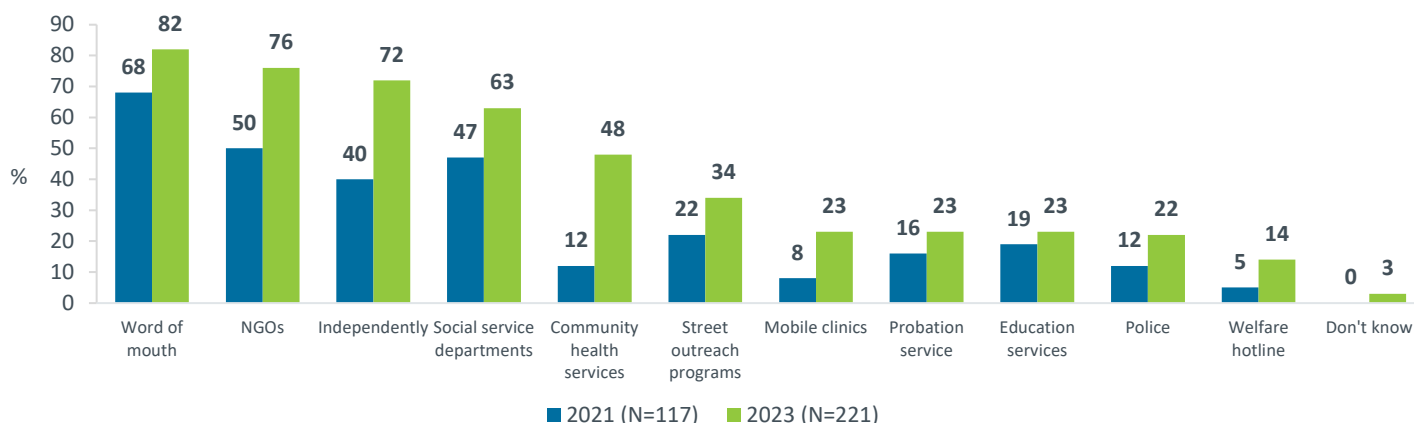
⁷ Some of the programs provide shelter and temporary housing as part of the rehabilitation and treatment plan, such as a hostel or emergency accommodation, but not permanent housing.

⁸ Including existing services shut down since the Resolution, and those initiated following the Resolution, but closed since then.



They know there's a place, so they bring each other. Most women reach us by word of mouth. One brings the other, often actually taking her by the hand, or telling her about it for a long time, until she finally decides, OK, it's time. Or she finds it hard to believe, and then she slowly sees how her friend solves all kinds of problems, and then she comes".
(Service director, January 2023)

Figure 7: Service users' referral routes in 2021 and 2023, as reported by professionals (in %)



Other leading referral sources in 2023 were third-sector organizations working with individuals in prostitution (76%), self-referral (72%), social services departments (63%), and health services in the community (48%). In 2023, there was also an increase in referrals by the police (from 12% in 2021 to 22% in 2023) and from the Ministry of Welfare's hotline (from 5% in 2021 to 14% in 2023) (see Figure 7). Our interviews with individuals in prostitution indicated that for many, the first encounter with a service was through the "Lo Omdot Me'negged" NGO, (hereafter LOM) and through the Ministry of Health's mobile clinics.



Many girls are in touch with the mobile clinic, because it constantly drives around at night. Many girls come, men also, to talk with the mobile staff. There, they tell them about emergency apartments, [Female Horizon](#), and [Saleet](#). (Safaa, PP, April 2023)

[Kol Zchut](#) is an NGO supported by the Ministry of Justice and the Israel National Digital Agency. It created an online guide which includes all services and rehabilitation options for individuals in prostitution, and is updated continuously, so that it provides reliable and up-to-date information about the services offered by government agencies and NGOs.

Outreach Services

In 2023, approximately 60% of support organizations reported conducting active outreach efforts. According to our survey of professionals, the primary methods for identifying individuals involved in prostitution in 2023 were monitoring known prostitution websites (61%), direct contact through outreach workers (49%), and social media platforms (47%). Interview findings revealed that digital outreach, particularly engaging with individuals advertising sexual services online—was an expanding focus area. This approach allowed organizations to connect with previously unknown individuals and offer support services directly. However, interviews also highlighted that effective outreach required substantial staffing resources, which many organizations struggled to maintain.



The more they see the same face, then naturally a relationship forms between human beings, so the permanence issue is significant... We go out, we try to make it every two weeks, at night, give them a little gift, a mirror with our phone number, and really invite them to turn to us for help. The idea is that the more they see the same face, the more they tend to make contact. I also see how they welcome us, and if there's someone I had already contacted, I write to her, "Hi, we're coming today, I hope to see you". I mean, it's really like courtship... Persistence is important, there are some long courtships that can take half a year or a year. I make contact, sometimes through the internet. I've had cases of contact with girls that we've never met, and we had a very close relationship". (Outreach worker, February 2023).

4.4.2 Services Provided by the Ministry of Welfare⁹

The Ministry of Welfare provides support to approximately 3,000 individuals involved in prostitution annually, including adolescents and young adults at risk of exploitation. These services are detailed in Appendix D, Table D-1. Table 3 outlines the evolution and expansion of these services during the implementation period of the law and Resolution from 2020 to 2024.

⁹ A detailed list of services is provided in Appendix C-1, "Services Provided by the Ministry of Welfare".

Table 3: Ministry of Welfare services

Service	Facilities	Main Activities	Developments Following the Government Resolution
Emergency accommodation	4	Immediate assistance and short-term housing (up to 6 months)	Service extended to include transgender women
Rehabilitation hostels	4	Psychological support, rights advocacy, employment assistance	New hostel opened for men, including transgender men
Merchavei HaLev (Spaces of the Heart)	16	Support for women aged 13-26 who are at risk or have experienced sexual exploitation. Three facilities provide 24/7 emergency accommodation	Nine new facilities
Day and evening centers	4	Individual and group therapy, vocational training, educational support, and rights advocacy	New center opened for men, including transgender men
Municipal Units for Individuals in Prostitution	2	Integrated services within municipal social services	New service
Flexible support package	-	Individual assistance up to NIS 11,616 annually for rehabilitation	New program
Turning the Tables	2	Mental health support, legal consultation, rights advocacy, parenting guidance	New initiative within existing service
Her Academy	1	Employment preparation courses and job placement services	Partnership with Ministry of Welfare
Hope Center	1	Rehabilitation-focused employment	New initiative within existing service
"Beyond the Rainbow," Maavarim NGO	1	Support services and emergency response for transgender individuals	New initiative within existing service
LOM (Not Standing By)	-	Crisis hotline, emergency response, material aid, volunteer support, service coordination	New initiative within existing service

^ two branches also serve transgender adolescent boys and men – HaLev 24/7 in Tel Aviv and HaLev 24/7 in Haifa.

In 2021, a *rehabilitation apartment for mothers and children* operated in central Israel for several months, through the *Hokhmat Nashim* (Women's Wisdom) Center, but it closed and had not reopened at the time of this report, despite the fact that about one-third of the women who receive services in welfare facilities are mothers.

Services under development. Housing First – long term independent living with subsidized rent and personal support; service for undocumented migrants; post-rehab apartment for transgender women; service center in Jerusalem; emergency accommodation for men; municipal units for individuals in prostitution in ten additional municipalities.

Services of the Welfare Employment Division. The Resolution budget was used to train employment teams, map barriers to employment faced by individuals in prostitution, and provide training for employment workers. Moreover, an attempt was made to connect municipal employment centers ("opportunity centers") to the treatment services for individuals in prostitution. A group of social workers dealing with employment and occupational support for individuals in prostitution was formed, to allow peer learning, sharing creative ideas and direct contact between the various services to promote job placement. That being said, and despite the fact that individuals in prostitution have unique employment needs and challenges, there is a low level of realization of occupational rehabilitation rights in the current models and, currently, there are no dedicated programs for individuals in prostitution as part of the Welfare Employment Division, nor has additional funding been allocated for the Division's activities.

Types of Services. The Ministry of Welfare's administrative data includes reports by professionals on the services provided to each recipient during 2020-2023. The services were divided into three types: services for basic needs, therapeutic services, and employment and educational services.

In 2023, 87% of service recipients received *services for basic needs*, including emergency accommodation, food, hygienic supplies, and clothing; 89% received *therapeutic services*. –These included outreach efforts (35%), help in realization of rights (69%); and individual therapy (38%). Most service users received more than one therapeutic service. In addition, 49% received *academic and employment services* – referral to study and training programs, soft skill job preparation, referral to daycare for children, help finding a job, and referral to partner employers who provide supportive employment opportunities. The number of service users receiving services in this area increased over time.

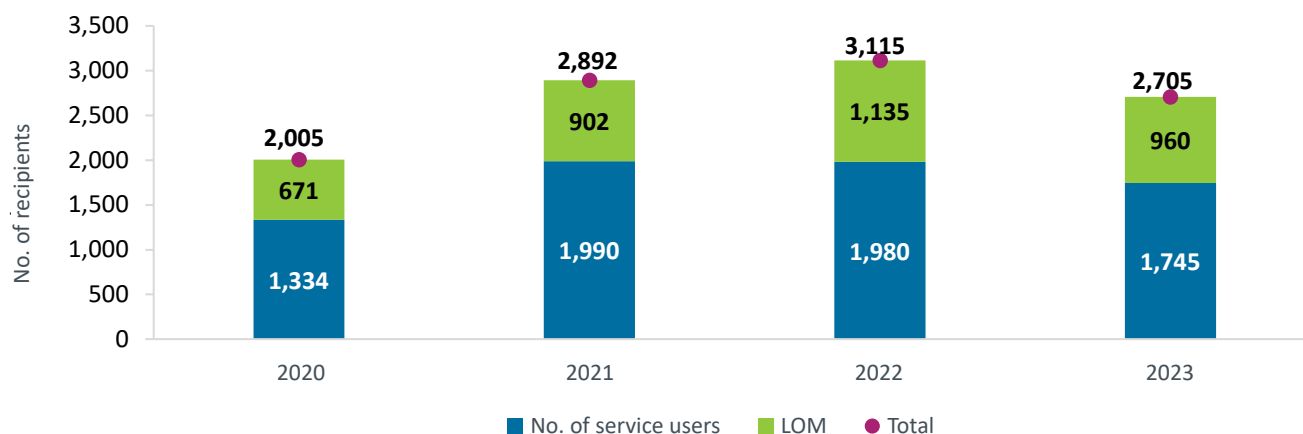
Number of Ministry of Welfare service recipients. ¹⁰In 2020, the Ministry of Welfare assisted 1,334 service recipients – women, men, and/or transgender individuals, both adults and minors. ¹¹The number of service recipients increased to 1,990 in 2021 and remained similar (1,980) in 2022. In 2023, the number fell to 1,745, due to the decrease in the number of service users in *Merchavy HaLev*, and in *Saleet*, and Female Horizon, the comprehensive treatment centers in Tel Aviv and Haifa (Figure 8).

The Ministry of Welfare's services were provided to many recipients through LOM ("Not Standing By"), which provided financial assistance government and philanthropic funds (671 individuals in 2020, 902 in 2021, 1,135 in 2022, and 960 in 2023).¹²



The last time I broke into pieces. I turned to LOM, and not only they – the world helped me. I entered a good place in my life. I was lucky. I don't think most women were as lucky. Turning the Tables – I get free therapy there and a course. Therapy is great, especially when it's free. I used to have a therapist via Zoom and it didn't work out. With sexual abuse and complex post-trauma, you have to be a specialist. I was also at Female Horizon for a short while. It's for women in worse condition. It's for women who still haven't left [prostitution] and I wanted a place that's for after". (Irit, Presently in Prostitution, April 2022)

Figure 8: The number of Ministry of Welfare Service Recipients



¹⁰ The Ministry of Welfare reported data for 2020-2023.

¹¹ Individuals served by more than one service were counted separately for each service.

¹² Others were assisted by the NGO LOM and through the projects Cooking for You, You're Not Alone, dental treatments, etc.

4.4.3 Services Provided by the Ministry of Health¹³

The Ministry of Health treats some 1,300 individuals in prostitution each year (see detailed services in Appendix D, Figure D-2). Following the Resolution, the ministry expanded services provided to individuals in prostitution. Table 4 presents the various services in brief and their development following the law.

Table 4: Ministry of Health Services

Service	No. of facilities	Main activity areas	Developments following the Resolution
Mobile clinics for individuals in prostitution	4	Testing, treatment and consulting on STDs, including HIV/AIDS, material assistance, psychosocial treatment	Mobile clinics in Jerusalem and Beersheba, social workers for Arab and LGBT communities
Prostitution site locator	1	Informing the mobile clinics on prostitution sites	New service
Psychiatrist in the Levinsky Clinic	1	Psychiatric treatment and counselling	New position
Ofek Clinic at the Wolfson Medical Center for individuals	1	Medical and social care tailored to the needs of individuals at risk of/in prostitution	Opened in 2021 but closed in 2023
Community Smile – Rambam Dental Clinic	1	Dental treatment for individuals in prostitution	New service
Derech Ariela – Drug rehab for women with dual diagnosis	1	Psychiatric treatment, stabilizing treatment and rehab for women in prostitution	Contract with the Ministry of Health
Inpatient drug rehab unit for women	2	Separate hospital drug rehab unit tailored for women	Contract with the Ministry of Health

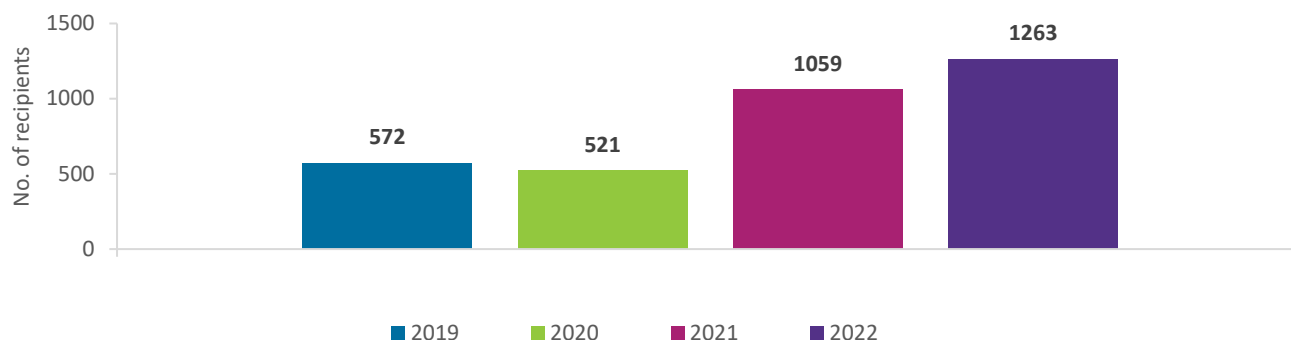
Services under development: Levinsky Clinic in the South; mobile clinic in Eilat.

Number of Ministry of Health Service Recipients.¹⁴ In 2022, the ministry assisted 1,263 individuals in prostitution, an increase from 2019 when only 521 individuals were served (Figure 9). The sharpest increase in service recipients was at the Levinsky Clinic in Tel Aviv, while the hospital units saw a slight decrease over time.

¹³ See Appendix C-2 for further details.

¹⁴ The ministry reported data for 2019-2022.

Figure 9: The number of Ministry of Health Service Recipients



4.4.4 Ministry of Justice Services

Insolvency model. The Insolvency Procedures and Legal Aid Officer developed a model for individuals in prostitution that facilitates the complex process of debt payments, based on the 2018 Insolvency and Financial Rehabilitation Law. Lawyers were trained to work with individuals in prostitution, special trustees were appointed for these cases, and the principles of the model were presented to the court. In this model, the women received a tailored service including the close accompaniment of a social worker. In 2021-2023, 140 cases of individuals in prostitution were treated using this model, in a process that took 12-16 months to complete. It is planned to include financial training as part of the model in the future, to equip the service recipients with practical tools for financial conduct.

Pardon model. This program was launched in 2020 by the Minister of Justice and the President of Israel to help remove barriers to leaving prostitution and entering employment. Women convicted of prostitution related offenses, such as solicitation or maintaining a prostitution site, can request that their criminal record be erased, or that fines be waived or reduced. At the time of this report only 19 applications were made, of which 17 were accepted. Professionals indicate a need to revoke police records as well, which is subject to the authority of the Israel Police rather than the President.

4.4.5 NII (National Insurance Institute) Services

Disability allowances and income support. In 2022, a procedure was established to minimize the bureaucratic and emotional difficulties individuals in the process of leaving prostitution face in obtaining a temporary two-year disability allowance. Among other things, the new procedure enables individuals to have their requests be

ruled on by a medical committee without having to go before the committee in person, as well as submitting a letter from a their social worker rather than a psychiatrist.

Rehabilitation allowance. The rehabilitation allowance enables individuals leaving prostitution to receive income while participating in rehabilitation programs (such as Hope Center and *Turning the Tables*). This benefit existed before the Resolution, but the Resolution enabled additional rehabilitation services to be recognized for the allowance. In addition, steps were taken to enhance the collaboration between the employment coordinators in the services and the NII rehabilitation workers.

4.4.6 NGO Services

In addition to third-sector organizations (such as LOM and Her Academy) that receive government funding for some of their activities, some NGOs that do not receive government funding provide unique services for individuals in prostitution. One of them is *Argaman*, an NGO established in 2017 to represent sex workers who oppose the law. Argaman offers help to sex workers through a volunteer social worker and a lawyer in the areas of realization of rights, submitting requests for the flexible service package, financial assistance, individual support, etc. As of March 2024, the NGO's volunteers were providing intensive support for about twenty women.

TransIsrael helps transgender women enter employment through provision of an employment mentor, partnering with employers who receive training to include transgender women leaving prostitution, and employment courses. The NGO holds community events, runs support groups, and provides material assistance and food. In 2023, it helped about 400 transgender women in prostitution.

4.4.7 Inter-ministerial and Inter-organizational Collaborations

On the *individual level*, collaborations between service providers working with individuals in prostitution are essential due to the complex needs of the service recipients. Many suffer from post traumatic stress, have medical or addiction problems, and relocate frequently. Serving this population requires close collaboration between the different agencies involved. Most professionals are familiar with the range of services around the country, but collaboration depends on the service and the worker. Some municipalities, such as Tel Aviv-Jaffa, have municipal units for prostitution that coordinate and connect the services and facilitate moving between them. Establishing municipal units in additional cities is expected to meet this need.

On the *ministerial level*, the inter-ministerial team, led by the Government Coordinator, promotes coordination and collaboration between government units and NGOs. The team meets several times a year and acts to synchronize and promote services for the individuals in prostitution, including new services not included in the original

2019 Resolution. The team coordinated the allocation of the NIS 30 million designated by the Resolution for three years. Subsequently, this amount became part of the permanent government budget. At the end of each budget year, the inter-ministerial team decides how to allocate budget surpluses for emerging needs, such as police training, or food stamps for individuals in prostitution during the Israel-Hamas war.

There are also non-governmental partnerships, such as the [Task Force on Human Trafficking and Prostitution](#) – a partnership of fifteen civil society organizations. The Task Force is active in promoting policy and services for individuals in prostitution and inter-organizational collaborations. **In conclusion**, the service system that developed as part of the Resolution expanded the range of services. As a result, individuals in prostitution are receiving a wider range of services better suited to their unique needs. Some of the services expanded to cities beyond the Tel-Aviv area, making them more accessible. However:

- Most services are concentrated in central Israel. There are few services in Jerusalem, and needs, such as psychiatric counselling and treatment, and emergency housing and accommodation are not being addressed.
- Financial assistance is provided by a few services, even though the most obvious need for individuals wishing to leave prostitution is for financial support and housing.
- Although there are a few services offering employment support and career orientation services, there is a considerable shortage in such services nationwide.
- There is shortage in services for men in prostitution, particularly in Jerusalem and southern Israel.

4.5 The Service System – According to Individuals in Prostitution

All the study participants were aware of at least some of the support services, and many have used more than one service. For many of them, their first contact was with LOM or with the mobile clinics, which met their urgent needs and referred them to additional services.



You have all the NGOs that help out, because without their help... LOM, if it wasn't for them, honestly, I don't know how I would have made it". (Iris, Previously in Prostitution, July 2021)

The interviewees noted the need for a longer stay in the housing facilities, to enable them to have enough time in a safe place without worrying about a roof over their heads. In general, they sought greater flexibility in services.

Some of them spoke about avoiding contact with the social services departments and the government welfare system. One of the reasons for the establishment of the municipal units for people in prostitution in various

places around the country was to break the barrier of working through the welfare system as was explained by one of the interviewees.

“ Welfare... I often wanted to get their help. No response, they don't get back to you. It's not the first time. Once every 18 months I tell myself, OK, let's try. No one to talk to. I remember once telling someone that I was very afraid of contacting welfare, because I was afraid that they would take my children away. She told me 'If they even blink at you, say thank you'. And that's the objective truth". (Or, Currently in Prostitution, April 2023)

Some of the study participants mentioned the problem of being registered in the social services department at their place of residence to get help, and some would even prefer to do without it. The main fear was that of mothers, who fear losing custody over their children. This is despite the significant change in the policy of welfare services in recent years, which no longer immediately consider women in prostitution to be unfit mothers, a change attested to by some of the participants.

“ In recent years it is known that they don't remove children. Really, things have settled down. If you're good, even if welfare know you're working in prostitution, and you don't do drugs and stuff, they don't take [your children]". (Elinore, Currently in Prostitution, January 2022)

Professionals in services for individuals in prostitution reported a change in the attitudes of some of the social workers in local welfare departments toward individuals in prostitution thanks to their work in helping them use the flexible basket of services' which "normalized" the contact with women in prostitution:

“ The flexible basket pushed prostitution into the local welfare departments through the back door. The social workers in the welfare departments don't ask about prostitution. They don't talk the talk – it's a specific discourse when it comes to women in prostitution. They get scared easily. When a woman comes to an ordinary welfare department she would never even raise the issue of prostitution there because she's afraid they'd take her children. So both sides live in the comfort zone – these don't ask and the others don't share. But the flexible basket has forced the departments to open this issue". (Social worker, July 2023)

Some of the individuals in prostitution are helped by NGOs. One of the participants said:

“ Only TransIsrael helped me. First, they sent me to school. I studied for 18 months" (Bar, transgender woman, Currently in Prostitution, June 2022)

In addition, due to the considerable variation in the needs of individuals in prostitution, some did not find a place that suited them. Nevertheless, they pointed out that without the help that they did receive, their situation would have been far worse. It appears that there is a wide range of services for a population with diverse needs, but it is still difficult to adjust them to the unique needs of some.

4.6 The Service Users in the Service System

In interviews with individuals in prostitution and with service professionals, two particularly common circumstances were raised: poverty and extreme financial distress, and physical or sexual abuse. Often, the two are combined. Many of the participants have been thrown into the street and find themselves struggling to survive without family support, without a place to live, without money, and without being able to acquire employment skills that would enable them to gain a stable income. In addition, many lack confidence and do not believe in themselves, in others around them, and in service providers. Almost all interviewees mentioned financial distress as one of the reasons for entering prostitution. For some, prostitution was the only way to survive and support their children.



When I got to the point that I have a child alone at home and the fridge is empty and people are knocking on the door, it seemed the most natural thing in the world to return to doing this. I have a child with special needs, I have a child that needs lessons that cost a f***ing 250 shekels, I have a child who needs afternoon activities to let out his energy, because he needs it. There are clothes, snacks, food, there's everything, and I didn't get anything from his father at the time. Even when I did get an allowance, it was the bare minimum, 1,700 shekels". (Iris, Presently in Prostitution, July 2021)

4.6.1. The Characteristics of Welfare Service Users¹⁵

The data below refers to professionals' reports on individuals served by the Ministry of Welfare in 2023.¹⁶ Note that the data does not represent the entire population of individuals in prostitution, but only those who sought welfare services.¹⁷

¹⁵ For some of these services, no information was provided on many of the users. A low response rate limits the possibility of understanding the full picture regarding service user characteristics, and the rate of those responding "Yes", as shown below, in fact represents the lowest possible incidence of the phenomenon. Note that an improvement in the response rate occurred between 2020 and 2023, the years in which the data were collected.

¹⁶ Apart for data on service recipients from LOM.

¹⁷ The data on Ministry of Health services recipients have been submitted separately for each service and are therefore reported in the detailed description of the services, in Appendix C-2.

Socioeconomic background. Half (47%) of the service users are aged 25 and below, and 5% are under age 18. Over the years, the rate of adults aged 41+ has increased. Most (84%) of the service users are women, 7% are men, and 9% identify as transgender. Over the years, the rate of the latter has increased to a slight degree, as has that of the men. Nearly a third (29%) of service users are mothers, an increase compared to 18% in 2020 and 27% in 2022. More than a tenth (11%) had no Israeli citizenship. Over the years, the number of Arab service users has decreased (from 25% in 2020 to 19% in 2023).

Background of abuse and neglect. Most (71%) of the service users have experienced some kind of sexual abuse in their past, compared to 61% in 2020. One third (32%) have experienced familial sexual abuse; 71% have been victim to psychological and/or physical violence in the family; and 65% have been continuously neglected by their families. A full 40% do not have any contact with their family; only 16% reported being in continuous contact with their family, with higher rates among minor service users and women. At the time of study, 15% were living with an abuser.



I never chose prostitution; it wasn't my choice to get up one day in the morning and be in prostitution. It's the terrible life that has shown me the path, being without a mother and father. (Avital, Currently in Prostitution, March 2023)



A person is nothing without his family. I lost all hope because of that. I will never be able to return [to my family and birthplace]... When I lost them, I felt that no matter what I do, I can do everything. I can be a prostitute, I can be homeless... Sometimes I really hope someone from the family would ask me to come back home (Said, man, Currently in Prostitution, June 2022)

Mental health indicators. Most (79%) of the service users are coping with complex post-traumatic stress (whether or not they have received an official diagnosis). Half (46%) have eating disorders. No less than 44% have attempted suicide or self-harm, compared to 28% in 2020. Seven percent have been diagnosed with gender dysphoria, an increase from 4% in 2022.

Disability status. In 2023, the rate of service recipients with any kind of disability, as recognized by the NII, was higher than in 2022: 59% compared to 46% ($p < .001$). There was an increase in service users with a disability of more than 40%.

Substance abuse. The most commonly used drug is cannabis, regularly consumed by 46% of service users (compared to 36% in 2022 and 24% in 2020-2021). Fourteen percent regularly consume alcohol. There has been a decrease in the number of service recipients regularly using narcotics, from 20% in 2020 to 13% in 2023. One-tenth regularly use "other substances" (not specified) – **an increase compared to previous years.** However, it should be noted that the percentage of underreporting for the use of most drugs is quite high.

Contact with Social Services Departments. In 2023, 57% of the service recipients were previously known to welfare agencies, compared to 42% in 2020. That year saw an increase in the number of adult women known to the welfare departments compared to previous years. The rate of girls under age 18 known to the welfare departments (71%) was higher compared to other age groups, and to the entire population of service recipients (57%).

4.7 Professionals Treating Individuals in Prostitution

The survey among service professionals¹⁸ was completed by 117 participants in 2021 and 221 in 2023. Note that the professionals who responded to the survey in 2023 are not necessarily those who responded in 2021.

Table 5 shows that most of the respondents in 2021 were employed in welfare services. In 2023, the sample was more diverse, and included additional services in unique models, as well as NGOs.

Nearly all service professionals are women. In fact, only the 2023 survey included men (2%) and transgenders individuals (2%). About a quarter (23%) of the professionals are young adults aged 23-30, 48% are aged 31-45, and the remaining 29% are older. A quarter (26%) of the participants are social workers, 30% are therapeutic/rehabilitation instructors, and 22% are managers. The rest of the respondents are area coordinators, outreach coordinators, employment coordinators, or volunteer coordinators, as well as medical professionals (physicians, psychiatrists and nurses). Only 57% of the professionals are employed full-time or nearly full-time (76%-100%), a lower rate than in 2021 (75%).

Table 5: The professionals' workplace, 2021-2023 (in %)

	2021 <i>n</i> = 117	2023 <i>n</i> = 221
Place of Employment		
"Spaces of the Heart"	53	37
Welfare services for adults, including services in contract with the ministry	39	42
Ministry of Health services	6	13
Nongovernmental/ other services	2	5
Ministry of Justice / Unique models	0	4

¹⁸ The professionals were employed in all ministries relevant to the Resolution as well as in NGOs active with individuals in prostitution.

Job experience. In 2021, 47% of the professionals were new to their positions, with up to one-year experience. In 2023, this rate dropped to 37% and the rate of employees with more than seven years' experience increased from 9% in 2021 to 15% in 2023.

Previous relevant experience. In 2021 and 2023, 75% and 64% of the professionals, respectively, reported not having any prior experience working with individuals in prostitution. This issue was raised in interviews with the professionals who had experience and expertise in this area. Some felt that because of the small number of experienced professionals in this field, if they leave their positions, organizational knowledge that has been accumulated will not be retained.



We are experts on all the areas you've mentioned. Why don't they use us for that purpose? Why isn't this knowledge recorded and stored? When I finish my job, that huge amount of knowledge will simply go with me! (Answer of a service professional to the question – “Do you have anything you want to add regarding the survey questions?” - 2023 survey).

Relevant skills for working with individuals in prostitution. The professionals were asked to indicate the degree to which they have mastered skills in a several areas required for treating individuals in prostitution.¹⁹ In 2023, 88% reported being highly skilled in the *therapeutic relationship* area, which is of great importance to the service recipients. However, only 60% reported being highly skilled in *the accessing public benefits and entitlements*; 54% in *vocational rehabilitation*; and 46% in *material and financial assistance* – areas where the needs of individuals in prostitution are great. In general, managers reported themselves to be more skilled than other professionals and the instructors reported the lowest skill levels in all areas.

Unique skills in dedicated positions. Outreach is an important skill when working with individuals in prostitution, given their lack of trust in the system and their difficulty in accessing treatment. Over the years, there was sharp a decrease in the percentage of outreach coordinators who reported mastery of the required skills – from 88% in 2021 to 43% in 2023. At the same time, there was an increase in the rate of employment coordinators who reported mastery of vocational rehabilitation skills (from 60% in 2021 to 71% in 2023). Managers and social workers also showed an increase in their reports of high vocational rehabilitation skills.

¹⁹ The division into areas was done using factor analysis, based on the nature of the skills, as well as using the Cronbach's Alpha test to examine the strength of the relationship between the items.

Training and supervision. Both surveys indicate that the professionals received a relatively wide range of training in different areas related to treating and working with individuals in prostitution, in understanding the phenomenon and in working with unique populations. Most (73%-75%) of the respondents reported having received training over the past year, some of which they paid for by themselves. The most frequent training topics were skills for working with extreme populations (71%-63%), factors and causes leading individuals to prostitution (72%-67%), and treating sexual abuse (61%-50%). In most cases, the percentage of professionals trained in the various areas decreased with time. Both the survey and interviews indicated that many professionals thought that training provided was inadequate and 63% stated that lack of training was a barrier in their work.



It's a population with unique characteristics that requires a different intervention approach by us social workers. If you intervene like we're used to, you'll be left without clients". (Social worker, January 2023)

For professionals treating individuals in prostitution, *supervision* is essential in order to provide a space of support and consultation, in order to prevent burnout in their intensive and emotionally overwhelming work, and to prevent secondary traumatization. Most (92%-90%) of the professionals reported receiving supervision at their workplace, about half once a week and the rest less often. Less than half (44%) received supervision from their direct supervisor or team leader, and 43% from an external supervisor. Most professionals reported that the supervision met their needs.

4.8 Challenges and Barriers in the Service System

This section presents the barriers encountered in the service system, as noted both in the surveys of the professionals in 2021 and 2023 and in the interviews with the professionals and service recipients.

Working conditions of the professionals: low pay, workload, and insufficient training. The service professionals are the driving force, and the essential and main support for individuals in prostitution. In 2023, 72% of professionals mentioned that low pay was a barrier for them, and this may also increase the difficulty, noted by 69%, in recruiting new workers, a figure that rose compared to 2021. In addition, 82% mentioned a high workload, 58% mentioned the few available positions, and 63% mentioned a lack of training. The rate of those reporting high turnover as a barrier to providing an appropriate service increased from 32% in 2021 to 46% in 2023.



I'm afraid workers are unappreciated, especially the more experienced among them. There is no sense of promotion. In order to keep giving to others, it's important that the workers be seen. To appreciate, to promote, to enrich... Often, due to emergencies and multiple cases, there is an expectation that we will work extra hours on a volunteer basis. even on the weekends. (Professionals, 2023 survey)

Another employee commented regarding the pressure of the workload:



I'm the director of the center, office manager, public education coordinator, procurer, budget manager, community social worker, intake social worker, and therapist. (Professional, 2023 survey)

Shortage of professionals with the skills to work with unique populations. There is a shortage of professionals who have a deep understanding of gender issues in order to help *transgender people*. This means that transgender people do not always receive the right kind of help. The same is true of *Arabic-speaking* culturally sensitive professionals. In the survey, 48% of professionals suggested that the inability to provide services to non-Hebrew speakers was a key barrier.

Shortage of services for unique populations. There is a shortage of services, such as an emergency service for men aged 21+, services for undocumented migrants, a home for adult women in complex situations, services for mothers, services for Arabs in prostitution, and in-depth vocational rehabilitation for individuals in prostitution, and particularly for transgender people. Dedicated services for transgender people and for men became available only in 2022, but they are not comprehensive services and so not meet all of their needs.

Lack of services in Jerusalem and Eilat. There is a lack of services in various areas, specifically housing, employment, long-term psychosocial care and psychiatric treatment for individuals in prostitution in general, and for unique populations in particular.

Limited stay in emergency accommodation. Women can stay in emergency accommodations for up to six months. Some of them claim this is not enough, and that they need therapeutic services in an out-of-home setting for a longer period in order to become stabilized enough for long-term rehabilitation services.

Bureaucratic barriers. Half (49%) of the professionals indicated in the survey that bureaucratic hurdles prevent many service recipients from accessing public benefits and entitlements. Many of the professionals also addressed this issue in their interviews, as follows.

- The social worker must devote long work hours and deal with complex administrative procedures in order to activate the highly coveted flexible basket of services - 130 requests for the flexible basket had already been submitted by October 2020. Note, however, that some services have managed to “crack the code” and implement the flexible basket by carefully selecting services that can be accessed with relative ease (such as purchasing clothing), while meeting all the local authority’s requirements, as a service director in one of the localities told us:



It took us ten months. I’m not kidding, it took ten months, but we created a procedure”.
(Service director, June 2023)

Moreover, the basket does not meet the needs of undocumented migrants (who can submit a request through the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews). Finally, the basket is intended for individuals in prostitution treated by the rehabilitation services and in an “advanced rehabilitative process”, which means that many women are not entitled to it.



The “not-so-flexible” flexible basket, yes? In order to get money out of the flexible basket you must first squeeze out your own juice. Again, I think that women in prostitution and their social workers work really-really hard to get the rights they are entitled to, by merit, and not by grace”. (Ministry of Health service professional, January 2023)

- The nature of work with individuals in prostitution requires considerable flexibility in all aspects of care, which sometimes requires redesignating the budgets of the various services, such as transferring funds from “housing support” to “vocational training”. The way things work now, particularly in services in contract with the Ministry of Welfare through a tender, there is no flexibility in spending budgets, which makes their work difficult. It has been reported that for some of the tenders for services, contractors do not even bother to submit offers.



Another huge barrier in the work with the Ministry of Welfare is inflexibility... moving a little from this item to the other is impossible. A tender committee [is required], it’ll take a year. These things are impossible, they don’t make sense”. (Service director, January 2023)

- Some programs find it difficult to survive due to operational difficulties, including the Horizon Clinic, or Feminine Horizon in Haifa. Other programs have been in the planning stage for years but have yet to start functioning, such as a mobile clinic in Eilat and a vocational project for transgender people.

- The various services are budgeted by the number of service recipients at any given time, whereas many of the expenses are fixed costs, such as salaries, and the services must be ready to receive new clients at all times. The service recipient population is not stable, with individuals constantly entering and leaving the services, and many services have no designated outreach coordinator and find it difficult to maintain operations at full capacity. Although in some of the services, the Ministry of Welfare tops up the budget to a ceiling of 80% of the budget for every program that fails to reach capacity, there is still a feeling of organizational instability. The services must invest considerable resources on paperwork for the Ministry of Welfare and the municipalities at the expense of focusing on treatment.



The Ministry of Welfare's model paralyzed the field. It's not that there's no budget, it's that the model, the red tape, the procedures, prevent it from being implemented.... In some municipalities things are simpler and they know the field, and even if they don't know the woman involved they'll open a case and work out the budget designation. In others it's very difficult, particularly in Arab society, where it's very hard to make them work out the designation – even when the Ministry of Welfare refunds them, [in the meantime] a deficit is created. Because by the time the designated budgets come in, they are in deficit". (Service director, March 2023)

4.9 Summary: People in Prostitution and the Services for Them

The law had a certain impact on the lives of many individuals in prostitution. For some, it meant financial difficulty, for others new options for change and leaving prostitution, with the help of existing and expanded services. The survey of professionals found that 72% of them supported the law, while 26% believed it would have a negative effect on individuals in prostitution. Only 13% believed it would limit the extent of prostitution.

Individuals in prostitution have diverse needs and characteristics, some of which serve as a barrier to leaving prostitution, such as the need for a stable outcome, the need for housing, emotional problems, and difficulty in accessing public benefits and entitlements. The service system expanded following the Resolution, particularly services provided by the Ministry of Welfare and Ministry of Health. Other ministries, such as the Ministry of Justice, also developed and adapted services for this population. At the same time, the number of service users also increased. However, some services are still lacking, and some populations are not served by the current system. Finally, the service system is burdened by challenges and barriers such as a shortage of professionals specializing in unique populations and bureaucratic hurdles.

5. Prostitution Consumers

The law reflects a change in the perception of prostitution consumption, which apart from minors in prostitution, had not been forbidden previously. This chapter deals with the population the law is directed at – prostitution consumers (hereafter, consumers). It discusses several components of this population: the entire population of prostitution consumers in Israel, individuals fined for consuming prostitution, consumers who have taken part in the alternative program, and individuals addicted to sex and to consumption of prostitution. Finally, the chapter discusses the change in the extent of prostitution in Israel, focusing on the alternative program and other services for consumers addicted to sex and to prostitution.

Sources of information: Interviews with individuals in prostitution, with professionals, and with consumers; administrative data on fines imposed by the Israel Police in 2021-2023; administrative data from the Ministry of Welfare on the participants in the alternative program in 2022-2023; Google Trends, a prostitution consumption survey; and a survey among participants in the alternative program

5.1 The Extent of Prostitution Consumption by Israeli Men

The extent of consumption of prostitution was measured in a survey of men aged 18-70, at two points in time:

1. **The first survey** was carried out in September-October 2021, about a year after the law came into effect, some nine months after enforcement had been approved, and almost contemporaneously with the beginning of significant enforcement. In addition, the survey was administered some 18 months after the outbreak of COVID-19 and the resulting social distancing restrictions. To examine the extent of prostitution in ordinary times, prior to the pandemic and the implementation of the law, the respondents were asked whether and how often they consumed prostitution "routinely", in the year prior to COVID-19, that is, between March 2019 and February 2020.
2. **The second survey** was carried out in March-April 2024, about a year before the temporary order of the law expired, and some six months after the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack and ensuing war. To examine the extent of prostitution consumption while the law was in effect, but without the effects of war, the respondents were asked whether and how often they consumed prostitution in the year before the war, that is, from October 2022 to September 2023.

The first survey was completed by 5,757 men, 5,437 Jews and 320 Arabs. In the second survey, we contacted the same men who had responded to the first. The response rate was 42%. To obtain the required sample size, we

contacted a complementary sample of 439 men who had not completed the first survey. A total of 2,883 men responded to the second survey, 2,711 Jews and 172 Arabs (see sample data in Appendix A).

In the following sections, we present data on the change in the extent of prostitution consumption among all respondents in 2021 and 2024, whether they participated in both or in only one of the measurements. The findings will be presented for Jewish and Arab respondents separately. Next, we will present data on the extent of prostitution consumption by respondents who participated in both surveys (hereafter, "repeat respondents"). The repeat-respondent sample included 2,364 Jews and 80 Arabs. Due to the low number of Arab repeat respondents, these data will be presented for Jewish consumers alone.

5.1.1 The Extent of Prostitution Consumption among all Respondents During the Last Five Years²⁰

This subsection presents the data on the extent of consumption of prostitution ²¹among all respondents, both Jews and Arabs, from the 2021 and 2024 surveys. Tables 6 and 7 present the data on consumption among Jews and Arabs, respectively.

As seen in Table 6, in the 2024 prostitution consumption survey, 12.2% of Jewish men reported having consumed prostitution over the past five years, as opposed to 9.2% in 2021 ($r_c=.058$, $p < .01$). Among the different age groups, we found a significant increase in reporting by men aged 35-70 ($r_c=.076$, $p < .01$). Conversely, as seen in Table 7, among Arabs, there was a decrease in reporting in 2024 compared to 2021 (16.6% vs. 10.5%). The statistical significance of this gap is marginal, however, and the effect size is negligible ($r_c=.08$, $p = .07$). This decrease is due mainly to the sharp decrease in self-reported consumption among Arab young adults aged 18-24 – from 36.8% in 2021 to 10.5% in 2024. Given the low number of survey respondents among Arabs aged 18-24 (77 in 2021 and 40 in 2024), and given the unusual consumption rate in this age group in 2021, the finding regarding the decrease in consumption should be interpreted with caution.

²⁰ Out of all respondents in 2021 who consumed prostitution in 2015-2020, and all respondents in 2024, who consumed prostitution in 2018-2023.

²¹ "Have you consumed sex services for pay in Israel?" The definition of sex services for pay for the purpose of this survey is: sexual acts involving physical contact, for pay or other compensation, even if somebody else paid for it. This definition excludes strip shows without sexual contact, pornography, or sexual therapy such as sexual surrogacy. The response options were (a) Yes, in the last five years, that is after 2015/2018; (b) Yes, more than five years ago; (c) No.

Table 6: Prostitution consumption in the last five years, as reported by *Jewish* men aged 18-70 in the 2021 and 2024 surveys, by age group

	2021 survey				2024 survey			
Age	18– 24	25– 34	35– 70	Total	18– 24	25– 34	35– 70	Total
<i>n</i>	910	1,400	3,127	5,437	210	587	1,914	2,711
Consumed prostitution in last 5 years (%)	11.1	8.2	8.2	9.2	13.1	13.2	11.6	12.2

Table 7: Prostitution consumption in the last five years, as reported by *Arab* men aged 18-70 in the 2021 and 2024 surveys, by age group (by *n* and %)

	2021 survey				2024 survey			
Age	18– 24	25– 34	35– 70	Total	18– 24	25– 34	35– 70	Total
<i>n</i>	77	81	162	320	40	45	87	172
Consumed prostitution in last 5 years (%)	36.8	8.3	11.1	16.6	10.5	11.1	10.2	10.5

5.1.2 The Extent of Prostitution Consumption among all Respondents During the Year Prior to the Year of the Survey²²

In order to neutralize the impact of COVID-19 and the war, the participants were asked if they had consumed prostitution during the year prior to these events (rather than in the 12 months prior to the survey itself). As seen in Table 8, a significant increase in consumption was found: from 7.1% in 2021 to 9.0% in 2024 ($r_c=.032$, $p < .01$). The increase in consumption among 35-70-year-olds is the most prominent ($r_c=.046$, $p < .01$), whereas the increase in the other age groups is nonsignificant. In other words, the increase in consumption over the years is due mainly to an increase among 35-70-year-olds.

²² Out of all respondents in 2021 who consumed prostitution between 2015 and 2020, and all 2024 respondents who consumed between 2018 and 2023. Due to the small number of Arab respondents, the following data refer to Jewish men alone.

Table 8: Prostitution consumption in the year prior to the year of the survey reported by Jewish men aged 18-70 in the 2021 and 2024 surveys, , by age group (by %)

	2019 – In the year prior to COVID-19				2023 – In the year prior to the October 7 attack			
Age	18– 24	25– 34	35– 70	Total	18– 24	25– 34	35– 70	Total
<i>n</i>	910	1,400	3,127	5,437	210	587	1,914	2,711
Consumed prostitution in the year prior to COVID 19 or the attack of October 7, 2023	7.6	8.2	6.7	7.1	8.8	8.8	9.1	9.0
Did not consume prostitution in the year prior to COVID 19 or the attack of October 7, 2023	92.4	91.8	93.3	92.9	91.2	91.2	90.9	91.0

Note: Data are presented after weighting for age and district, in each survey separately

5.1.3. Extent and Pattern of Prostitution Consumption among Repeat Respondents

Consumption over the past five years: In examining the rate of consumption among the 2,364 repeat respondents, we found that in 2021, 10% of respondents reported having consumed prostitution over the past five years, and that in 2024, 13% reported so. This represents an increase of 32% in reported consumption – statistically significant according to the McNemar test ($p < .01$).

Consumption over the past year: In 2021, 8% of repeat respondents reported having consumed prostitution in the year prior to COVID-19 (March 2019-February 2020). In 2024, 10% reported so regarding the year prior to the war. This represents a significant 20% increase according to the McNemar test ($p < .05$).

Among repeat respondents reporting consumption over the past five years, 86% reported not having consumed prostitution in the year prior to the survey (2019 and 2023); 6% reported not having consumed in 2019but having consumed in 2023; 4% reported the opposite; and 4% consumed prostitution in both 2019 and 2023.

As described above, the findings from the consumer surveys indicate an increase in consumption from 2021-2024. However, it should be noted that the first survey was conducted *after the approval of the law* while the extent of consumption was not compared to the period *prior to the legislation*, and did not examine consumption trends on a continuous basis. To examine trends in consumption prior to the legislation, as well as to examine trends over the entire period under study, we conducted continuous monitoring over a longer timespan by analyzing trends of online searches for prostitution services based on Google Trends data.

5.2 The Demand for Prostitution According to Google Trends

Recent years have seen growing use of the Google Trends website, which provides data on Google search trends, to characterize social phenomena (Levi-Zohar et al., 2023). As part of the present research project, we analyzed the trending of prostitution-related terms, in order to characterize the changes in the demand for prostitution in Israel, with particular focus on changes in the periods prior to and after the approval of the law. Using Google Trends for this purpose is highly relevant given the extensive use of the internet to access and consume prostitution services. Using the website enables us to deal with the complexity involved in estimating changes in the extent of consumption of prostitution, a phenomenon characterized by great secrecy, by analyzing data regarding actual conduct, rather than self-reports.

We analyzed trends in searching for the Hebrew equivalents of the following three terms, selected after consulting with experts on prostitution, and conducting interviews with consumers and women in prostitution. The three terms were "prostitutes", "escorts" and "discreet apartments". The analysis was based on data collected for each month from January 2013 to April 2024. The data are obtained from the website after normalization regarding all Google searches over that month, and after conversion to a 0-100 scale, and represent the relative search volume (hereafter, RSV) at a given time, in relation to the period under study.

The findings addressing trends from 2013-2023 are presented in detail in the research report [Using Google Trends to Examine Changes in the Demand for Prostitution in Israel](#) (Levi-Zohar et al., 2023); A follow-up report will be published during 2025.

These reports provide detailed explanations of the considerations behind selecting the search terms, the periods studied, and the statistical analyses. They also include additional analysis and more detailed explanations of the findings than those provided below.

5.2.1 Temporal Trends in Prostitution-Related Search Terms

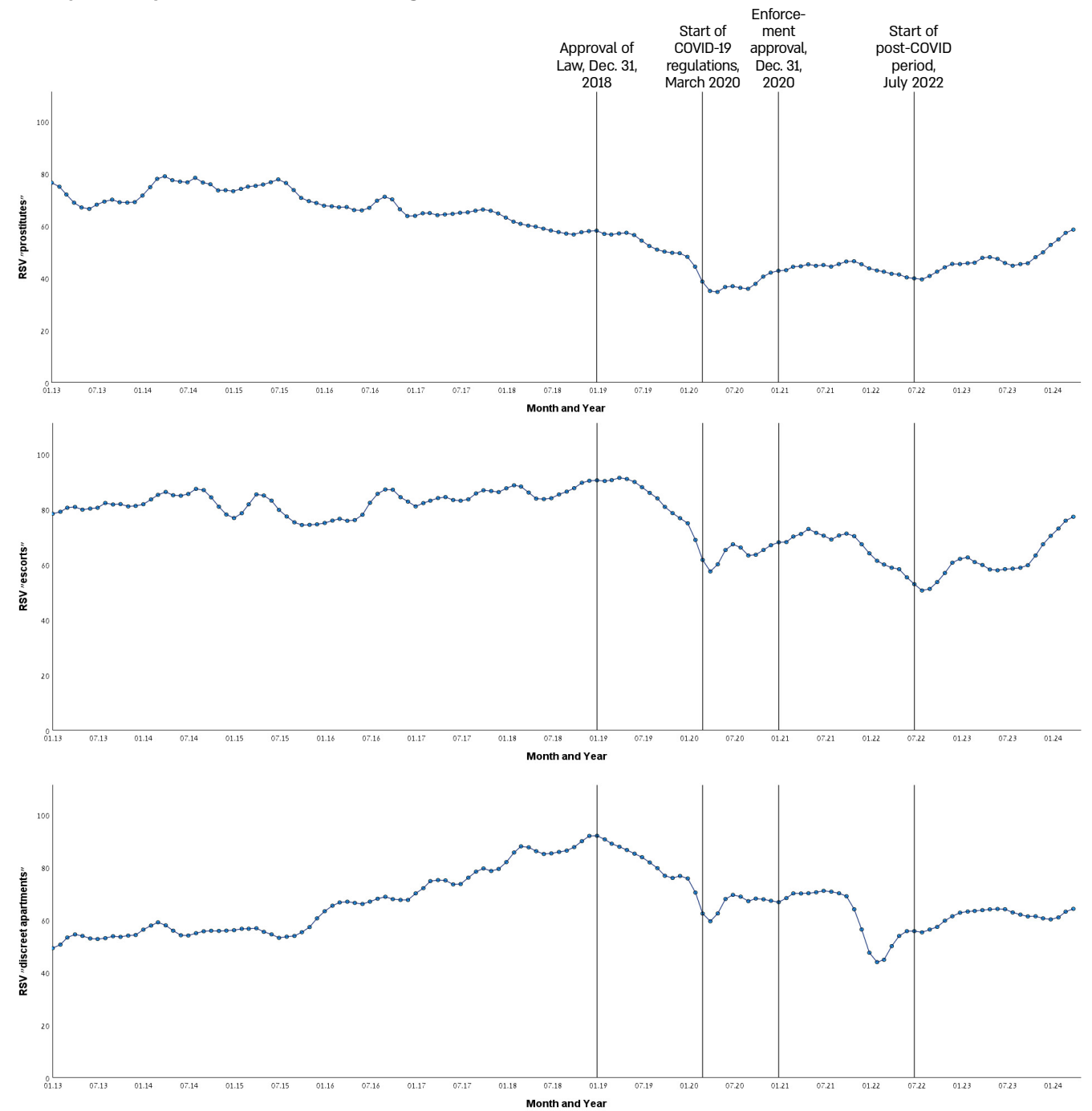
Figure 10 presents the trends in searching for "prostitutes", "escorts" and "discreet apartments" over the months from January 2013 and April 2024. The data presented in the figures are based on trend lines after adjustment for seasonal and random variation (a figure based on the raw data is presented in Appendix E-1). The vertical lines in the figure represent the four relevant time points for examining trends in the demand for prostitution in Israel: (1) The parliamentary approval of the law on December 31, 2018; (2) The imposition of the COVID-19 regulations in March 2020, which imposed movement and social distancing restrictions, and in certain periods also complete shutdowns, resulting in a significant economic slowdown; (3) The approval for police enforcement

of the law in December 31, 2020; and (4) The transition to the post-COVID period, where most restrictions were removed and the pandemic no longer affected economic activity in Israel, in July 2022.

Figure 10 points to several search term trends:

- *The period after the law's approval* and prior to the outbreak of the pandemic saw a decrease in the search volumes for the three terms: For each of the terms, the RSV in February 2020 was 80% of the RSV in December 2018. The decrease in the search for "prostitutes" had begun prior to the law's approval, and for the terms "escorts" and "discreet apartments", it began right after or a few months after the approval, a clear change of trend compared to the previous period. These findings are consistent with the assumption that the legislation reduced the demand for prostitution.
- *During the first wave of the pandemic* (March-April 2020), the trend of fewer searchers for the three terms continued. At this time, the fear of COVID-19 peaked, and individuals followed the social distancing restrictions, avoiding physical contact with strangers. Therefore, the trend in this period is consistent with the assumption that the search for prostitution-related terms reflects, above all, the demand for actual consumption. Indeed, by the end of the first wave of the pandemic, the trend reversed, and there was an increase in RSVs.
- The figure does not indicate any change in trends around the time of the approval of enforcement in late 2020. Nevertheless, in all three search terms there was a transition to a downward trend in the latter half of 2021, around the time *intensive enforcement* began (see Chapter 3).
- The year 2022 saw the beginning of an upward trend in search volumes, which continued until the end of data collection in April 2024. This increase is consistent with the *gradual decrease in enforcement*. The negative relationship between search volumes and enforcement efforts will be described in detail below.

Figure 10: Relative search volume for the terms “prostitutes”, “escorts”, and “discreet apartments” (from 0-100, January 2013-April 2024), after correcting for seasonal and random variance



5.2.2 Search Volumes by Period

Despite the upward trend from 2022 to April 2024, in this period as well, the extent of searches remained lower than in the period prior to the law's approval. The average extent of searches for the terms "prostitutes" and "discreet apartments" from July 2022 to April 2024 was 80% of that in the two years prior to the legislation; moreover, the extent of searches for the term "escorts" was 70%. Since by the second half of 2022, the impact of COVID-19 had ended, the difference between the two periods may be attributed to the influence of the law.

To further analyze the finding, linear regression analyses were conducted, comparing the extents of searches for the three terms in the period prior to the law's approval (2017-2018), and the extents of searches in three additional periods: the months after the approval of the law and prior to the social distancing regulations (the year 2019 and January-February 2020), the years of COVID-19 (March 2020-June 2022), and the post-COVID period (July 2022-April 2024). See Appendix E for details of the analyses and their results.

The three regression analyses produced significant negative coefficients for the post-COVID period: *prostitutes*: $B = -15.16$, $SE = 1.71$, $\beta = -.66$, $p < .001$; *escorts*: $B = -24.33$, $SE = 2.28$, $\beta = -.79$, $p < .001$; *discreet apartments*: $B = -20.35$, $SE = 2.47$, $\beta = -.67$, $p < .001$. In other words, despite the increase in searches post-COVID, from the beginning of the second half of 2022 to April 2024, the search volumes in general are significantly lower than before the approval of the law. This finding suggests that the demand for prostitution fell after the approval of the law, regardless of the impact of the pandemic.

The regression analyses were conducted once again, separating the post-COVID period (July 2022-September 2023) from the period since the outbreak of the war with Hamas (October 2023-April 2024). The three analyses produced significant negative coefficients for the two periods: *prostitutes* – post-COVID: $\beta = -.62$, $p < .001$, wartime: $\beta = -.34$, $p < .001$; *escorts* – post-COVID: $\beta = -.76$, $p < .001$, wartime: $\beta = -.38$, $p < .001$; *discreet apartments* – post-COVID: $\beta = -.57$, $p < .001$, wartime: $\beta = -.43$, $p < .001$. Thus, in the last seven months of the data collection period as well (overlapping the war period) the search volumes were significantly lower than before the law's approval. Nevertheless, Figure 10 indicates that the trend of increased RSVs continued into the war period.

5.2.3 The Relationship between Enforcement and Search Volumes

Figure 10 indicates that the changes in search volumes are consistent with changes in law enforcement: when enforcement efforts increased, the searches decreased, and vice versa. To substantiate this impression statistically, we calculated Pearson correlations between the search volumes for the three terms and the number of fines imposed by the police every month in the years 2021-2023. To control for seasonality, we calculated partial

correlations while holding the month constant. Similarly to many studies examining relationships between Google search trends and external indicators (e.g., Cho et al., 2013; Kurian et al., 2020; Li & Filobos, 2020; Verma et al., 2018), correlations were calculated between the searches in each month and the fines imposed up to three months previously and up to three months afterwards. This procedure enabled us to examine temporal precedence between the enforcement and the demand-for-prostitution trends.

The correlation results are presented in Table E-2. Significant negative correlations were found between the search volumes and the number of fines imposed *three months beforehand*, for the three search terms: “prostitutes” ($r = -.60, p < .01$), “escorts” ($r = -.63, p < .01$), and “discreet apartments” ($r = -.73, p < .01$). As reported in Appendix E, much lower correlations were found between the search volumes in a given month and the number of fines imposed during that month or after.

These findings attest to a negative relationship between the search volumes and the number of fines imposed in previous months. The findings establish precedence, such that higher enforcement in a given month is consistent with reduced demand for prostitution in the following months, and vice versa. Figure 11 presents search trends for the three terms, combined with the data on fines imposed three months previously.

Note that during the period under examination, many events could have affected the demand for prostitution, including the later waves of COVID-19, campaigns to increase public awareness of the law (see Chapter 6), and the October 7 attack and subsequent war. Although the effect of enforcement cannot be isolated from all the other factors active in that period, the pattern of relationships found over a 36-month period supports the possibility that the negative relationship between the law’s enforcement and online searches for prostitution is not accidental, and that increased enforcement indeed reduced the demand for prostitution. These findings demonstrate the importance of enforcing the law in order to achieve its aims.

5.2.4 Conclusions

The findings support the conjecture that demand for prostitution dropped following the approval of the law. Nevertheless, the law’s positive effect probably erodes with time, as indicated by the increase in search volumes since 2022. Moreover, the findings establish the negative relationship between enforcement and demand for prostitution, thereby highlighting the necessity of intensive enforcement to buttress the law’s impact on reducing demand for prostitution. Note, however, that in interpreting these findings, the limitations of using Google Trends must be taken into consideration, as described in Section 2.5.

Figure 11: Relative search volume for the terms “prostitution”, “escorts”, and “discreet apartments (from 0-100, April 2021-March 2024), combined with the number of fines imposed three months previously



5.3 Characteristics of Prostitution Consumers and Consumption

5.3.1 Characteristics of Prostitution Consumers

Table 9 presents key sociodemographic characteristics of three consumer groups: (1) Jewish men aged 18-70 who attested to consuming prostitution over the past five years, according to the survey; (2) men who have been fined for consumption, according to police data; and (3) men who have been fined and who have participated in the alternative program, based on Ministry of Welfare data. Note that the data about men who have been fined are indicative of the limited group of men fined for consumption, and not of all consumers; similarly, the data on participants in the alternative program reflect only the characteristics of this small population.

The table indicates that about 60% of those fined are young adults up to age 35, whereas some 40% are aged 35 or above. The mean age of alternative program participants is higher, and nearly 60% are aged 35+.

Table 9: Sociodemographic characteristics of prostitution consumers^ fined for consumption and of participants in the alternative program, in 2021 and 2024 (in %)

		Consumers among the Jewish survey participants^^^		Fined for Consumption^^^		Alternative Program Participants
		2021 (n = 506^^)	2024 (n = 327^^)	2021 (n = 1,320)	2022 (n = 2,622)	2021 – 2023 (n = 107)
Age	18–24	20	18	32	23	14
	25–34	25	23	29	33	28
	35–70	55	59	38	43	59
	71+	0	0	1	1	0
	<i>M</i>	36.79	38.58	33.13	34.68	43
	(<i>SD</i>)	(12.01)	(12.64)	(12.44)	(12.12)	(14.13)
District of Residence	Center	30	29	-	-	28
	Tel Aviv	19	26	-	-	33
	Haifa	14	12	-	-	
	North	7	8	-	-	10
	South	15	13	-	-	13
	Jerusalem	10	10	-	-	9
	Judea & Samaria	4	2	-	-	3

		Consumers among the Jewish survey participants ^{^^}		Fined for Consumption ^{^^^}		Alternative Program Participants
		2021 (<i>n</i> = 506 ^{^^})	2024 (<i>n</i> = 327 ^{^^})	2021 (<i>n</i> = 1,320)	2022 (<i>n</i> = 2,622)	2021 – 2023 (<i>n</i> = 107)
Marital Status	Single	40	37	55	48	57
	Married / in relationship	47	54	20	24	24
	Divorced / separated	8	7	7	8	6
	Widower	1	2	1	0	0
	Unknown	2	0	17	20	13
Religiosity	Ultra-Orthodox / very religious	0	7	-	-	4
	Religious	13	8	-	-	18
	Traditional	26	22	-	-	0
	Secular	62	63	-	-	40
	Unknown	0	0	-	-	38
Country of Birth	Israel	88	91	-	-	76
	Other	12	9	-	-	24
Education	High school	11	9	-	-	37
	High school diploma	28	28	-	-	42
	Vocational / post-secondary	22	18	-	-	-
	Higher education	39	43	-	-	-
	Unknown / refused to answer	0	1			21

[^] Jews who have consumed prostitution over the five years, according to their survey responses.

^{^^} The data are presented after weighting for age and district, in each survey separately. The *n* values refer to the number of respondents without weights.

^{^^^} The table presents the characteristics of those fined in 2021 and 2022, for whom we have individual data. No individual data was obtained in 2023.

To assess the uniqueness of the consumer population, the characteristics of Jews who reported consuming prostitution in the survey were compared – using χ^2 tests for goodness of fit – to those of all Jewish men in Israel, in the relevant age range, according to Central Bureau of Statistics data.²³

It was found that the *religiosity* of consumers was significantly different from that of the general population of Jewish men, in 2021 ($\chi^2_{(2, n = 499)} = 67.62, p < .001$), as well as in 2024 ($\chi^2_{(3, n = 330)} = 50.59, p < .001$). In both years, the rate of those defining themselves “secular” was higher among consumers (62% and 63%, respectively) than among all Jewish men (44%).

The *age* distribution of consumers participating in the 2021 survey was significantly different from that of all Jewish men ($\chi^2_{(2, n = 500)} = 11.32, p < .01$), such that the percentage of men under 35 was higher among consumers (45% vs. 38%). Conversely, in 2024, no significant difference was found between the two respective age distributions.

Finally, regarding *residential area*, in 2024 only, the rate of those living in the Tel Aviv district was significantly higher ($\chi^2_{(6, n = 330)} = 12.96, p < .05$) among consumers than among all Jewish men (26% vs. 21%).

Despite these differences, overall, the findings indicate that the characteristics of consumers are like those of the Jewish male population in Israel. They hail from all social sectors, their education levels are varied, and they do not live in specific areas.



I've met some young ones and some old ones, single and married, fully functioning and less so, but I think that ultimately, what they all share is some kind of desire for contact, a need for intimacy, some kind of difficulty in forming a relationship with a woman". (Parole officer, January 2024)

²³ The 2024 consumers' ages, residential areas and marital status were compared to data processed out of Israel's 74th Statistic Yearbook (2022 mean for age and residential area, 2021 mean for marital status), and the 2021 consumers' characteristics were compared to data processed out of the 71st Statistic Yearbook (2019 mean for age and residential area, and 2018 mean for marital status); the 2024 and 2021 consumers' religiosity was compared to data from the 2022 Social Survey for Israel.

5.3.2 Characteristics of Consumption²⁴

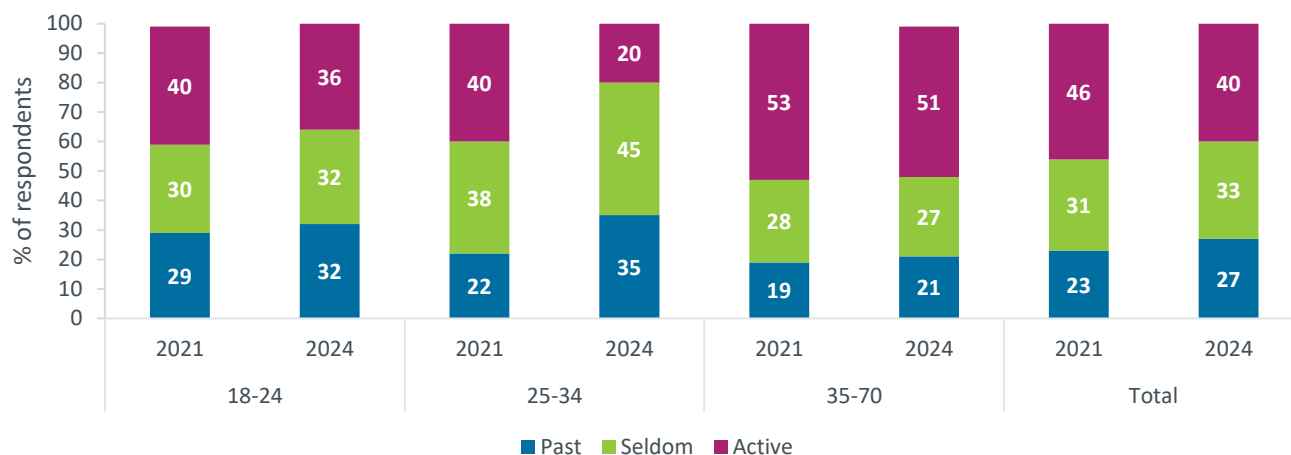
Frequency

The frequency indicator is based on two data: (1) The number of times in which a person has consumed prostitution (once in a lifetime or more); and (2) The frequency of consumption over the year before the survey: in the first measurement – the year before COVID-19, from March 2019 to February 2020; and in the second – the year before the war, from October 2022 to September 2023. The consumption indicator categories were as follows:

- *Past* – once or more in their lifetime, but not in the year examined.
- *Seldom* – once in the year examined.
- *Active* – more than once in their lifetime, and several times in the year examined.

Figure 12 presents the rate of consumers divided into those categories based on the two survey measurements among the general Jewish population. About a quarter of respondents in the two measurements had consumed prostitution only in the *past*, namely in the five years before the survey, but not in the year prior to COVID-19 or in the year before the Israel-Hamas war (March 2019–February 2020, and October 2022–September 2023, respectively); about a third consumed prostitution *seldom*; and nearly half were *active*. Among those aged 35-70, the rate of active consumers (51%–53%) was higher than in the other age groups. Moreover, among men aged 25-34, the percentage of active consumers dropped from 40 to 20 between the surveys ($r_c = .20$, $p < .05$).

Figure 12: Frequency of prostitution consumption reported by Jews aged 18-70 in the 2021 ($n = 492$) and 2024 ($n = 320$) surveys, by age group (in %)



²⁴ According to data of survey respondents (Jewish men aged 18-70) who have consumed prostitution at least once over the five years prior to the survey year (hereafter, "consumers").

Prostitution Consumption Sites

Professionals involved in drafting the law and preparing for its implementation feared that the law would push prostitution to more hidden places (see, e.g., the [Report of the Interministerial Team on Examining Tools for Minimizing the Consumption of Prostitution, December 2017](#)), and from the urban setting to rural areas. This was a source of concern for enforcement authorities, since in rural areas, locating the sites and enforcing the law would be even more challenging than in visible sites and areas. Moreover, it was a concern for treatment professionals since the harm to individuals in prostitution in hidden sites and areas could be more severe, and outreach could be more challenging. To assess the transition to hidden sites and areas, we examined where prostitution was consumed in two points in time.

In the two measurements, we found that the most common site for consuming prostitution was discreet apartments – about half of the respondents reported having consumed prostitution in the year prior to the survey year mainly in this type of site. About 20% reported mainly engaging escorts. A similar percentage consumed prostitution mainly in brothels or in brothels disguised as massage parlors. Only few of the respondents (5%-7%) consumed prostitution mainly in an open site (street or car). Comparing the two surveys, we identified no change in prostitution sites between the years 2019 and 2023, and it appears that the transition from massage parlors and brothels to discreet apartments reported by individuals in prostitution and police officers had begun before the law came into effect, and was therefore not reflected in the surveys.

Moreover, the data from the two measurements of the consumption survey did not support the assumption that prostitution was “migrating” from urban to rural areas. The consumption of prostitution in urban areas remained high compared to rural areas. Thus, 83% and 85% of respondents attested to having consumed prostitution in urban sites in 2019 and 2023, respectively. Only 17% and 15% attested to having consumed prostitution in rural areas in those respective years. The difference between the years is not statistically significant.

Gender of individuals in prostitution

The gender of individuals in prostitution is important for understanding the different needs and allocating the resources for the services they require. The great majority of consumers in both surveys (91% in 2021 and 90% in 2024) consumed prostitution from a woman; far fewer (8% and 7%, respectively) from a man; and 2% and 3% from transgender people.

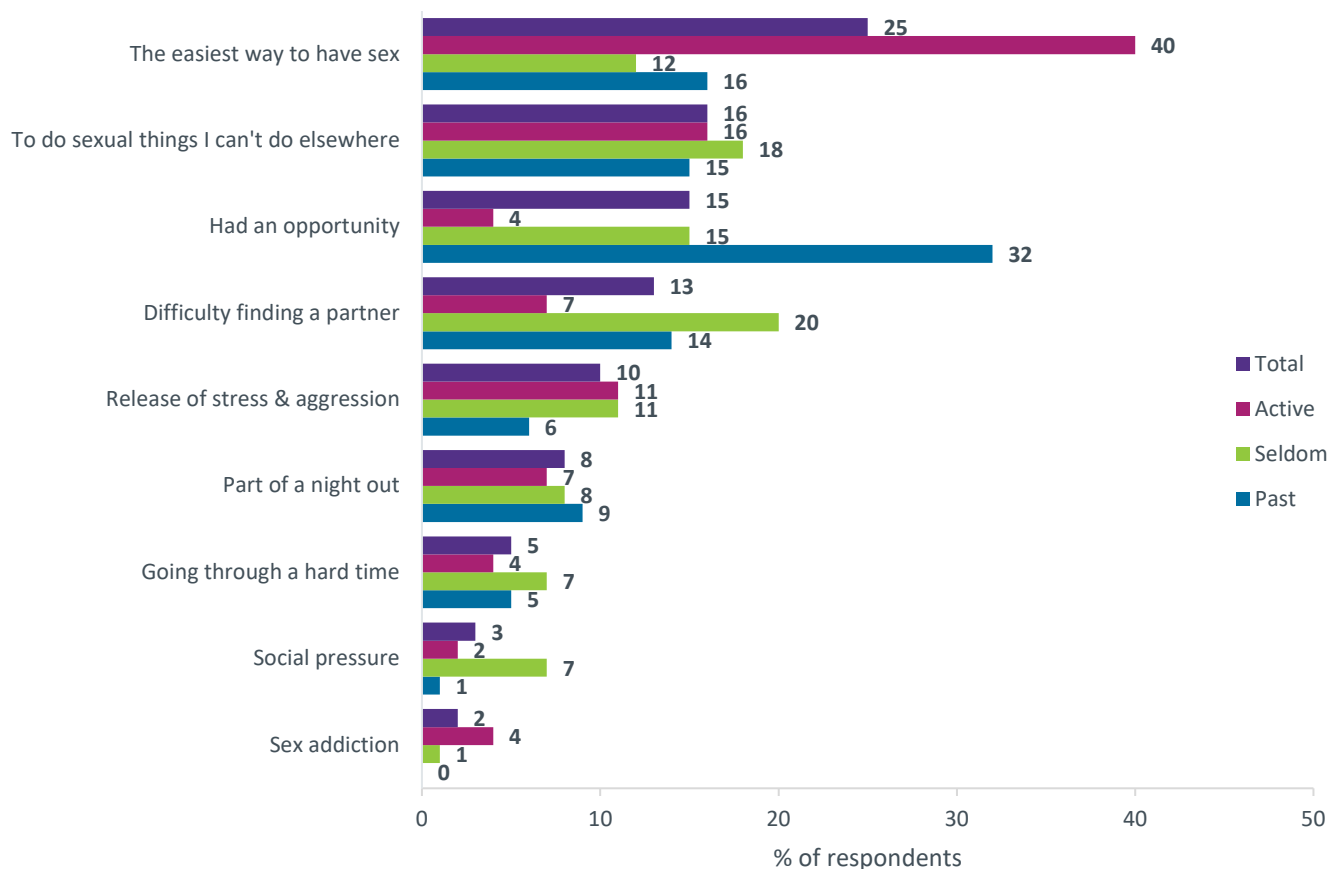
5.4 Consumers' Attitudes and Perceptions

5.4.1 Motivations for Consuming Prostitution

Motivations for consuming prostitution were examined in the consumer surveys conducted in 2021 and 2024, in the survey of alternative program participants, as well as in in-depth interviews with professionals, and consumers (including program participants). The data obtained from consumer surveys showed little change from 2021 to 2024, and we therefore present only the data from the second survey. Figure 13 details the motivations of Jewish consumers aged 18-70, overall and by consumption frequency – “past”, “seldom”, and “active” (see subsection 5.3.2 for definitions of these categories). As seen in the figure, the most common motive for consuming prostitution among Jewish prostitution consumers was: “the easiest way to have sex”. The second most frequent motive is “doing sexual acts that you couldn't do otherwise”. The examination of motives by frequency in 2024 shows that the active consumers report the “easiest way” and the “sex addiction” motives more than do others, whereas those in the “past” category have done it more often because they “had an opportunity”.

A different set of motives was reported in the survey of **participants in the alternative program**. Most frequently reported were “difficulty finding a partner” (27%), “had an opportunity” (24%), “the easiest way to have sex” (17%), “part of a night out” (15%), and “bad mental state” (14%). Moreover, a relatively high number of participants reported consuming prostitution because of sex addiction (8%). Thus, they mentioned “difficulty finding a partner” and “had an opportunity” as the two leading reasons for consuming prostitution, whereas in the general survey these were not leading motives and were important mainly for “seldom” or “past” consumers. Another important finding is related to the “easiest way to have sex”, where there is similarity in the results of program participants and “seldom” or “past” consumers (included in the general survey). In this motive, there is a clear difference compared to the “active” group, for whom this motive is significantly stronger than among the three other groups. It appears that the motives for consumption among program participants are similar to those of “past” and “seldom” consumers. A possible explanation is that active consumers are not interested in participating in the program and changing their behavior and attitudes.

Figure 13: Rate of Jewish consumers aged 18-70 reporting their motives for prostitution consumption, by frequency of consumption, 2024 survey (N = 324; in %)



In-depth interviews with the participants in the alternative program revealed that whereas some consumed prostitution out of a physical-sexual urge, others repeatedly emphasized the socioemotional need:



Individuals wouldn't just arrive and go to someone. Individuals lack something, they need love, they need contact, it doesn't matter what. They don't know how to do it right, so they go and do it in a twisted way. The person himself is also very much harmed by that, right? Mentally, it's very difficult, like you're reducing your own value to rock bottom, you're paying

for someone who can give you a little human contact, it's simple, it's a very low place... I mainly used to go to girls' private homes. You have all kinds of prostitutes. So I preferred those I knew, and they knew me, and there was a kind of friendship, sort of. That's what's mainly did it for me. The relationship that was kind of more personal, because that's what I ultimately missed. I didn't miss the physical act. I missed something emotional... In fact, how do you know that you too are a person who deserves love, and how do you know that others also want to receive love from you, and how do you do it with confidence". (Yosef, program participant, January 2024)



I think me and others who consume prostitution, we're also victims of something, could be... from our childhood, difficult things in our past. I mean, I personally look at other men who manage to have an intimate relationship with someone, get engaged and marry and some have a girlfriend. But for me this was very difficult and very problematic to form a relationship with someone and I had to have sex through consuming prostitution" (Muhammad, program participant, June 2022)

Another participant said he became involved in consuming prostitution through friends, and that he does so as part of hanging out with them. He said he now realized that his friends "dragged him down" to prostitution and, therefore, he tried to avoid contact with them.

Understanding the motivations that lead individuals to consume prostitution and their consumption patterns can help in planning public education campaigns adjusted to the various target audiences, tailor the interventions for the needs of each subpopulation, and contribute to designing additional moves to reduce consumption. According to professionals, an occasional consumer who came to consume prostitution in a one-time outing with friends is very different from a regular, long-time consumer, let alone a sex or prostitution addict, hence the need for interventions tailored to the type of consumption.

5.4.2 The Damages of Consumption and Consumers' Willingness to Stop

Among the wide range of negative effects of the consumption of prostitution, consumers reported being harmed as well. This harm was mentioned in interviews with participants in the alternative program participants. For example, some said that consuming prostitution involved significant expense. Other participants reported that their consumption affected their self-confidence:

“ It sort of damaged my self-esteem, the way I look at myself. You can say I used to be disgusted with myself. It made me love myself less”. (Muhammad, Alternative program participant, June 2022)

“ It affected me when it comes to confidence, I think. [...] I go to a woman, and I leave her mentally drained... Ultimately, of course, you don't get something from it, it doesn't give you a solution for anything, it only lowers your confidence, it doesn't give the solution for what you need. You lack one thing, you think you'll get it, and then you don't get a real solution”. (Yosef, Alternative program participant, January 2024)

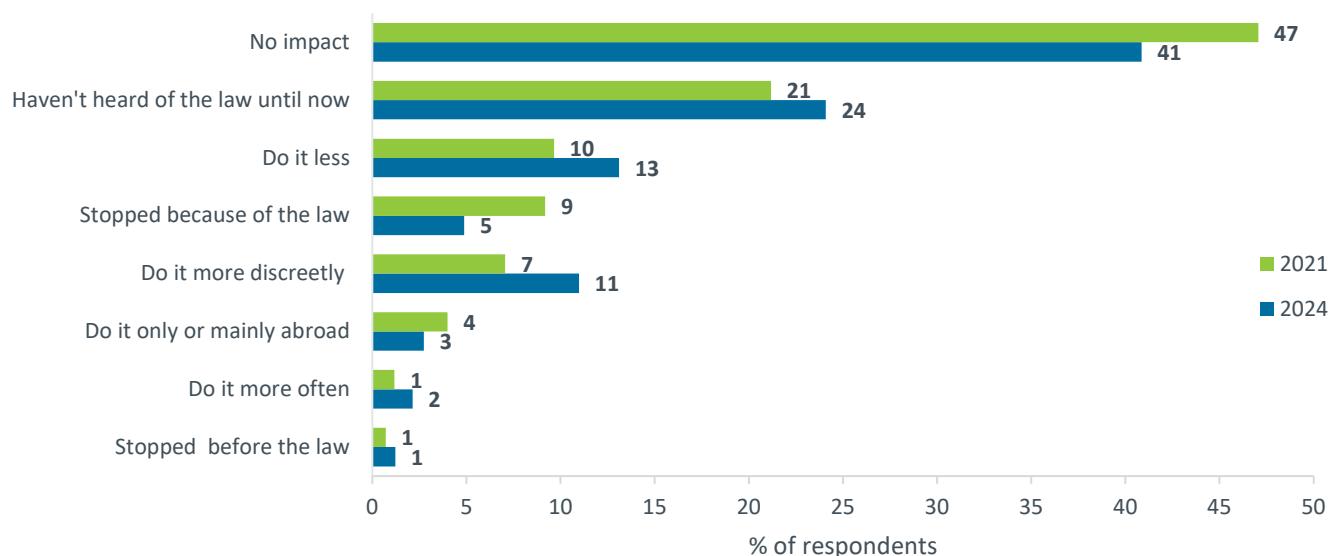
In the 2024 consumption survey, about one-third of the consumers reported having been harmed by consuming prostitution, whereas in the survey of program participants, three-quarters reported having been harmed, and only a quarter reported otherwise. Among all adult Jewish consumers and program participants, the most common forms of harm were “bad feeling”, “shame”, and “expenses” (see details in Figures G-1-G-4).

Following the law, prostitution became illegal. Nevertheless, and despite the harm to consumers, about a quarter of the 2021 and 2024 consumption survey participants admitted they were not interested in quitting. Specifically, in 2024, 40% of the active consumers reported not interested in quitting.

5.4.3 The Law's Impact on Consumers

Consumers were asked about the effect of the law on them in both surveys – in 2021, around the time enforcement began, and in 2024. As you can see in Figure 14, in 2021 and 2024, 47% and 41%, respectively, reported not being affected by the law. In 2021, 21% did not even hear about the law, a rate that only increased in 2024, to 24%. About a quarter of the consumers reported having changed their behavior following the law. Some reported having stopped consuming prostitution (9% in 2021 and 5% in 2024), and others reported consuming less (10% in 2021 and 13% in 2024). Still others changed their habits, but not as the legislation intended. For example, some reported consuming prostitution more discreetly (7% in 2021 and 11% in 2024), or intending to consume only abroad (4% and 3%, respectively) (see additional data on the law's impact by age group and consumption frequency in Tables F-1 and F-2).

Figure 14: The law's impact on prostitution consumers, according to 2021 ($n = 432$) and 2024 ($n = 327$) surveys (in %)



Note: The data of all respondents are presented after weighting for age, in each measurement separately. The n value refers to the number of respondents, without weights.

This complexity is evident in the testimony of a consumer, who said that despite some fear of the police, he does not avoid consuming prostitution:

“ I still feel that urge. Even before the law, I wanted to prevent myself from doing it – it’s not the real thing. After it’s over I look at it as a waste of money. I’d fall into it sometimes. The mental part prevents me from stopping; the law makes me afraid, but not so much as to change my decision. The police can’t enforce everything.)Omer, consumer, November 2022).

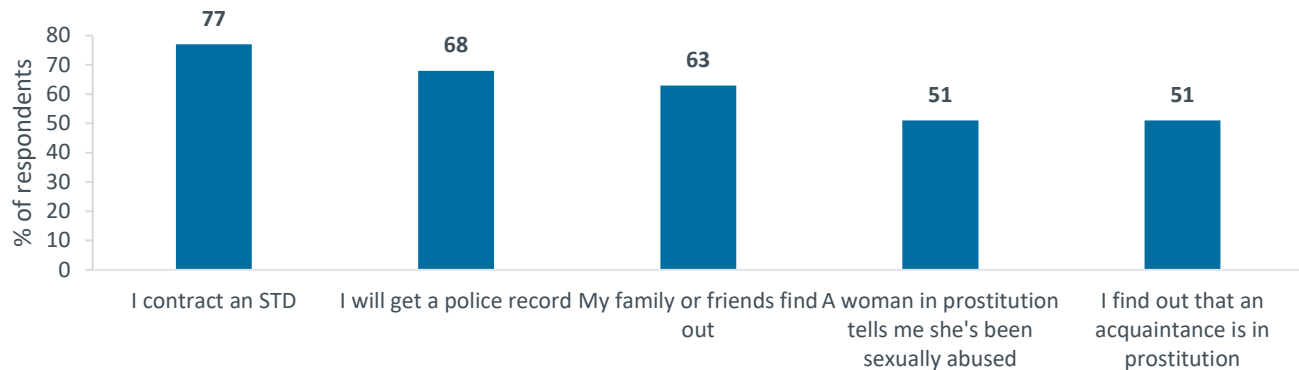
Conversely, another consumer who had participated in the alternative program talked about the effect of the fine:

“ Every time I now consider going to a brothel and such, I will recall that incident [of being fined], and then decide not to” (Muhammad, 32, program participant, June 2022)

In the 2024 survey, consumers were asked *what would make them stop consuming prostitution*. Figure 15 indicates that according to consumer reports, mainly circumstances that affect them directly will make them

stop consuming prostitution. Thus, 77% of participants would stop consuming if they contracted a STD, 68% if it led to a criminal record, and 63% if their consumption was revealed to their family or friends. Fewer consumers believed they would quit for reasons related to individuals in prostitution: if they find out that a person in prostitution had been sexually victimized, or if a relative of theirs was in prostitution (51% each).

Figure 15: Circumstances that may cause prostitution consumers to stop consuming, based on the 2024 survey (n = 329; in %)



Note: The data of all respondents are presented after weighting for age, in each measurement separately. The n value refers to the number of respondents , without weights.

5.5 The Alternative Program

The law and attendant regulations offer the option of participating in the alternative program rather than paying the administrative fine. The program is managed by the Senior Division of the Adult Probation Service. It includes a group psychoeducational workshop or an individual intervention for 6-10 hours for the fined consumer. The objectives of the program, as defined in the law, are among other things, to provide knowledge and increase awareness of the harm caused to individuals in prostitution, in order to prevent the recurrence of the offense.

In 2021-2022, 2.6% of the Israeli citizens who were fined chose to participate in the program.²⁵ In 2021-2023, only 109 consumers who were fined chose to participate, of whom 92 were found suitable, and 79 (86%) completed the program successfully. This small number is due, among other things, to low response rates and the reduced number of fines imposed in the second half of 2022 and in 2023.

Information about the possibility of participating in the program appears on the fine notice, and is also presented on the [Gov.il](#) and [Kol Zchut](#) websites. Half (54%) of the program participants who responded to the questionnaire reported having learned about it from the fine notice; 30% heard about it from the media (internet, newspaper, etc.); and 20% were informed by the police officer who fined them.



It was on the government's website, [I saw it] when paying, there was a rubric for selecting the workshop. In the fine notice itself you see it in small print below, you can hardly see it, only when you go into the government website can you see this option (Roy, program participant, June 2022)

The alternative program includes the following three stages:

1. Meeting with a probation officer to assess suitability – the meeting is held after the consumer fined requests to participate, in order to assess the candidate's suitability for the workshop based on their background and consumption habits.
2. Group psychoeducational workshop that includes three two-hour sessions. The sessions are led by an external facilitator, accompanied by a probation officer. When no workshop is available in the candidate's residential area within a reasonable time, or when they have a language, mental, cognitive, or physical difficulty, individual treatment is provided instead. This treatment also includes three sessions and is provided by an external facilitator.
3. Individual summary meeting with the probation officer, in which the officer helps the participant work through the process undergone in the workshop, and the two discuss options for future treatment as required.

Most participants viewed the meetings with the probation officer as significant. They reported feeling that the meetings were conducted respectfully and sensitively, which enabled them to share their personal feelings about consuming prostitution with the probation officer.

²⁵ In 2023, no data were obtained about the consumers who were fined, but only on the number of fines, so this datum cannot be calculated for that year. Moreover, data on undocumented migrant consumers fined were obtained at the fine rather than consumer level, for all the years under study, and they were therefore excluded from our analysis.



I just felt comfortable telling those things to the probation officer, highly personal things which I usually don't share with others, and this issue of prostitution consumption is extremely sensitive, and I haven't shared it with other people . It's actually the first time I shared it in that meeting with her, and I felt that something changed within me, it's like if you have a secret that you've been keeping all your life and you reveal it to someone and they listen to you and accept you the way you are, without criticizing you, so it changed me for the better". (Muhammad, program participant, June 2022)

Most (90%) of the participants also reported being satisfied with the workshop to a high or very high degree. A full 99% agreed with the statement "the workshop was conducted in a respectful atmosphere and enabled free discourse", to a high or very high degree. Most also indicated that the time spent in the workshop was utilized well (90%). The participants' responses suggested that they gained important insights from the workshop. Specifically, most felt it enabled them to think deeply about why they consumed prostitution (81%), that it provided them with new information about prostitution and its consumption (68%), and that they now better understood the harm done to both consumers (80%) and individuals in prostitution (79%).

Fourteen classes of the alternative program were held in 2021-2023, attended by a total of 76 fined consumers. Three other consumers received individual treatment.

The first session of the workshop is dedicated to getting acquainted, followed by a preliminary discussion of the participants' attitudes and perceptions regarding prostitution and its consumption. In the this session, the participants also meet with a Ministry of Justice representative who talks about the law, its rationale, the underlying social issues , etc. The second session focuses on individuals in prostitution and consumers. The participants view a short film about a woman in prostitution and then discuss individuals in prostitution. Next, the focus shifts to the consumers, their motives and the harm entailed. In the third session, the participants meet with a nurse from a public health clinic who discusses diseases that may be contracted due to consuming prostitution. The session ends with a summary and processing of the workshop content and the process undergone by the participants (for further details, see Table G-1).

Some participants indicated that there were additional subjects that should have been discussed in greater depth in the workshop. For example, some suggested adding content that would expose them to the phenomenon from the perspective of individuals in prostitution, such as additional videos or meetings with individuals in prostitution. Some felt the need for more medical and professional information, which they found important and new for them. Others felt there should be greater focus on them as consumers, particularly on the motivations

for consumption, relationships and vulnerability. Note that in the survey completed by program participants, the most common motivation for consuming prostitution was difficulty in forming a relationship (26%).

A number of professionals from outside the probation service criticized some of the content delivered in the workshop. In particular, they argued that the focus on the risks of consuming prostitution, including contracting STDs, labels individuals in prostitution and exacerbates the stigma against them. And while many of the participants reported that fear of STDs was a deterrent, the professionals felt that using this factor in educating for avoiding consumption was problematic, due to the negative labeling of individuals in prostitution.

To examine the change in the participants' attitudes as a result of the workshop, one questionnaire was administered to the participants before their first meeting with the probation officer, and another at the end of the workshop. The survey indicates certain attitude changes regarding prostitution, individuals in prostitution, and its consumption.

Following the workshop, more participants agreed with the statement: "Prostitution is a social phenomenon that offends human dignity" (from 64% before to 79% after). Moreover, more participants agreed that prostitution had a negative effect on men's attitudes towards women (49% before, 63% after). After the workshop, the percentage of those agreeing that "prostitution is a job like any other" dropped significantly (from 26% to 12%), and this is lower than the percentage who agree with this statement among the general population (25%). After the workshop, more participants agreed that "Most women in prostitution are interested in leaving it" (52% before and 70% after). Finally, more participants who had completed the workshop did not agree that "Most women in prostitution enjoy what they do" (67%-77%).



[I used to think] that maybe I'm the one who offended her least out of all those who were with her, so that in a way, she likes the fact that it's me who came to her and not someone else. Yeah, maybe it was good for her. Without the workshop, I wouldn't have known it harms them". (Yosef, program participant, January 2024)

Another perception examined related to the legitimacy of consuming prostitution. The rate of participants who disagreed with the statement that "For a man who needs sexual release it's legitimate to go to a woman in prostitution" increased from 54% before the workshop to 70% afterwards. In the interviews as well, some participants shared a significant experience that changed their attitudes in that regard:



Obviously, I now see things differently. I'm more aware of what I used to do. It also made me stop. The option of consuming prostitution is hardly there anymore. It made me think deeply, search, make more efforts to seek a solution, instead of every time I feel I want to consume prostitution to simply go ahead and do it" (Muhammad, program participant, June 2022)

Moreover, after the workshop, there was an increase in the number of participants interested in consuming less prostitution (from 5% before to 12% after), as well as among the participants considering quitting (13%-17%). At the same time, after the workshop, there was an increase in the rate of respondents who assumed they would find it difficult to quit (16%-33%), possibly suggesting that after the workshop, the participants had a better grasp of the difficulty involved. Indeed, one participant shared that following the workshop, he was trying harder to quit, without always succeeding:



After the workshop, it happened to me once that I went – a friend dragged me, I didn't really want to. We were after a night out at the club... I also regretted it. We were also a bit high. And at a moment's whim, yes, I did go with him in the end... So yes, the workshop made me understand it very well. I had opportunities that again – it looks weird that friends take you, and it happened to me – now I hardly go with these friends anymore, but at the time I used to, the kind of friends that pull you down. They would go up to all kinds of discreet apartments and such, and I'd tell them no... I'd also explain to them that there's no point in paying somebody and such. And I'd stay in the car. And it happened a lot. But once I did go up, I regret to say. And since then, not at all, nothing". (Yosef, program participant, January 2024)

The question arises as to how much of a change the workshop can affect. As we see in the interviews with the participants, as well as with the probation officers and facilitators, the workshop can lead to change, but this also depends on the participants themselves – their attitudes, willingness and desire to change.

The public attitudes survey asked the participants if they thought all consumers should be compelled to participate in the alternative program. In 2021 and 2024, 62% and 65% respectively thought this should be done.

In the prostitution consumption survey, consumers were asked whether they'd rather pay the fine or participate in the program. Over the years, there was an increase in the rate of consumers opting for the program (32% in 2021 and 40% in 2024). This rate is significantly higher than the actual participation rate (about 2%), but it does suggest potential for increasing participation in the future.

5.6 Addiction to Consuming Prostitution and Sex

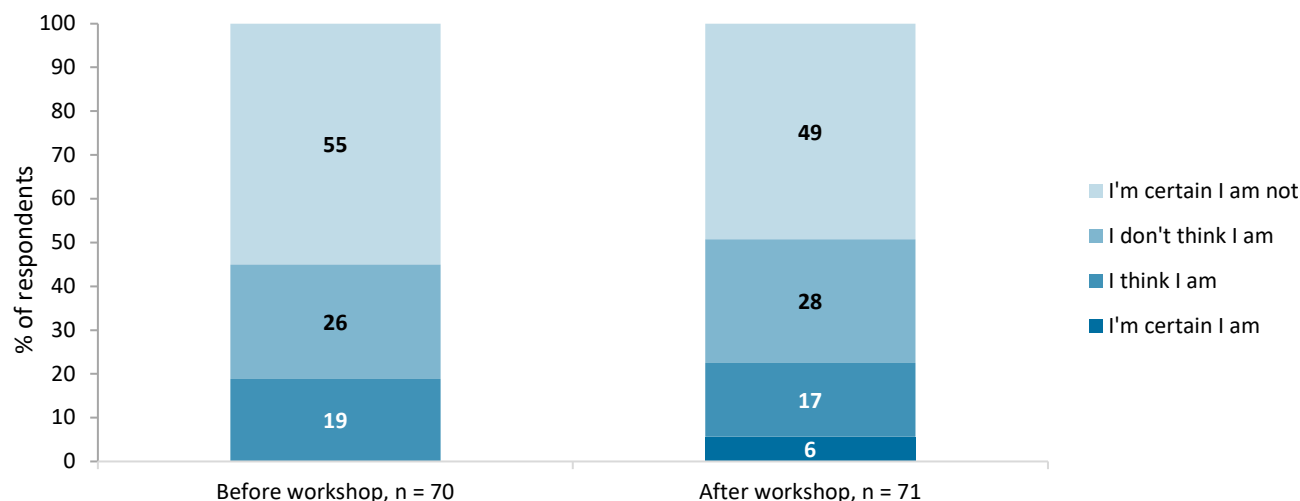
The population of male sex addicts is different from the rest of the prostitution consumers. To them, participating in the alternative program is insufficient – they require therapeutic intervention and long-term and intensive support. Note that the sex and prostitution addict is not always aware of their addiction, which may be seen as a natural and normal urge. Accordingly, participating in a workshop such as the one provided in the alternative program can at least lead to acknowledgement of addiction, as a prelude to therapy.

Figure 16 presents the respondents' self-perception as sex addicts (or not), before and after the workshop. After the workshop, 6% of the participants were certain they were addicted to sex, whereas *none* reported thus prior to the workshop. Thus, the workshop could have affected the participants' addiction awareness. One consumer described his addiction and entry into therapy as follows:



I don't recall even a week without sex for money, without a prostitute. If I had [enough] for a [massage] parlor I'd go, and if not, I'd grab a junkie on the street, and if I really had nothing, I'd go to a peep show for five shekels. During my military service I realized there was a problem because I couldn't form a relationship with women because all I saw in them was sex. I was discharged for a mental health condition... I'd go to the [Diamond] Exchange area [in Ramat Gan] to catch prostitutes. Over the years it developed, and my entire day would revolve around sex... I knew the girls were miserable, I knew that ten individuals had been there before me, but I really didn't care... I got to the point that I had nothing to eat. I'd get into extreme situations. I couldn't imagine my life without it. I'd make lots of deals with God, that if I won the lottery, I wouldn't go to prostitutes... and nothing helped... I got to the point that I could no longer stand myself. Enough. I started working on myself. "Just for today". At first, I would experience detox to the point of real pain. My self-esteem was so low, I was ready to buy self-esteem for money". (Consumer, treated in a sex addiction rehab program, July 2023)

Figure 16: Self-perception as sex addict, according to questionnaires before and after the Alternative Program (in %)



5.6.1 Services for Sex and Prostitution Addicts

The Mental Health Division in the Department of Addictions at the Ministry of Health offers two unique mobile services for prostitution consumers addicted to prostitution and sex: the Compass clinic, active since 2020 at the Mifgashim Center in Beit Shemesh, run by the Retorno NGO which focuses on the prevention and treatment of addictions ; and the Move clinic in Tel Aviv, active since July 2023 and run by the Public Health Association. The six-month treatment programs are fully funded by the ministry. They are designed to end the addictive behavior and deepen the understanding of the harm caused by the addiction to others. The treatment includes individual, group, couple and family sessions, and close support by a sponsor, according to the 12-Step Program. At the Move clinic, the treatment also included psychiatric diagnosis. The idea is that in the case of addicts in a relationship, addiction to sex affects intimacy, so that to help the addict, his partner must be brought in and be helped as well.

The clients arrive at the program through Sexaholics Anonymous (SA), word of mouth, or treatment professionals, and at their own initiative, in response to daily ads on the internet. According to professionals in these services, the motivation for treatment is mostly external, specifically pressure by an intimate partner. According to them, the law is not perceived by addicts as a motive for treatment – some are completely unaware of it when starting treatment.

In 2020, thirty clients were treated at the Compass clinic, of whom ten dropped out. In 2021, there were fifteen. In 2022, the service shut down due to the failure to win a tender, but it resumed in 2023, with 32 clients. Their mean age was 36, and most self-identified as ultra-Orthodox or religious Jews. All Compass clients are addicted to consuming sex for money, but according to staff members, they find it difficult to identify themselves as such:

“ [The clients] would prefer the general definition [of addiction] that includes for example porn and masturbation – softer things. Most would tell themselves the story that they are “different” [prostitution] clients, that they bond [with the prostitute]. Somebody told me that someone [a prostitute] had told him, if you weren’t married and I wasn’t a prostitute we’d be married... The mechanisms that know how to live with this conflict are highly developed – they can bear the split of studying the holy scriptures by day and going to prostitutes by night. They felt bad with themselves plenty of times”. (Social worker specializing in prostitution addiction, July 2023)

The Move clinic has thus far treated 35 clients, about half of them religious or ultra-Orthodox Jews – even among those self-identifying as secular, most are formerly religious. Their mean age is 35. Most are addicted to sex, and about a third are addicted to consuming prostitution specifically. One of the therapists described it as follows:

“ The distinction [between sex and prostitution addiction] is not therapeutic but rather dictated by the law. There is funding for prostitution addicts”. (July 2023)

Another described the treatment process:

“ You take all the unhealthy sexual practices and start being clean, by quitting some of them. You start with the most severe, such as live sex for pay, and quit it, and then you add the erotic massage. And then you add also the paid videochat, dating websites, porn and masturbation”. (Social worker in a sex addiction clinic, April 2023)

At the end of the treatment, most clients are referred to SA or another type of private treatment. According to the therapists in these programs, six months are not enough to treat the addiction, and the treatment duration must be extended. Another issue that arose in the interviews was the need to open the centers in the evenings to make them accessible to a wider audience.

At the Senior Division, Adult Probation Service, which runs the alternative program, probation officers provide a preliminary diagnosis of sex addiction in the suitability meeting. Nevertheless, any reference they give for treatment is no more than a recommendation at the final session. As one probation officer said,



At the moment, I don't see any motivation for working on this issue. It's hard to get to the gist of it in the three meetings and understand the depth of addiction, its extent and meaning, the price the individual pays... We haven't yet referred any [addicts to treatment]. But then again, nobody was interested". (February 2023)

One professional stated that the sex addicts among the prostitution consumers are suffering terribly and need help – just like any other addict. She said sex addicts needed a dedicated anti-addiction program or an SA group. It is important to be aware of the problem of addiction to prostitution during the alternative program, to be able to identify cases of addiction and refer them to the services mentioned above. Moreover, efforts must be made to locate sex addicts proactively, to provide them with a suitable service.

5.7 Summary: Prostitution Consumers

According to the prostitution consumption surveys conducted in 2021 and 2024, the rate of Jewish men reporting consumption in 2024 was higher than in 2021. This finding is valid both for the rate of consumption over the five years prior to the survey: 12.2% in 2024 compared to 9.2% in 2021, and for the rate of consumption in the year prior to the survey: 9.0% in the year prior to the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas War compared to 7.1 in the year prior to COVID-19.

In order to further examine trends in the demand for prostitution, continuously and over a longer duration, search data from the Google Trends website were analyzed. It was found that in the period after the parliamentary approval of the law in late 2018, the RSV of terms related to prostitution dropped. It was also found that subsequent fluctuations in search volumes were statistically related to changes in the number of fines issued to offenders. Since the middle of 2022, there has been an upward trend in the extent of searches for prostitution-related terms, consistent with the general decrease in enforcement.

As shown in the prostitution consumption surveys, consumers belong to diverse social sectors, have varied education levels and reside in different areas of the country. About 40% of consumers have consumed prostitution more than once in the year prior to the survey. The most common site for consuming prostitution is discreet apartments. The most common motivation for consuming prostitution is that it is "the easiest way to have sex". Despite the effects of consumption on the consumers, about one quarter reported that they were not interested in quitting. As for the impact of the law on their behavior, about a quarter of the consumers reported having never heard of the law, and another 40% and more reported having heard about it without being influenced by it. Nevertheless, about 20% reported having stopped consuming prostitution or reduced their consumption following the law.

In 2021-2023, only 109 (2%) of all fined consumers chose to participate in the alternative program; 79 (86%) of them completed it successfully. The program includes three group sessions and two meetings with a parole officer. According to a survey conducted among the participants, the program changed their attitudes towards prostitution, individuals in prostitution and the consumption of prostitution – to a degree. Some participants credited the program with helping them acknowledge their sex addiction. The population of sex-addicted men differs from other prostitution consumers, and requires therapy and long-term support, currently provided in two centers funded by the Ministry of Health. Efforts must be made to reach out to additional sex addicts in order to provide them with suitable services.

6. The Public Education Campaign and Public Attitudes

The law attaches great importance to public education activities designed to transform the public attitudes toward prostitution, people in prostitution and its consumption. In its "Purpose" section, the law states that it is designed "reduce prostitution by prescribing a prohibition on prostitution consumption, *as part of a combined effort that includes education and information for the public* and expanding the means of treatment and rehabilitation for populations in prostitution [...] acknowledging the harmful aspects of prostitution and the damages it entails".

The Resolution, made around the same time the law was passed, allocated budgets for that purpose as well, through the interministerial team. This chapter examines public education and information activities undertaken by both government and non-governmental organizations as required by the law in order to change social perceptions, from the view that people in prostitution are co-offenders to the view that they are victims of the offense of prostitution consumption. The chapter will also review changes in public attitudes towards prostitution.

“ I believe in education and information. Because the Johns are anyone, even people I know, and you know and we don't know it. Many of them are normative people and I believe that when the situation is explained to them, this will make them change their habits and our attitudes. And I waited so long for the law, and it didn't happen. (Social activist, February 2022)

Sources of information: Interviews with officials and professionals; mapping of services; survey of public attitudes at two periods of time; administrative data from the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Welfare, and Ministry of Health.

6.1. Information Campaigns about the Law and Prostitution

The Resolution required four ministries to conduct public education and information campaigns about prostitution, and the law.

6.1.1 Ministry of Justice

In 2020-2021, three campaigns were conducted in social media and on Google in order to raise awareness of the law. The campaigns targeted Jewish and Arab men aged 18+. According to the ministry, there were more than 113,000 visits to the Justice Ministry website and 23 million views, and the rates of clicking on the ad were high, relatively



to the budget invested. In addition to the campaigns, the ministry's PR unit promoted multiple articles in the press about the law, to increase exposure. An additional campaign by the ministry, together with the Ministry of Welfare – as part of the Resolution – has been delayed due to the Israel-Hamas war.

6.1.2 Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health holds preventive workshops in settings for youth and young adults at risk, as well as for professionals. The workshops address attitudes on a variety of issues related to positive sexuality and to sexuality that is risky and abusive; the prostitution continuum; as well as on healthy aspects of sexuality. The workshops for youth are held in small, gender-exclusive groups, to enable open and nonjudgemental discourse. In the workshops for professionals, the focus is on attitudes and perceptions, while dealing with situations from the daily lives of the youth. Reports by the ministry indicated that, thanks to the budgets provided under the Resolution, there was a significant increase in the number of workshops and workshop facilitators compared to the period before 2020. In 2021 there was no public information activity due to the need to float a tender. The workshops resumed during 2022-2023. The organization conducting the workshops on behalf of the ministry is the Israel AIDS Taskforce. In 2022-2023, 157 workshops were held with 2,886 youth and young adults at risk and 2,432 professionals from various disciplines.

6.1.3 Ministry of Welfare

The ministry operates the Turning Point project through the "Toda'a" (Consciousness) NGO. It provides education on consensual sexuality, coping with abusive situations and sexual victimization, avoiding entry into prostitution, preventing consumption, and social responsibility. The project targets professionals and youth at risk served by the ministry's "Shalem" (Rehabilitation, Accompaniment, Prevention) Administration, with emphasis on cultural and lingual adaptation and an open, eye-to-eye discourse. The activity with professionals emphasizes in-depth learning about prostitution, how to conduct a dialogue on sensitive issues, and on outreach. In 2021-2023, 1,262 adolescent girls and boys participated in 306 workshops. In addition, 4,080 professionals participated in courses, symposiums and team training sessions.

6.1.4 Ministry of Education

Since the Ministry of Education has access to virtually all youth in Israel through schools and other educational settings, it has an important role in providing information and in preventing the consumption of prostitution by young adults. The Unit for Sexuality and Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children and Youth at the Psychological Consulting Service (PCS) deals with educating students for healthy sexuality and promoting educators' abilities

to identify students in distress due to sexual abuse. According to ministry policy, schools are required to conduct some of the programs, but most of them are elective and are chosen by the schools at their discretion and according to their needs. Moreover, schools can choose to select workshops for positive sexuality from various service providers. Since there is no follow-up on these programs, it is impossible to estimate the number of staff members and students who have participated in them or to measure their impact.

The Psychological Consulting Service has developed programs for students and staff. For example, the Strengths on the Way, a life skills program for K-12 students, To Grow and Thrive, for six-graders countrywide (with a total of 3,500 workshops), and Positive Friendships and Relationships for 11th-graders (with 63,000 participants in 2022-23). Note that the ministry's programs are universal, that is, they do not deal directly with prostitution or its consumption, based on a pedagogical approach that stresses education for healthy sexuality and positive communication between intimate partners.

Another sphere of activity includes training programs for educators and educational counsellors, designed to develop their abilities in identifying and reaching out to children and youth at risk and in distress. The programs also train the teachers to talk to students about the subject, emphasizing the development of students' help-seeking skills, as well as the importance of reaching out to them and referring them to the appropriate services. New training materials have also been added.



Normally speaking, what is the school's role? To be in touch, not to give up on the child. Such girls usually have difficulty attending – to see to it that she goes to school, to encourage her, to find every possible way of making her come to school. And to be in contact with welfare and the therapeutic professionals, to make sure she doesn't slip out of our hands".
(School counsellor, June 2023)

6.1.5 Lobbying and Information Campaigns by NGOs Active in the Area of Prostitution

NGOs, some of which support the law and others oppose it, provide information to the public through their Facebook pages and work to change public attitudes to prostitution through websites, lectures, events, policy papers and close contact with the press. They also lobby with the ministries. The main NGOs active in this arena are the Task Force on Human Trafficking and Prostitution, Lo Omdot Me'negged, Social Space, TransIsrael, Argaman, and the Israeli Association of Sex Education, which amalgamates all organizations and individuals engaged in sex education in Israel.



You must drill down to the root causes. Appropriate sexuality has to be explained. People need to have options". (Service director, July 2023)

6.1.6 Awareness of the Law

Public awareness of the law is essential for the success of the integrated efforts to implement it and naturally depends on public information campaigns. Surveys conducted for this research project in 2021 and 2024 found that 61% of the respondents were aware of the law, a figure that did not change across measurements. Examining different population groups showed that the rate of those familiar of the law among young adults aged 18-24 (50% in 2021 and 46% in 2024) was lower than the respective rate in the 25-49 age group (63% in both measurements), as well as among adults aged 50+ (58% in 2021 and 63% in 2024). Chi-squared tests show that these age differences are significant ($r_c = .07, p < .01$).

In both 2021 and 2024, the rates of those familiar with the law were higher among Jewish men (71% and 79%, respectively) than among Arab men (53% and 43%; 2021: $r_c = 9.7, p < .01$; 2024: $r_c = 43.7, p < .01$), and among Jewish women (59% and 59%) compared to Arab women (39% and 37%; 2021: $r_c = 13.7, p < .01$; 2024: $r_c = 11.1, p < .01$). Among Jewish men, the 2021-2024 increase in the rate of those familiar with the law was significant ($r_c = 6.4, p < .05$). These figures suggest a need for information campaigns targeting young adults and Arabs.



I didn't know there was such a law, who on Earth knew it was forbidden, anyway? It was only after the policewoman said this was something new, from 2020... well, good to know, who knew about this, anyway?" (Ron, Alternative program participant, 32, June 2022)



People don't talk about it. I think this should be discussed in the education and welfare departments. Because I don't know if there's awareness in [Arab] towns, for instance. I don't think there's awareness of the law. I think it's essential to promote that awareness. To also start with the municipalities, to let them understand what it is and realize it's there. Turning a blind eye – that's the easy way to cope". (Arab professional, July 2023)

Widespread public education is essential for implementing the law and achieving its objectives. Both public attitude surveys and interviews (with consumers, police officers, people in prostitution and professionals) indicate that not enough has been done to deliver the clear message of the law that consuming prostitution is a criminal offense that carries an administrative fine, and could lead, in some cases, to an indictment, and that people in prostitution are the victims of this offense.

6.2 Public Attitudes

Public information and educational activities are directed to four areas. as follows:

1. **Knowing and supporting the law**



I don't think there's a girl who works in it and doesn't know the law, but some consumers don't know. I tell someone he can get a fine, and he doesn't know what I'm talking about. It wasn't publicized enough. (Elinore, currently in prostitution, January 2022)

2. **Understanding the harm caused by prostitution** for people in prostitution, consumers, and society as a whole



It's not only about freeing the women and saving the next generation, it's also a general social goal. A society where it's legitimate to buy a women – this has broad implications, not only for that specific woman. (Professional, March 2021)

3. **The treatment of people in prostitution.** Reducing the negative stigma toward people in prostitution from an understanding of the complex life experience that has led them into prostitution and the realization that it is they who are harmed by it.



We often choose to do things in our lives, not because we really have a choice, but because we don't. (Orly, Previously in prostitution, April 2022)

4. **Public attitudes toward prostitution consumption.** These must be changed, together with changing the view that consumption is a legitimate outlet for men who seek sexual release.

In order to assess changes in public attitudes regarding prostitution, we conducted surveys in 2021 and 2024. Some of the questions were identical to those included in the 2016 national survey (Santo & Carmeli, 2016). Examining the findings of these surveys, as well as the survey conducted by Shilo et al. (2020) helps assess the change in public attitudes over the years.

6.2.1 Support for the law

In both 2021 and 2024, most (71% and 72%) of the respondents supported the law “to a great degree” or “to a very great degree” (hereafter, supporters). These degrees of support represent a considerable increase compared to previous surveys that had examined public attitudes regarding the “client incrimination” model that forms the basis of the law – 26% in 2008 (Shilo et al., 2020), and 39% in 2016 (Santo & Carmeli, 2016). Apparently, support for the model increased following the legislation, and has remained stable since.

The following are data on the supporters, by population group. As you can see in Table 10, most respondents in each of the population groups examined supported the law in both measurements. Nevertheless, there were gaps in the level of support between measurements and among groups.²⁶ The results are presented in Table H-1.

The model indicates that regardless of the year of measurement, the likelihood of supporting the law was significantly higher among women than among men, among Arabs than among Jews, and among religious compared to nonreligious respondents. It was also found that the likelihood of support fell with age. No relationship was found between marital status and support for the law.

Table 10: Support for the Law[^] by Population Groups in the surveys conducted in 2021 (*n* = 803) and 2024 (*n* = 804) (in %)

Population Group	2021	2024
Total	71	72
<i>Gender</i>		
Men	66	63
Women	76	81
<i>Nationality</i>		
Jews	68	71
Arabs	83	77
<i>Age Group</i>		
18–24	81	66
25–49	69	75
50+	69	66
<i>Religiosity</i>		
Nonreligious ^{^^}	70	70
Religious ^{^^^}	75	83

[^]"To a great degree" or "To a very great degree"

^{^^}"Not religious" or "Not very religious"

^{^^^}"Religious" or "Very religious"

²⁶ To determine the statistical significance of these gaps, a multiple logistic regression model was created to predict the likelihood of supporting the law as a function of measurement year and several individual and sociodemographic characteristics – age, gender, nationality, religiosity and marital status.

6.2.2 Expectations from the law

This subsection presents public attitudes regarding the law’s ability to affect various aspects of the prostitution phenomenon in practice. Shilo et al. (2020) examined this using 21 statements which were also used in the current study (in both 2021 and 2024). Table 11 presents select attitudes regarding various impacts of the law. Despite the figures of high fundamental support for the law presented in Table 10, Table 11 indicates that most respondents do not expect the law to result in a real change in prostitution consumption and public awareness.

Table 11: Agreement^ with various aspects of the law’s impact in the surveys conducted in 2021 (n = 803) and 2024 (n = 804) (in %)

	2021	2024
The law will reduce the number of prostitution consumers	18	20
The law will increase the understanding that you don’t pay for sex	24	29
The law will encourage prostitution consumers to seek therapy	16	16
The law will increase public awareness of the harms of prostitution	28	29

^Agree “to a large extent” or Agree “to a very large extent”

The idea that “prostitution always was and always will be” recurred in many interviews with people in prostitution, consumers, police officers, and even some professionals. The prevalence of this idea points to the need to deepen the law’s underlying messages in order to bring about change. For example, a prostitution consumer who participated in a rehab program for sex addicts said:

“ Prostitution was always around and it here to stay. It’s not something you can stop. The only thing you can do is to legalize it, minimize the crime that’s involved in it, and have loads of information about why it’s not worthwhile getting there”. (Pini, Consumer, July 2023)

A probation officer working with prostitution consumers also highlighted the need for comprehensive public education to reduce consumption:

“ I think that fundamentally, when you inform the public that consuming prostitution is no longer legal, forget about morality for now [...] it can stop a large sector of people who go there, because many people don’t want to violate the laws [...]. I don’t see a constant message, I don’t see anyone pushing this issue so that it gets into people’s ears”. (Kobi, Probation officer, January 2024)

As in Shilo et al.'s (2020) survey, in the present study we also used factor analysis to group statements indicative of public attitudes regarding the law into two major indicators: "The law will reduce the extent of prostitution in Israel", and "The law will affect people in prostitution negatively" (see Table H-2 for the results of this factor analysis). A mean score was calculated for each respondent on the two items, and these scores were divided into three levels of agreement with the statement in question: 4.0-5.0 = "Agree to a great degree"; 2.1-3.9 = "Agree to some extent"; and 1.0-2.0 = "Disagree".

According to the two measurements, only a small minority (5%) highly agreed that the law would reduce prostitution, as opposed to 65% who agreed to some extent and 30% who disagreed. Note that in Shilo et al.'s (2020) survey, conducted before the law entered into effect, 12% highly agreed that the law would reduce prostitution, 63% agreed to some extent, and 25% disagreed.

At the same time, 13% of respondents highly agreed that the law would harm people in prostitution, as opposed to 81% who agreed to some extent, and 6% who disagreed. In Shilo et al.'s (2020) survey, 16% felt that the law would harm people in prostitution, 77% were undecided, and 7% disagreed.

Despite the survey data indicating public skepticism regarding the law's ability to make a difference, the interviews indicated that its effects were felt on the ground, after all.

“ I do see a somewhat different social attitude. I do see NGOs growing stronger. I do see how legitimate it is to raise the issues. Whereas the discourse [about prostitution] used to be in the dark, today it's OK to talk about it over dinner with your family". (Or, currently in prostitution, March 2022)

This was said by a woman in prostitution who pointed to changes in society and public and even private discourse on prostitution.

A professional working with people in prostitution:

“ Regarding the law, it all depends on what's done with it. If the law enables greater emphasis and budgeting for prevention – regarding both entering the world of prostitution and of consuming prostitution – then it has a chance to succeed in the long term". (Professional, 2023)

6.2.3 Understanding the Harm of Prostitution

To examine changes in attitudes regarding the harm of prostitution, the 2021 and 2024 surveys included the same questions that appeared in the 2016 national survey. Table 12 shows that at both points in time, more

than 80% of respondents perceived prostitution as offensive to human dignity and as negatively affecting men's attitudes towards women. Compared to the 2016 survey, there was an increase in the rate of respondents who viewed prostitution as affecting men's attitudes towards women (from 70% to 84% and 82% in 2021 and 2024, respectively. Regarding human dignity, there was no significant change compared to the 2016 survey (81%).

Table 12: Agreement[^] with attitudes regarding prostitution in the surveys conducted in 2021 (*n* = 803) and 2024 (*n* = 804), according to population group and gender (in %)

	Jews				Arabs				Total	
	Men		Women		Men		Women			
	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024
Prostitution is a social pheno-menon that violates human dignity	77	76	87	90	86	74	95	97	84	83
Prostitution is a social pheno-menon that negatively affects men's attitudes toward women	75	73	92**	88**	86*	76*	88	95	84	82

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; refers to the comparison between the years in the specific population and gender group, according to *t*-tests conducted for agreement with the statements on a 1-5 scale.

[^]"Agree to a large degree" or "Agree to a very large degree"

t-tests conducted to compare women and men on the degree of agreement with attitudes regarding the harmfulness of prostitution (on a 1-5 scale) indicate that both Jewish and Arab women consider prostitution as significantly more harmful than both Jewish and Arab men (see Table H-3 for the results of the statistical analysis). Table 12 also indicates that among Arab men, there was a significant decrease in the perception that prostitution had a negative effect on men's attitudes toward women, whereas there was an increase among women (at a marginal significance of $p = .08$).

Comparing the 2016 national survey and the surveys conducted for the present after the legislation came into effect indicates that changes in public attitudes occurred mainly in the years *prior* to the legislation, whereas no significant changes occurred from 2021-2024. In interpreting this finding, it should be noted that only 2.5 years passed between the latter two surveys, whereas more than five years passed from the national survey and our 2021 survey; overall, eight years passed between the 2016 survey and the last measurement for this research.

6.2.4 Public Attitudes Toward People in Prostitution and Its Consumption

Stigmatization of People in Prostitution

Many people in prostitution interviewed for this study expressed pain for the stigma attached to them and its harsh impact on their lives, on their families, and on their ability to reintegrate in society after leaving prostitution – mainly because many of them entered prostitution due to harsh circumstances, and many felt they had no other choice in order to survive. Above all, it appeared that people in prostitution would have liked to be treated like all others. One of them said:



What is everyone's first curse? Whore!" (Efrat, presently in prostitution, June 2021)

An Arab woman in prostitution said:



Some girls, their families don't mind them working as prostitutes. So long as they don't advertise themselves and people don't see their pictures on social media or on TikTok and know they work in prostitution". (Abir, transgender, presently in prostitution, May 2023)

The surveys indicate that most people do not think the law will affect the stigma on people in prostitution, but from 2021-2024, there was a moderate increase (at a marginal significance of $p = .06$) in the rate of those who expected the law to exacerbate the stigma (26%-30%, respectively).

Attitudes Toward Leaving Prostitution

As in the 2016 national survey, our 2021 and 2024 surveys examined public attitudes regarding leaving prostitution. Table 13 presents the rate of those who agree "to a great degree" or "to a very great degree" with attitudes toward leaving prostitution, according to population group and gender. In the current surveys, less than half (44%-46%) of all respondents believed that people in prostitution want to leave it. This figure is lower than in the 2016 survey, where 60% believed that women in prostitution wanted to leave it. Nevertheless, in the current surveys, most people (78%) agreed that people in prostitution were "unable to leave prostitution without help".

t-tests comparing women and men in their degree of agreement with attitudes regarding leaving prostitution (on a scale of 1-5) indicated significant differences: Jewish women thought people in prostitution were interested in leaving it more than did Jewish men. Moreover, women, both Jewish and Arab, believed that women needed help in leaving prostitution, more so than men (see Table H-3 for the results of the statistical analyses). Among both genders and nationalities, there was no change from 2021 to 2024.

Table 13: Agreement^ with attitudes on people in prostitution in the surveys conducted in 2021 (n = 803) and 2024 (n = 804), by population group and gender (in %)

	Jews				Arabs				Total	
	Men**		Women**		Men**		Women**			
	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024
Most women in prostitution are interested in leaving it	37	41	49	52	47	38	45	51	44	46
Women in prostitution cannot leave it without help	74	69	82	86	72	71	87	86	78	78

** $p < .01$; refers to the comparison between women and men in both measurements for each population group separately.

^ "to a great degree" or "to a very great degree" "

Attitudes Toward Consumption of Prostitution

Public attitudes towards the consumption of prostitution were examined through the statement "For a man who needs sexual release, it is legitimate to go to a prostitute". Only 15% of respondents agreed with this statement "to a great degree" or "to a very great degree". Gaps between population groups were observed in this regard. In both measurements, men, more than women, perceived the consumption of prostitution as highly or very highly legitimate (about 20% and 10%, respectively). According to t -tests conducted for the original 1-5 scale, significant gender gaps were found in both measurements (2021: $t_{(782)} = -7.8, p < .01$; 2024: $t_{(772)} = -6.1, p < .01$). From 2021-2024, there was a decrease in the rate of Jewish men who believed that consumption was legitimate for a man in need of release, from 24% to 20% ($t_{(613)} = -2.4, p < .01$), whereas among Arab women, this rate increased from 5% to 13% ($t_{(172)} = 2.3, p < .05$).

6.3 Summary: Public Education and Information and Public Attitudes

The law emphasizes the importance of educating the public in order to change social attitudes towards prostitution. Several ministries are active in this area: the Ministry of Justice has conducted digital campaigns to raise awareness of the law; the Ministry of Health holds workshops on healthy sexuality and risks for adolescents and young adults at risk and for professionals; the Ministry of Welfare offers the Turning Point project for youth at risk, which focuses on education for sexuality and preventing entry into prostitution; and the Ministry of Education has developed programs for students and teachers on healthy sexuality and identifying risk situations. In addition, NGOs are engaged in public education and lobbying; their activities include campaigns, workshops,

educational programs and training for professionals. Surveys conducted in 2021 and 2024 found that 61% of respondents were aware of the law, with the lowest rate found among young adults and Arabs. Most interviewees expressed the view that the current information campaigns are insufficient and ineffective.

Most of the public (~70%) supports the law, a significant increase compared to previous surveys on prohibiting prostitution conducted prior to the enactment of the law (26% in 2008 and 39% in 2016). Despite this broad support, the public is skeptical regarding its ability to make a real impact. Thus, about 20% believe the law will reduce the number of prostitution consumers, and only 5% expect it to reduce the extent of prostitution in Israel. Nevertheless, a large majority of over 80% consider prostitution to be offensive to human dignity and to the relationship of men toward women. The surveys conducted in 2021 and 2024 did not indicate any significant change in attitudes towards the law or towards the phenomenon of prostitution in the years since the legislation, beyond the changes documented previously.

Gender gaps are evident in public attitudes toward the law. More than do men, women tend to support the law, to view prostitution as offensive, and believe that women in prostitution are interested in leaving prostitution and need help to do so. Finally, interviews with both women in prostitution and professionals point to the importance of educational campaigns in changing public attitudes.

7. Changes and Trends During the Law's Implementation

The years during which the law was implemented, 2019-2024, saw tumultuous events in Israel, in the social, political, economic and security spheres. A series of election campaigns and short-lived governments undermined the stability of state authorities; COVID-19 and its implications, including social distancing and the resulting intensified use of the internet and social media in all areas of life, including prostitution; societal trends that affect the treatment of women, violence against women and women's objectification; the activities of feminist organizations and movements against their victimization, such as #MeToo; the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023, and the ensuing war; and the economic impact of all these developments.

The main objective of this study was to examine the impact of the law and Resolution on the phenomenon of prostitution in Israel and on addressing it. This chapter reports our findings regarding trends and changes in prostitution in Israel during the time the law was implemented, according to the relevant research areas. We will also present areas in which, despite expectations to the contrary, no change was observed. Note however that these influences may not be isolated from all the other processes that occurred simultaneously in the country. The duration of the study (three years), prevents us from examining the law's impact on the extent of prostitution in the long-term. Therefore, we are wary of reaching conclusions regarding the direct or indirect effects of the law.

7.1 Interministerial and Intersectoral Collaborations

- The interministerial team, led by the Government Coordinator, drew up an annual plan to utilize the budget allocated through the Resolution, implementing the its rationale and promoting new initiatives for professional enrichment in the field of prostitution and for the population of people in prostitution.
- To fund the Resolution, an annual NIS 30 million were added to the government budget base for the purpose of rehabilitation, treatment, and public education about prostitution.
- Following the Resolution, new collaborations were formed and additional stakeholders rallied to aid people in prostitution. These included additional government units (such as the Official Receiver, the Legal Assistance Unit and the Pardons Department at the Ministry of Justice, and the NII). In addition, collaborations with NGOs such as *Lo Omdot Me'negged* and *Her Academy* were expanded, as were collaborations with philanthropic funds such as Schusterman Foundation.

7.2 Police Enforcement of the Law

- **Changes in the police's operational doctrine and procedures.** Following the law and the Attorney General's guidelines, a new operational doctrine was developed, a dedicated enforcement procedure was written, the technological infrastructure for enforcement was established, etc. In addition, a team was created to follow up on the law's implementation, led by the Consulting and Legislation (Criminal Law Department) at the Ministry of Justice, in order to provide legal solutions to questions related to the law's enforcement, its' implementation and regulations, and removing barriers.
- **Expanding police officers' knowledge and skills** through dedicated training sessions for some 11,000 police officers; developing a dedicated learning program for various police officials; further education on human trafficking and prostitution, lectures and ongoing guidance. Nevertheless, some of the police officers interviewed for this study found it difficult to acknowledge the harm done to those living in prostitution, possibly indicating lack of knowledge and the need for further training. It was also found that the police officers have additional enforcement tools at their disposal to deal with the phenomenon of prostitution more comprehensively, such as confiscating the earnings of the establishments, and knowledge about these tools needs to be expanded.
- **Reducing prostitution in areas where there is enforcement and police presence.** Enforcement activities have probably led to the reduction of prostitution in visible sites (the street and storefronts) – a trend known from before the legislation. The interviews suggest that people in prostitution move from places where enforcement is intense to hidden sites such as discreet apartments and rooms rented by the hour, although this trend had begun before the implementation of the law.
- **Enforcement in limited geographical areas, and gradual decrease in enforcement over the years under study.** Intensive enforcement began in the latter half of 2021, when the government promoted the issue with senior professional police officials, who gave orders to intensify enforcement. In practice, the law was enforced in limited geographical areas – 97% of enforcement activities were undertaken in only three police stations, two in central Israel and one in the north. In mid-2022, enforcement levels dropped considerably and remained low until the end of 2023.
- **Additional complexity of investigating criminal offenses related to prostitution.** Police officers who participated in our study expressed the concern that changing the consumer's status from that of a witness in a prostitution site to that of an offender would reduce the likelihood of their cooperation in investigating related criminal offenses, since by testifying they would incriminate themselves for consumption. The police officers argued that this resulted in more complex investigations that required additional resources.

- **Initial signs that people in prostitution tend to rely more on the police for their protection.** Realizing that they were no longer offenders, some people in prostitution shared that they felt safer in turning to the police for protection against violent consumers and even in going back to the street without fear of police harassment. Nevertheless, many still reported that abusive treatment by police officers had not changed, and that they remained distrustful of the police.

7.3 Trends in the Characteristics of Prostitution

- **Change in prostitution sites.** Police officers, consumers, people in prostitution and professionals reported that the law entailed a transition from visible sites such as the street and clearly identifiable brothels to hidden sites such as private homes, discreet apartments or hotels, where police officers find it harder to enforce the law. Note that these changes began before the legislation, and the consumption surveys found no change in prostitution sites from 2019-2023.
- **Expansion of online prostitution** is yet another trend that began before the legislation – the use of the internet for seeking and scheduling prostitution services, as well as the accelerated development of “webcam prostitution” and platforms such as OnlyFans.

7.4 Trends in the Welfare of People in Prostitution

- **Financial hardship.** Many people in prostitution testified that the law had reduced their income, particularly early into its implementation, when there were public campaigns about it, as well as in periods of widespread enforcement.



Many clients told me they were afraid, and I'm lucky to have them on a regular basis...
They're afraid, it's enough that they see a newspaper story about somebody who's been arrested, and you can spend an entire week without earning a single shekel".
(Bar, transgender, Presently in prostitution, June 2022)

- **Mixed trend in people in prostitution's sense of personal security.** On the one hand, people in prostitution felt more secure because of the realization that the law was in their favor, that police officers would no longer harm them, and that the consumers were now the offenders. On the other hand, some testified that the move to discreet apartments exposed them to consumer violence, leaving them with the consumers who were not deterred by the law, while the more law-abiding consumers stopped coming.
- **The change in the discourse on prostitution and its' effect on people in prostitution.** People in prostitution attested that following the legislation, public discourse on prostitution became more open, and that there

was greater public expression of different attitudes and greater involvement of people in prostitution in that discourse. This was true both regarding the view that prostitution was a form of abuse and the view that prostitution is a legitimate occupation based on free choice.

7.5 Trends in the Support and Service System for People in Prostitution

- **Increase in the number of users of services for people in prostitution.** Following the opening of new services and the expansion of existing ones, the number of Ministry of Welfare service users increased from about 1,300 in 2020 to about 2,000 in 2021-2022. In 2023, the number of service users decreased once again, to 1,700. *Lo Omdot Me'negged* provided financial assistance funded by the ministry and philanthropic funds to a large number of women: 700 in 2020, 900 in 2021, 1,100 in 2022, and 1,000 in 2023. The number of Ministry of Health service users also increased, from about 600 in 2019 to about 1,300 in 2022. The main increase was in the number of service users in the Levinsky Mobile Clinic in Tel Aviv.
- **Expanded services in all areas.** The assistance offered to people in prostitution is now more diverse and better tailored to the service users' needs. Moreover, the national deployment of some services was expanded, contributing to their accessibility. Nevertheless, services are still lacking in some locations, such as Jerusalem and Eilat, and in areas such as vocational services.
- **Unique programs for assistance and accessing public benefits and entitlements.** Despite the difficulties in implementing it as noted above, the flexible basket of services adds a layer of customized services for people under the care of the rehabilitation services. In addition, certain programs have been developed to facilitate the access to public benefits and entitlements by people seeking to leave prostitution, such as obtaining a disability allowance from the NII, and pardons and insolvency declarations from the Ministry of Justice. Nevertheless, in some areas assistance is lacking, as in erasing one's criminal record.
- **Increase in the number of services and service users among unique populations.** The number of transgender people and men using services increased; unique services for these populations were opened; and steps were made to provide also for the needs of undocumented migrant women. Nevertheless, there is still lack of services for some of the unique populations, such as a hotline for men, a treatment setting for undocumented migrant women, a home for older women in complex situations, services for mothers, and .
- **Increase in the number of professionals** supporting people in prostitution
- **No significant change in the skills of professionals treating people in prostitution.** This is probably due to the entry of new professionals into the area and the high turnover of professionals in the various services. There was a decrease in the professionalism of outreach coordinators, combined with self-reports about improved vocational rehabilitation skills among employment coordinators and managers.

7.6 Trends in the Demand for and Consumption of Prostitution

- **Demand for prostitution.** According to Google search data, the extent of searches for prostitution-related terms dropped shortly after the law was passed in late 2018. Apparently, this was due to the law's approval. In 2022 there was an increase in the extent of search for the terms examined, probably reflecting an erosion of the law's effect on the demand for prostitution. Note that despite the increase in searches, their extent remained lower than in the period before the law. Significant negative correlations were found between the extent of searches for prostitution-related terms and the number of fines imposed in the months before the search. Thus, greater enforcement in a given month was related to a subsequent reduction in demand for prostitution, and vice versa. These findings establish a direct negative relationship between enforcement and demand.
- **Self-reports of consumption.** In our 2024 consumption survey, the rate of self-reported consumption of Jewish respondents aged 18-70 was higher than in 2021, both with regard to the past five years and with regard to the year prior to the survey.
- **Frequency of consumption** among Jewish men did not change significantly from 2021-2024.
- **Prostitution sites.** According to the surveys, the most frequently used prostitution site remained the discreet apartments (45%-50%), followed by escort services and brothels and massage parlors. Only a minority of consumers consumed prostitution on the street or in a car (5%-7%).
- **Consumption in rural areas** remained significantly lower than in urban areas (which represented 85% of all consumption).
- **Consumers' reports on the impact of the law.** Most of the consumers in the 2021 and 2024 surveys testified that the law had not affected them, or they hadn't heard about it. Overall, 18%-19% reported that they were affected by the law to the point of no longer consuming prostitution (9% in 2021 and 5% in 2024), or that they reduced their consumption frequency (10% and 13%, respectively). Some consumers changed their behaviors, but not in the way the legislator intended. For example, some reported consuming prostitution more discreetly (7% and 11%), or that they intended consuming prostitution only abroad (4% and 3%).
- Services for men addicted to sex and prostitution were expanded.

7.7 The Impact of the Alternative Program (in lieu of a fine) on the Participants

- **A small number of consumers opted for the alternative program.** Only 109 consumers chose to join the program. Of the 92 who were found suitable, 76 completed the psychoeducational workshop and three received individual treatment. This small number is due to the reduction in enforcement and the low rate (1.9%) of consumers who opted for the program after being fined.
- **The program changed the consumers' attitudes towards prostitution.** Consumers who completed the workshop described its "enabling" and "dignifying" atmosphere, and said it made them reconsider consumption. Following the workshop, many of the participants expressed opposition to the consumption of prostitution, seeing it as harmful for the people in prostitution.
- **The program increased the participants' awareness of the characteristics of sex addiction.**
- **Following the workshops, participants increasingly wanted to stop consuming prostitution.** Most participants reported having stopped consuming even before starting the workshop. Moreover, in the post-workshop questionnaire, there was an increase in those who responded that they wanted to consume less prostitution and of those who considered stopping completely.

7.8 Trends in Education and Public Information Campaigns

- **Rates of exposure and entries into (online) publications of the Ministry of Justice were higher than expected.** The ministry data indicates that there were more than 23 million view and 13,000 entries to its website, with, and that the frequency of clicking on the ministry's ad was high relative to the budget allocated to the campaigns.
- **Expansion of Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of Health programs to prevent the consumption of prostitution by adolescents and young adults at risk.** The expanded information campaigns were directed at professionals, youth and parents. There was an increase in the rate of adolescents participating in meetings on healthy sexuality, preventing entry into prostitution and preventing the consumption of prostitution.
- **Expansion of Ministry of Education programs on education for healthy sexuality and the identification and prevention of abuse,** led by the Unit for Sexuality and Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children and Youth at the Psychological Counseling Services. According to ministry policy, "Strengths on the Way" is a mandatory school program that includes content on sexuality and preventing abuse. Additional programs, some of them specific to the prostitution continuum, are elective, subject to the needs of each school. There is no way

of estimating the number of staff and students who participated in the programs or their impact, since the ministry does not monitor them on a continuous basis.

- **Significant increase in the number of instructors** dealing in sexuality and the prevention of abuse in the Unit for Sexuality and Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children and Youth at the Psychological Counseling Services, including the addition of new instructional materials.
- **Public education and information campaigns were expanded.** However, according to public attitude surveys as well as interviews with consumers, police officers, people in prostitution and professionals, information campaigns addressed to the general public remained insufficient.

7.9 Trends in Public Attitudes on Prostitution

- **No change in the level of familiarity with the law.** In 2021 and 2024, 61% of the Israeli public were familiar with the law. Among Jewish men, the rate of those familiar with the law *increased* from 71% in 2021 to 79% in 2024, whereas among Arab men it *decreased* from 53% to 43%, respectively.
- **Support for the law increased over the years, without any change in the last three years.** In 2021 and 2024, support for the law was 72%, a rate that represents a considerable increase compared to previous surveys – 26% in 2008 and 39% in 2016. Apparently, support for the law increased immediately upon its enactment and remained stable since then.
- **No change in public expectations of the law's impact.** Despite 72% who support the law, only 18-20% of the general population believe the law will reduce the number of prostitution consumers.
- **No change in the public's perception of prostitution as harmful** and in attitudes towards people in prostitution. Still, more than 80% view prostitution as a social phenomenon that is offensive to human dignity.
- **Among the Arab population, the gender gap in the perception of prostitution as harmful increased.** In 2021-2024, the rate of Arab men viewing prostitution as a social phenomenon that has a negative effect on men's attitudes towards women fell from 86% to 76%, whereas the respective rate among Arab women increased from 88% to 95%.

8. Recommendations

Social change is a long and gradual process. In order to reduce prostitution consumption and transform behavioral norms over the long term, and in order to enable those who wish to leave prostitution, it is important to complement the legislation with enforcement, public education, prevention and therapeutic activities. The recommendations in this section derive from the findings reviewed above and are organized according to the chapters of this report. However, the various issues are interrelated and interdependent.

8.1 Recommendations for Enforcement of the Law

1. **Expand and intensify enforcement efforts.** Given the findings suggesting that prostitution has been reduced in areas with police presence and enforcement of the law, and that demand for prostitution has dropped as a result, we recommend that policymakers and senior professionals promote police enforcement in their contacts with local police stations and police districts on a broad, national scale. We also recommend intensifying the efforts dedicated to comprehensive treatment of the prostitution phenomenon by the enforcement authorities: shutting down prostitution sites, enforcing criminal offenses related to prostitution, confiscating the property of brothel operators, and identifying hidden prostitution sites and enforcing the law in those sites. This requires the combined efforts of all relevant stakeholders, including business licensing departments in local authorities, the Tax Authority, the Enforcement Authority, and the State Attorney's Office.
2. **Remove difficulties and barriers to enforcement.** We recommend dedicating additional police human resources at the headquarters level (the Human Trafficking Unit) and addressing the complexity of the activities required for enforcement in the field (see Subsection 3.6). In addition, we recommend continuing the meetings of the follow-up team led by the Ministry of Justice's Consulting and Legislation Division to remove barriers and devise solutions for enforcement.
3. **Training** should be focused on enforcing the law according to police procedure and the Attorney General's guidelines regarding working with and treatment of people in prostitution on the scene, as well as additional legal tools available to them for general treatment of the prostitution phenomenon, such as property seizure. We recommend that such training includes face-to-face meetings with people in prostitution.
4. We recommend appointing a dedicated referent on prostitution in the Human Trafficking Unit.

8.2 Recommendations regarding prostitution consumers

1. **A combination of enforcement, educational and treatment efforts.** Legislation is not enough to reduce prostitution consumption. A combination of enforcement, educational and treatment efforts is required to reduce prostitution and change long-term norms and behaviors.
2. **Direct public education campaigns to potential consumer populations,** particularly young adults and Arabs who tend to be less familiar with the law.
3. **Encourage consumers who are fined to participate in the alternative program** by making information about the program more visible on the fine document and on the payment website, by having the police officer provide explanations upon imposing the fine, and by providing broad information about it to the general public.
4. **Examine ways to expand the target audience exposed to the content and tools in the alternative program** to include consumers who have not been fined.
5. **Expand the outreach to sex and prostitution addicts** through professionals and a public campaign, and continued expansion of therapeutic services for addicts.

8.3 Recommendations regarding services for people in prostitution

8.3.1 Recommendations for service development

1. **Continued expansion and adaptation of services to support leaving prostitution** so that they are suitable for members of different populations (men, transgender people, Arab women, undocumented migrants, etc.) in different stages in their involvement in prostitution and in underserved areas in Israel, particularly in the north, Jerusalem, and Eilat.
2. **Expand financial, vocational, and housing supports.** Economic hardship and poverty combined with the lack of permanent housing are among the key barriers to leaving prostitution. We recommend expanding financial assistance, economic rehabilitation, and long-term housing support. We also recommend providing a diverse array of vocational services on a long-term basis, in a way that will help people in prostitution to pursue their employment choices.
3. **Expand unique models for handling debts and criminal records.** In order to overcome additional barriers, we recommend applying the principles of the insolvency model also to debts lower than NIS 150,000, in collaboration with the Enforcement Authority; we also recommend promoting a program for clearing police records.
4. **Provide comprehensive legal assistance,** which takes into consideration all the legal needs of the service users. This is important as part of the process of accessing public benefits and entitlements – one of the key

needs of people in prostitution. Legal aid on behalf of the Ministry of Justice is provided to diverse populations free of charge (depending on their income). Accordingly, we recommend establishing direct communication channels between the various legal aid services and programs and train the lawyers in the service in working with people in prostitution. We also recommend facilitating their access to legal aid by reducing red tape.

5. **Enable easier access to available services.** We recommend making it easier for service users to contact and utilize the services in the flexible basket in a way suited to their needs. We also recommend making the system more flexible and expanding the budgeting of services for Ministry of Welfare placements by developing a budget model with a broad fixed base, like that used to budget services for the treatment of addictions.

8.3.2 Recommendations regarding expanding collaborations

1. **Including people in prostitution in planning, designing and implementing services** in order to make them compatible with their needs. This may be done through public participation, consulting with people in prostitution as experts by experience, expanding the employment of instructors with relevant life experience in the treatment settings and including them in professional training.
2. **Continued promoting of interministerial cooperations.** We recommend continuing the work of the interministerial team led by the Government Coordination Unit. The team makes an important contribution to implementing the Resolution and overcoming gaps and barriers, to channeling budget balances and promoting knowledge, and to the discourse and interministerial collaborations on people in prostitution. We also recommend expanding the interorganizational collaborations through roundtables and peer learning.

8.3.3 Recommendations regarding the target population of the services

1. **Identifying and reaching out to new service users.** We recommend allocating permanent staff in all treatment settings to reach out to people in prostitution who are not familiar with the services or who fear contacting them.
2. **Providing services through additional NGOs.** This approach has proven itself highly effective in offering a wide range of services to a diverse population. We also recommend contacting organizations that do not necessarily support the law but act consistently to promote the well-being of people in prostitution in order to reach additional populations, based on the perspective that improving the condition of people in prostitution, whoever and wherever they are, is the main goal.
3. **Including services to people in online prostitution.** Online prostitution is the gateway for adolescents into the prostitution world and is harmful to them. It is important to develop services for that population, including outreach, adjusted therapeutic services, and training professionals to raise awareness of this area and its harm.

8.3.4 Professionals

1. **Develop and retain experience-based professional knowledge** and the provision of training for professionals on treating unique populations, accessing public benefits and entitlements, material-financial aid, outreach, and volunteer management. We recommend establishing the professional and practical knowledge accumulated and adopting methods of knowledge extraction and preservation in order to develop the practice of working with people in prostitution. To do so, it is also important to rely on the knowledge of people in prostitution as experts by experience.
2. Provide dedicated training non-professional direct staff.
3. **Improve the professionals' working conditions.** The difficulties the professionals experience in their work include a high workload, low pay, difficulty recruiting employees and the lack of training and job positions. These difficulties are common in all public social services. Nevertheless, it is particularly important to address them in the area of services for people in prostitution because of the unique expertise they require, by adding positions, improving employment conditions and pay, and reducing the heavy workload.

8.4 Recommendations regarding expanding information campaigns about the law and the harms of prostitution

1. **Direct the campaigns to the public.** Since prostitution consumers come from all walks of life, it is important to reach out to the public, among other things through systems that serve them such as the education system and the Israeli army.
2. **Tailoring campaigns to specific audiences,** as identified in the study: the public, young adults aged 18-24, Arab men, and undocumented migrants. The emphasis in each campaign should be adjusted to the nature of the target audience.

8.5 Recommendations regarding future research

1. **A study on webcam prostitution.** Given the expansion of the phenomenon, its negative impacts and its strong relation to prostitution, we propose a study on the characteristics and extent of the phenomenon. Based on the findings of that study, we recommend consultations at the government level to examine legislative remedies and the use and implementation of relevant therapeutic and educational tools.

2. Follow-up studies on the long-term effects of the law, specifically:

- a. Survey of police officers to examine their attitudes and the enforcement of the law
- b. Study on the status of people in prostitution – their use of services, financial situation, sense of security and contact with the police
- c. Intensifying the study of unique populations in prostitution – men, transgender people, undocumented migrants, Arabs, and ultra-Orthodox Jews
- d. Study on the extent of prostitution consumption
- e. Study examining the stability of the change in attitudes of alternative program participants
- f. Study examining public attitudes on the law and on prostitution in general
- g. Study on the impact of the educational programs on adolescents and young adults and on the improvement in the skills of educators in welfare settings

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Appendices

Appendix A-1

Table A-1: Sample sizes in prostitution consumption surveys in 2021 and 2024

Population Group	Completed the 2021 survey	Completed the 2024 survey	Completed both surveys
Jews	5,437	2,711	2,364
Arabs	320	172	80
Total	5,757	2,883	2,444

Appendix A-2: Sample Representativeness in Prostitution Consumption Surveys

In the first sample, in 2021, 5,757 men (5,437 Jews and 320 Arabs) answered the survey. The Jewish respondents were sampled to represent the population (excluding the ultra-Orthodox) by three age categories and residential areas. Due to the small number of Arab respondents registered with the panel company that conducted the survey, there was no requirement for sample representativeness by age and residential area in their case.

To examine the degree to which the panel respondents represented the general population in Israel, in the first measurement, in 2021, they were asked whether they had contracted COVID-19 and had been vaccinated. According to Ministry of Health data, in all age categories, there was no significant gap between the population and the sample regarding COVID-19 morbidity and vaccination. We may therefore infer that the panel selected for the survey represented the population in general. Note, however, that the rate of ultra-Orthodox respondents was particularly low (0.2%), and it may therefore be argued that the sample was representative of the general Jewish population, without the ultra-Orthodox.

In the second measurement, in 2024, in order to examine consumption patterns among the repeat respondents, the survey was administered to all those who had completed the first measurement, apart from the inhabitants of the communities bordering on the Gaza Strip (due to the war), and respondents aged 70+. In the second measurement, 42% of those who had responded in the first measurement responded, requiring us to complement the sample in order to ensure its representativeness in terms of age. Accordingly, we included additional ultra-Orthodox participants, so that the rate of ultra-Orthodox respondents out of all participants in the second measurement represented the rate of ultra-Orthodox Jews in the general population.

For the sample to represent the research population in terms of consumption characteristics (Jewish men aged 18-70), we applied weights according to age and residential area. The weights set for the first measurement data were based on the data of the 2020 Israel Statistical Yearbook (no. 71), which was the most recent available, relying on 2019 data. The weights set for the second measurement data from 2024 were based on the data of the 2023 Israel Statistical Yearbook (no. 74), relying on 2022 data.

The findings of the two surveys were compared using statistical significance tests, according to the measurement scale and the objective of the analysis (e.g. χ^2 , Cramer's coefficient, and McNemar's test).

Note that the prostitution consumption surveys are not representative in terms of undocumented migrants among the prostitution consumers in Israel. According to information collected in the interviews and preliminary conversations conducted for this study, undocumented migrants (including Palestinian workers and asylum seekers) are a significant group of consumers in some prostitution sites. Nevertheless, this population is not represented among the panel respondents, the great majority of whom are citizens.

Table A-2 presents the basic personal and sociodemographic characteristics of the Jews who participated in the 2021 and 2024 surveys. The corresponding data for Arab respondents is not presented here, given their small number which is too small to be divided into the various categories of these characteristics. As seen in the table, in most aspects, the characteristics of the two samples were similar. The only exception was the representation of ultra-Orthodox Jews, who were 16% of the sample in 2024, as opposed to being entirely absent from the 2021 sample. This change increased the sample's representativeness of the general Jewish population in Israel.

Note moreover that in the two measurements, the percentage of respondents with a higher education degree (48-51) was significantly higher than the actual rate (30% among men aged 25-69 in late 2018 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2018)), a bias reflecting over-representation of educated participants in the panel.

Other than the biases reviewed above, the samples' characteristics were similar to those of the Jewish population in Israel in the years in question.

Table A-2: Characteristics of the Jewish samples in the 2021 and 2024 surveys (in %)^

		2021 (n = 5,437)	2024 (n = 2,711)
Age	18–24	16	17
	25–34	22	21
	35–70	61	62
	Average Age (SD)	38.8 (12.5)	39.8 (12.9)
Residential Area	Center	29	29
	Tel Aviv	21	21
	Haifa	11	11
	North	10	10
	South	15	15
	Jerusalem	10	10
	Judaea and Samaria	5	5
Marital Status	Single	35	31
	Married / in a relationship	59	63
	Divorced / separated	6	6
	Widowed	0	0
Religiosity	Secular	59	52
	Traditional	24	19
	Religious	18	14
	Ultra-Orthodox	0	16
Education	Primary / Secondary with no matriculation	9	13
	Matriculation diploma	21	16
	Postsecondary	21	16
	Higher education degree	48	51
	Unknown / refused to answer	0	4

^ The data are presented after weighing for age and residential area, for each measurement separately.

Appendix B: Professionals' Attitudes Toward the Law Prohibiting Prostitution

Table B-1: Attitudes[^] of Professionals Toward the Law in 2021 and 2023 (in %)

Statement	2021 (n = 110)	2023 (n = 160)
The law will reduce prostitution – summative index ^{^^}	26**	13
Increase leaving prostitution	34*	21
Increase the number of people in prostitution who seek rehabilitation	46*	31
Reduce or greatly reduce the phenomena of prostitution in Israel	16	15
Increase the understanding that one does not pay for sex	36*	26
Reduce the number of consumers	24**	11
Expand services for rehabilitating people in prostitution	41	32
Increase public awareness of the harm of prostitution	44	34
Make men treat women with greater respect	16*	8
Empower people in prostitution	18	15
Increase the number of prostitution consumers who seek therapy	24*	12
Increase the stigma on consumers	50*	35
The law will have a bad effect on people in prostitution – summative index ^{^^}	34**	26
Increase the physical and mental risks of people in prostitution	47	37
Increase the dependency of people in prostitution on pimps	37	30
Make "good" consumers stay away, leaving only "violent" consumers	39*	27
Increase the stigma of people in prostitution	26	28
Exacerbate the financial hardships of people in prostitution	45	36
Make the police harass people in prostitution	45	37
Drive payment for sex under ground	80**	58
Raise the prices of sex services	26*	16
Have a bad effect on people in prostitution	<i>not asked</i>	20
Will not change the situation with regard to prostitution	24	23

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

[^] "Agree to a great extent" or "Agree to a very great extent"

^{^^} See Table B-2 for details on the way the indicators were constructed and Cronbach's alpha values.

Table B-2: Reliability of the main indicators regarding expectations from the Law

Summative index	Content of index	Value range	Cronbach's alpha^ 2021	Cronbach's alpha^ 2023
The law will reduce prostitution	This index is based on 11 items related to the reduction of prostitution. The mean score of the 11 items was classified into three agreement categories: "Disagree" (1.0-2.4); "Undecided" (2.5-3.4); and "Agree" (3.5-5.0). Table B-1 presents the rate of those who agree "to a great degree" or "to a very great degree"	"Not at all" (1) to "to a very great degree" (5)		
The law will have a bad effect on people in prostitution	This index is based on 9 items related to the law's negative impact. The mean score of the 9 items was classified into three agreement categories: "Disagree" (1.0-2.4); "Undecided" (2.5-3.4); and "Agree" (3.5-5.0). Table B-1 presents the rate of those who agree "to a great degree" or "to a very great degree "	"Not at all" (1) to "Very highly" (5)		

Appendix C-1: Services of the Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs

- **Emergency accommodation** (emergency apartments) provide immediate assistance, protection, preliminary support and a temporary accommodation setting for people in prostitution aged 18+, for a period ranging from one night to six months. This service is provided by the *Salit* program in the Tel Aviv area; the Feminine Horizon program in Haifa (until 2023, through the Haifa Municipality and currently by the *Haderech* NGO); and the *Harduf* (previously, For You) program in Beersheba. *Accommodation House* in Tel Aviv, established in 2022, also provides emergency accommodation, specifically for transgender women.
- **Rehabilitation programs that include long-term housing** are offered by the ministry through hostels for people seeking to leave prostitution who have undergone substance abuse detoxification. The hostel services include emotional therapy, accessing public benefits and entitlements, medical or psychiatric monitoring, vocational support, etc. The hostels are operated by the *Salit* program in the Tel Aviv area, Feminine Horizon in Haifa, and *Harduf* in Beersheba. In addition, the *Roim Shakuf* hostel established in 2022 in central Israel serves men and transgender people (F2M) in prostitution aged 21+.
- **Heartspaces** treatment settings are designed for girls and young women aged 13-26 suspected of having been sexually abused and/or who are starting to enter prostitution. The settings provide them with a safe space by meeting their basic needs, providing shelter, training and personal care workshops, as well as tools for daily coping, accessing public benefits and entitlements, and job market integration. The settings operate in three models: (1) Limited model, three times a week (in seven locations); (2) Expanded model, five times a week (six locations); (3) 24/7 model for 13-21-year-olds, providing emergency accommodation for up to six months (three centers, two of which – Tel Aviv and Haifa – also serve men and transgender young adults). Tel Aviv also offers an “umbrella program” providing individually tailored services based on a personal budget.
- **Day and evening centers** provide individual and group therapy several times a week, as well as workshops for basic occupational skills, completing high school education, inculcating work habits, integrating into the job market, accessing public benefits and entitlements, etc. These centers are run by the *Salit* program in the Tel Aviv area, Feminine Horizon in Haifa, *Harduf* in Beersheba, and *Roim Shakuf* in Tel Aviv (for men and F2M transgender people). In 2023, the day and evening center of Feminine Horizon in Haifa closed and the *Harduf* center in Beersheba shifted to a new operational model, enabling its continued activity. In 2024, the day and evening center in *Salit* became a municipal unit which also included forty placements (in addition to the municipal units for the treatment of prostitution, which include 100 placements).
- **Municipal units (Units for the Treatment of Prostitution).** In 2023, the municipalities of Pardes Hana and Ofakim created dedicated units for treating people in prostitution within their social services departments,

to provide comprehensive services for people in prostitution, as well as to coordinate and facilitate access to other services in their jurisdictions provided to the general population, such as health or occupational services. Apart from the *Salit* units in Tel Aviv, in 2024, units were opened in Dimona, Rahat and Rehovot and additional units are expected to open countrywide.

- **Flexible basket.** People in prostitution over age 18 who are in the advanced stages of treatment and rehabilitation are entitled to services that are tailored to suit their needs. The flexible basket of services provides annual assistance according to credit points, up to 48 a year (the equivalent about \$3000). Assistance is provided in various areas, such as starting a drug rehabilitation process, providing furniture and essential electric appliances, providing economic assistance to improve functioning, assistance in paying off debts and paying for medical bills, and educational and vocational training programs. Requests for assistance from the flexible basket are reviewed by a social worker in the social services department and approved by the Ministry of Welfare. From 2022, it is possible to obtain an additional grant through the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, which extends financial assistance to additional populations of people in prostitution (such as undocumented migrants). These benefits are not conditioned on being in a rehabilitation and/or therapeutic process.
- **Holistic counselling center – *Hofchot et Hayotzrot*.** A counselling center for women aged 18+ on the prostitution and striptease continuum, who are not addicted to heavy drugs and have a relatively high level of functioning and personal resilience, and who want to leave prostitution and need help in doing so. The center has branches in Tel Aviv and Haifa and provides women with comprehensive assistance, including legal aid, psychiatric and emotional therapy, accessing public benefits and entitlements, and parenting guidance. The center is run by the *Hofchot et Hayotzrot* NGO, together with the ministry.
- **Her Academy** is a vocational school that trains and supports women transitioning out of prostitution and abuse. It offers courses designed to promote the women's rehabilitation process, empower them, expand their knowledge, develop their academic and interpersonal skills and provide them with tools to integrate into the job market and leave prostitution. The Academy offers vocational courses in a variety of areas, including office management, cooking, and bicycle repair. The "academy" also helps its graduates with occupational placement. The courses are provided by professional volunteers. In 2024, a second of the Her Academy was opened in Haifa. The program is run by the Her Academy NGO, together with the ministry.
- **Optimal occupation – "Hope Center"** is a special rehabilitative vocational program designed for people in prostitution. The program helps people who are unable to integrate into the open labor market acquire

occupational skills and job stability, as a step towards integration in society. The program includes a vocational rehabilitation course and psychosocial support in job market integration for two years, as well as counselling for potential employers. In 2024, the program started operating towards the end of the service users' stay in the hostels and day centers. The program is implemented by the Hope Center NGO, together with the ministry.

- **Over the Rainbow** is a program dedicated to transgender people in prostitution. It employs two dedicated social workers who provide information and assistance, emergency services, and preliminary material assistance. The program is run by the Ma'avirim NGO, together with the ministry.
- **Lo Omdot Me'negged (LOM)** is an NGO that provides a countrywide network of services for people in prostitution that complement the ministry's flexible basket. The NGO offers material assistance and individual support in order to minimize harm to people in prostitution, restore their trust in the services and in society in general, and motivate them to take advantage of the services designed to help them leave prostitution. The NGO runs a helpline and provides a variety of short- and long-term services, including dental care, food support, emergency economic support, help with basic equipment and logistics, and regular or need-based support by a volunteer. The complementary assistance program is provided by the NGO together with the ministry.

Services under Development

- **"Housing First"** is an innovative service for people in prostitution based on social real estate, together with the ministry, the Schusterman Foundation, the private sector and the Tel Aviv Municipality. Around the world, the program is applied mainly for the homeless population, whereas in Israel it is applied for people in prostitution. The participants receive an apartment in return for rent provided mostly by the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Welfare, and the Tel Aviv Municipality for a period of up to five years. At the same time, participants are provided with a comprehensive program that includes individual support and a system of therapeutic and rehabilitative services enabling them to live independently, as much as possible, and to leave prostitution gradually. The program started in 2024, and apartment placements began in the middle of the year. It is run by a steering committee with representatives from the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Justice.
- **Service for undocumented migrants** is a new service provided through a joint venture with the Schusterman Foundation. The program will provide therapy for undocumented migrants in prostitution, including comprehensive individual and group psychosocial therapy as well as basic financial support. This service is also supervised by a steering committee with representatives from the three ministries.

Appendix C-2: Ministry of Health Services

- **Mobile clinics for people in prostitution.** The mobile clinic for people in prostitution of the Levinsky Clinic in Tel Aviv, and the mobile clinic in Haifa have been active for more than a decade, operated by the health departments in the respective cities. The mobile clinics offer testing for STDs, including HIV/AIDS, counselling and treatment for STDs, and information on prevention – all anonymously and for free. The clinics also provide basic material assistance, access to public benefits and entitlements, and psychosocial treatment.

The clinics are staffed by a physician, a nurse, a social worker and a peer expert by experience (a mentor who used to be in prostitution and is now a clinic staff member). The mobile clinics travel through urban sites and the team members actively reach out and contact people in prostitution. In 2021, following the Resolution, additional mobile clinics were established in Jerusalem and Beersheba, as additional branches of the Levinsky Clinic in Tel Aviv. The clinics were also reinforced with Arab social workers and social workers for LGBT individuals.

Whereas most of the mobile clinic patients are women, there was an increase in the number of transgender people seeking treatment in the Tel Aviv and Haifa clinics, from 95 in 2021 to 116 in 2022. In the Haifa clinic, there was an increase in the number of Arab patients, from 76 in 2021 to 108 in 2022, and the rate of male patients is relatively high (19%-22%). In Tel Aviv, there was an increase in the rate of patients involved in prostitution for more than ten years among those in long-term care (from 31% in 2019 to 66% in 2022).

- **Prostitution site locator.** Following the Resolution, a prostitution site locator helps mobile clinics reach out to people in prostitution and in need of assistance by gathering information from public sources. The information is saved securely and is used only for the mobile clinics. Since 2020, more than a hundred active prostitution sites were located that were not known to the clinic staffs previously. Many of the sites which were located are in Jerusalem, Beersheba, Rishon LeZion and Haifa.
- **Psychiatric consulting and treatment.** In 2023, psychiatric consulting and treatment was added to the range of services provided by the ministry to people in prostitution, as an independent service. The psychiatrist receives patients in the Levinsky Clinic but serves all people in prostitution who apply for the service, including people of all genders and undocumented migrants.
- **"Ofek" – a comprehensive follow-up clinic for the care of people in prostitution** a multidisciplinary care for populations in and at risk of prostitution which operated at Wolfson Hospital in Holon from 2021 until it was closed due to operational difficulties. The hospital recruited a multidisciplinary team which provided

integrated medical services while helping patients schedule appointments and obtain refunds from the health plans, as well as mediation with the health services. The team applied cultural and gender sensitivity, based on the belief that health education can help people gradually regain control of their lives. The clinic provided outpatient medical services, including diagnoses and needs assessments by a team of physicians, social worker and nurses; lab tests; gynecology; colonoscopy; optimizing care for chronic illnesses or acute conditions; and psychiatric evaluation and counselling.

- **“Smiling to the Community” – the Rambam Hospital Dental Clinic** has been active since 2020 and includes preservative and rehabilitative dental treatment tailored for people in prostitution of all genders accompanied by a volunteer. The clinic also trains dentists to treat this population and to provide a service that meets their needs.
- **“Ariella’s Way” – Rehab for women in prostitution coping with comorbidity.** The service includes dedicated beds for stabilizing and detoxification treatment for women in prostitution coping with comorbidity, based on a multidimensional therapeutic approach. Patients from the mobile clinic can obtain psychiatric counselling in Ariella’s Way. In 2022 about 75% of the patients had complex PTSD and about half of them were between 18-30 years old.
- **Gender-adapted inpatient clinics for addiction rehabilitation** are inpatient clinics with a separate and gender-adapted service system (for women) through the Letsydech and Nika-Israel NGOs. The main diagnosis of the patients is alcohol and drug abuse – 81% and 85%, respectively. In 2021, 80% of them were addicted to drugs alone. In 2022, it was found that 84% of the women had been treated for drug abuse before.

Appendix D: Treatment and Rehabilitation Services

Figure D-1: The Number of Treatment Settings & Programs Providing Assistance in the Various Areas in 2021 and 2023

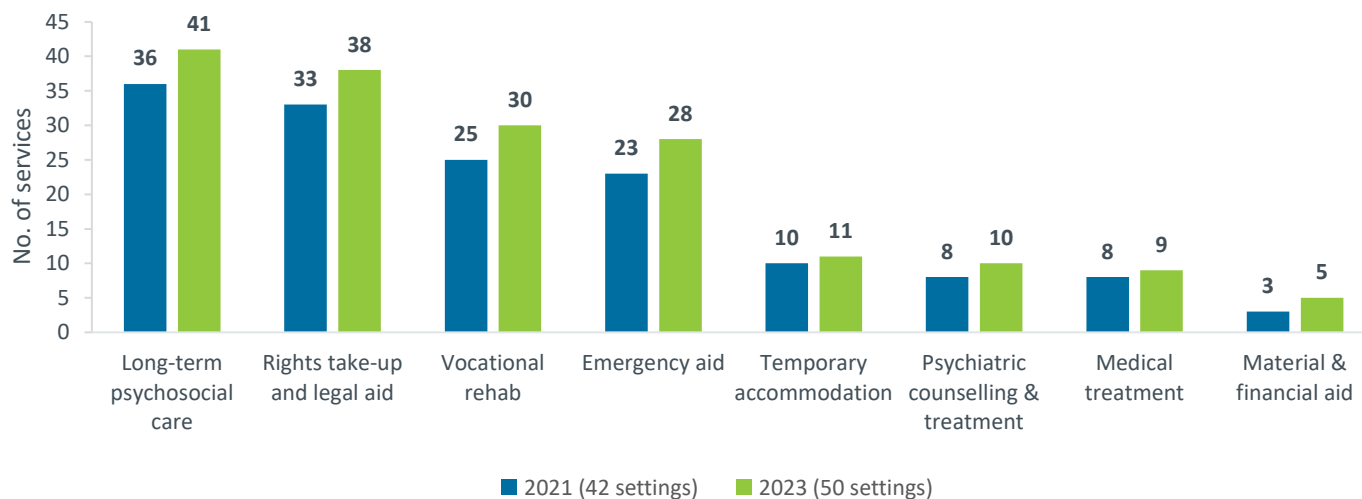


Table D-1: Ministry of Welfare Service Users, by Service in 2020-2023

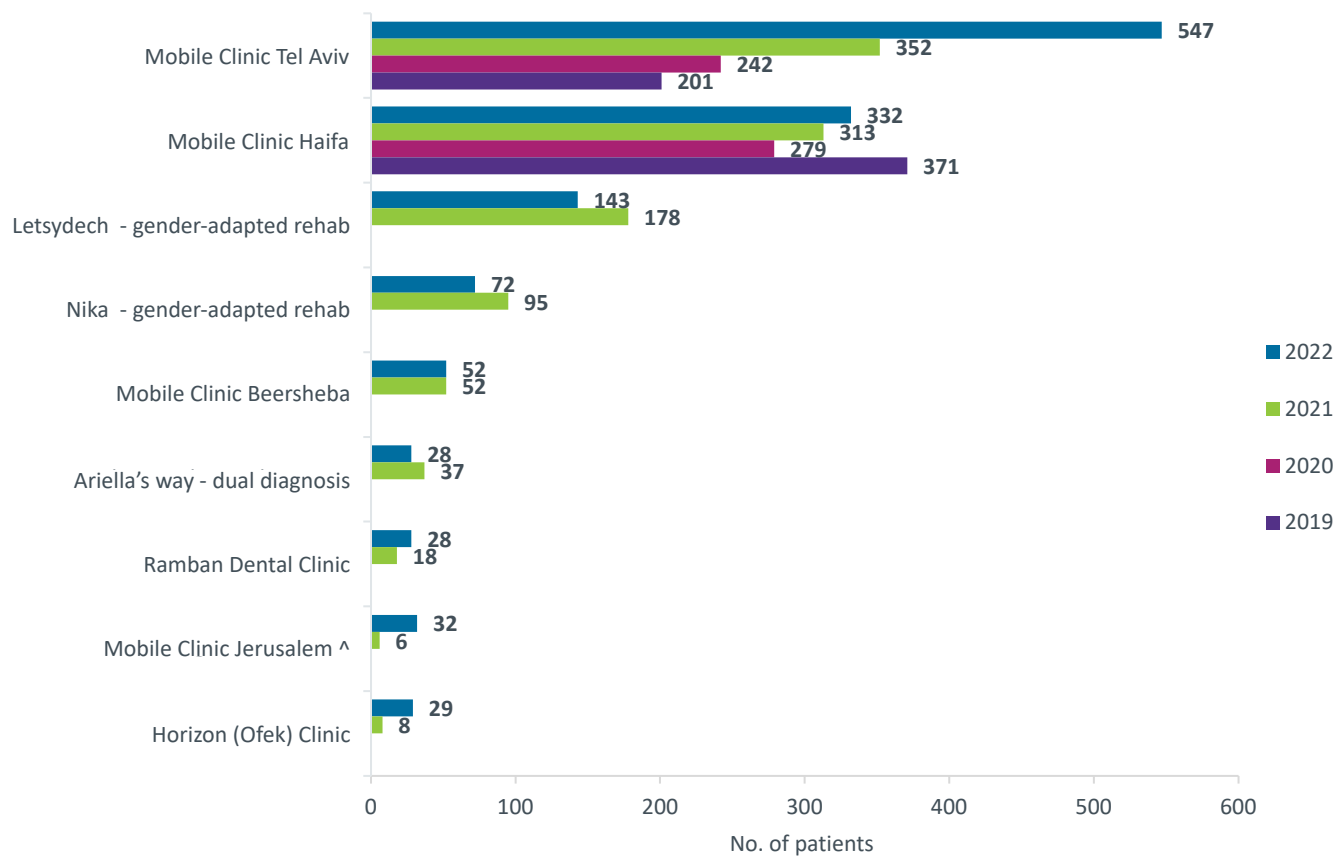
	2020		2021		2022		2023	
Name of Facility	No. of service users	% of service users	No. of service users	% of service users	No. of service users	% of service users	No. of service users	% of service users
Halev– total	722	36%	897	31%	733	24%	649	24%
Feminine Horizon – total	190	9%	190	7%	162	5%	101	4%
Hostel	42	2%	18	1%	15	0%	22	1%
Emergency accommodation	115	6%	110	4%	95	3%	79	3%
Day center	33	2%	62	2%	52	2%		
Salit – total	376	19%	397	14%	402	13%	174	7%
Hostel	189	9%	35	1%	19	1%	29	1%
Hostel	53	3%	220	8%	187	6%	78	3%
Emergency accommodation	134	7%	142	5%	196	6%	30	1%
Helpline^^							37	1%
Harduf/For You^	46	2%	100^	3%	42	1%	88	3%
Mia (<i>Hofchot et HaYotzrot</i>)			228	8%	379	12%	358	13%
Her Academy			129	4%	162	5%	136	5%
Hope Center			23	1%	33	1%	45	2%
Transitions (Over the Rainbow)			24	1%	11	0%	31	1%
Accommodation Center					13	0%	35	1%
<i>Roim Shakuf</i>					43	1%	61	2%
Pardes Hana Prostitution Treatment Unit							7	0%
Ofakim Municipal Unit							30	1%
Lo Omdot Me'negged	671	33%	902	31%	1135	36%	960	36%
Total	2,005	100%	2,890	100%	3,115	100%	2,675	100%

Note: It is impossible to determine the exact number of service users in all welfare services (or their precise percentage out of all welfare service users), since people who have been served in more than one service were counted in each service separately.

^ Estimated data provided by Harduf (formerly "For You") due to a change of operator.

^^ Only partial data have been obtained, and therefore not included in the analyses in the main text.

Table D-2: Number of Patients by Health Ministry Services, 2019-2022



^The data of the Jerusalem Mobile Clinic refer to patients who received psychosocial treatment. The clinic has also served additional patients who received only medical treatment.

Appendix E: Google Trends Data: Linear Regression Analyses for Comparing Search Volumes Across Periods, Explanation and Findings

Four periods were defined for the purpose of the regression analysis:

1. Prior to the law's approval – 2017 and 2018
2. After the law's approval and prior to the COVID-19 regulations – 2019 and January and February of 2020
3. The COVID-19 years – March 2020-June 2022
4. The post-COVID period – July 2022-April 2024 (end of data collection)

The search volumes for the terms "prostitutes", "escorts", and "discreet apartments" were the dependent variables (each of the terms was analyzed).

The month was defined as an independent variable for the purpose of statistical control, and was entered into the regression analyses in the first step.

In the second step, dummy variables were entered for the time elapsed after the law's approval and before the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic, the years of the epidemic itself and the post-COVID period. The two years prior to the law's approval were defined as the baseline period, to which the others were compared.

Table E-1: Findings of the Regression Analyses for Predicting the Volume of Searches for "Prostitutes", "Escorts", and "Discreet Apartments" by Periods

		"Prostitutes"				"Escorts"				"Discreet Apartments"			
		B	SE	β	Sig	B	SE	β	Sig	B	SE	β	sig
Step 1	Month	.32	.31	.08	.46	.47	.41	.12	.25	.89	.40	.24	.03
	ΔR^2			.01	.46			.02	.25			.06	.03
Step 2	Month	.19	.18	.07	.28	.55	.24	.14	.02	.97	.26	.26	< .001
	after law passed and before COVID-19	-8.99	1.95	-.32	< .001	-.70	2.60	-.02	.79	2.03	2.82	.06	.47
	COVID-19	-20.83	1.91	-.97	< .001	-20.40	2.15	-.71	< .001	-18.35	2.33	-.65	< .001
	Post-COVID	-15.16	1.71	-.66	< .001	-24.33	2.28	-.79	< .001	-20.35	2.47	-.67	< .001
	ΔR^2			.67	< .001			.67	< .001			.57	< .001

Figure E-1: Google Trends Data, Relative Search Volume for “Prostitutes”, “Escorts”, and “Discreet Apartments” (on a Scale of 0-100) by Periods; Source Data, January 2013-April 2024

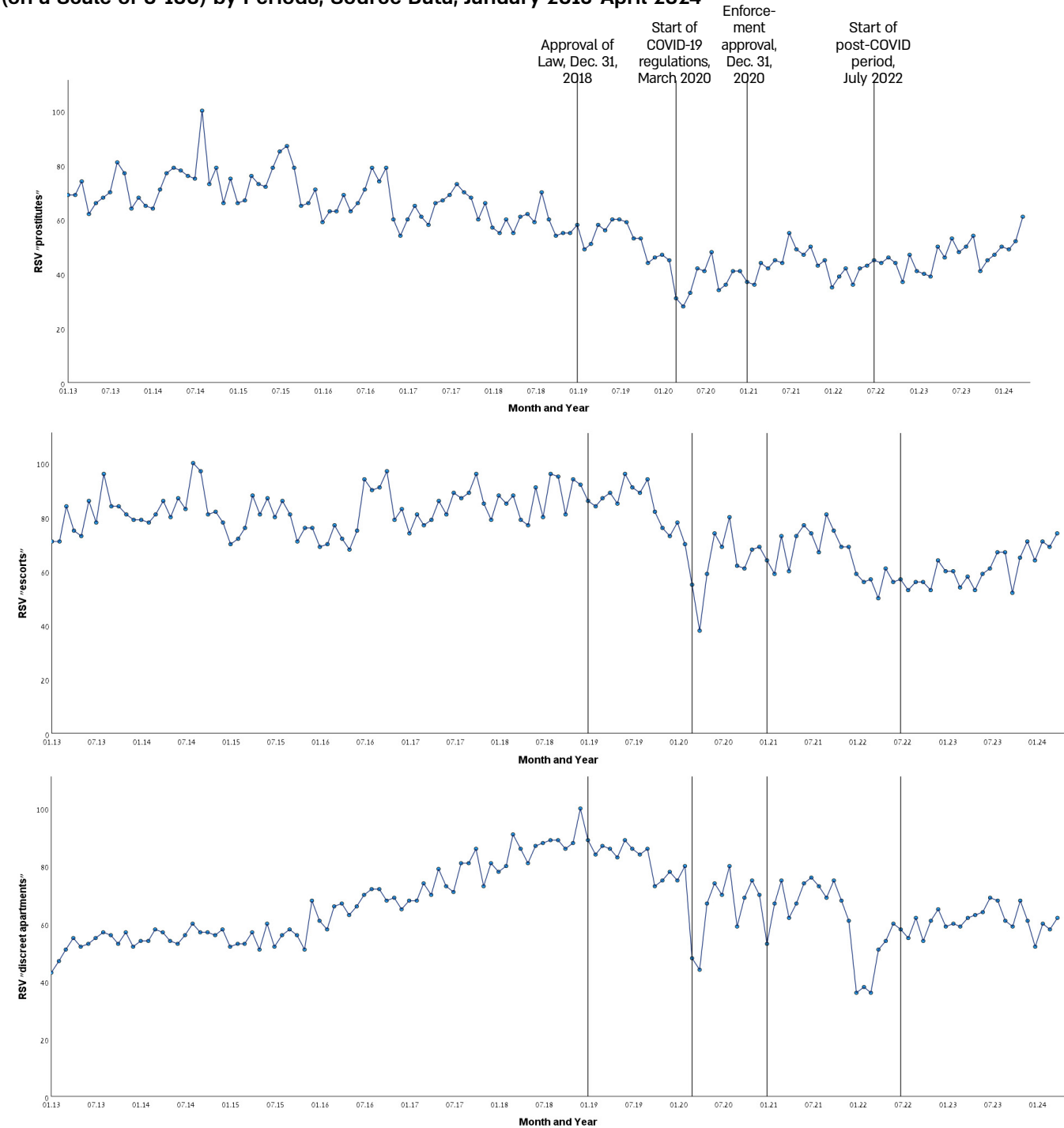


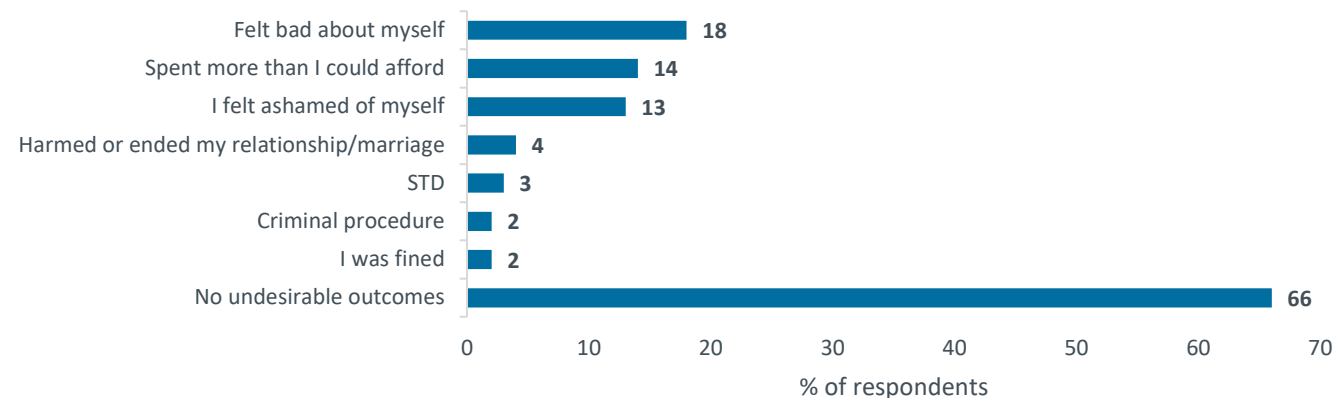
Table E-2: Google Trends Data, Partial Pearson Coefficients between Search Volumes and Number of Fines up to Three Months Before and After the Search, Controlled for Month of the Year (df=33)

Number of Fines: according to months before/after months of search	Search Term "Prostitutes"	Search Term "Escorts"	Search Term "Discreet Apartments"
Three months before	-.60**	-.63**	-.73**
Two months before	-.61**	-.49**	-.75**
One month before	-.43*	-.36*	-.61**
Same month	-.26	-.17	-.51**
One month after	-.16	-.05	-.38*
Two months after	.02	.10	-.31
Three months after	.22	.14	-.13

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

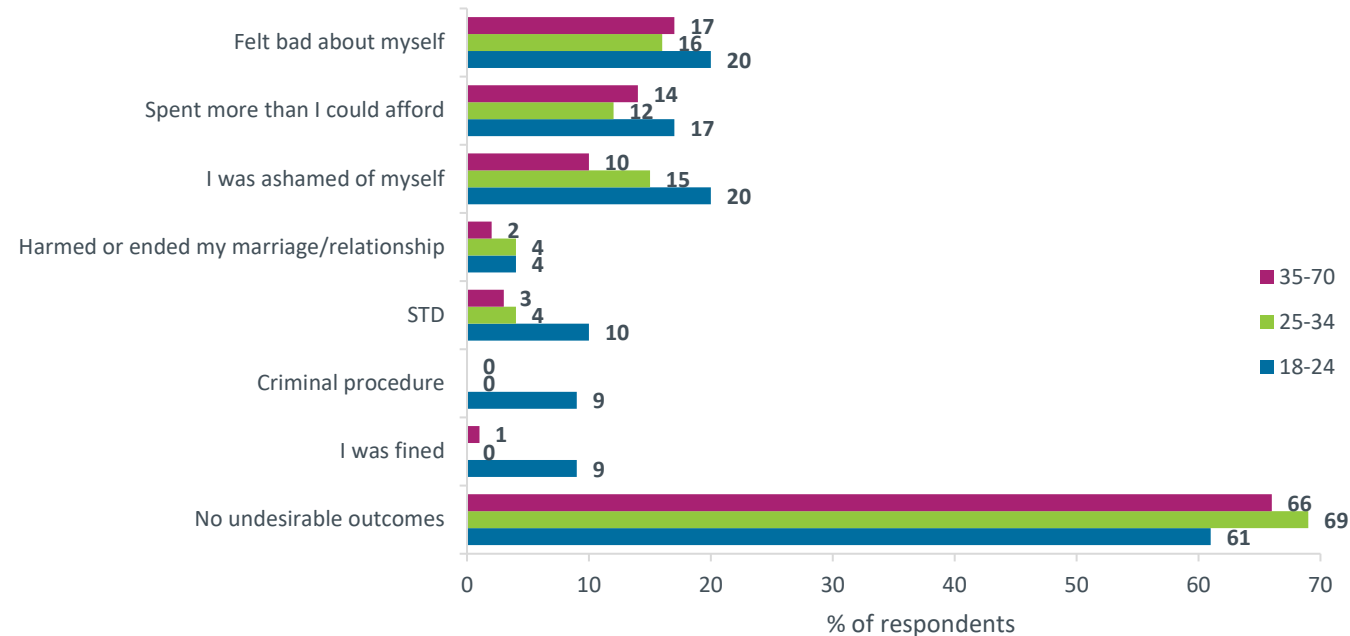
Appendix F: Harm of Prostitution Consumption, According to Consumers

Figure F-1: Harms of Prostitution Consumption for Consumers, according to the 2024 Consumption Survey (N = 327; in %)



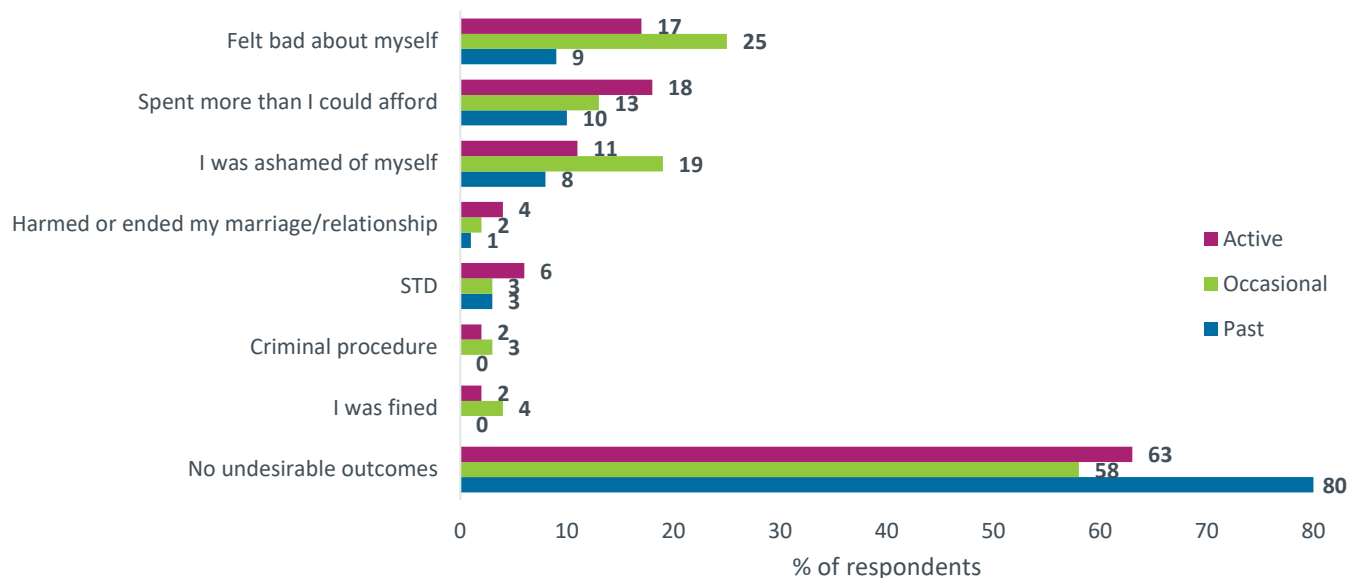
Note: The percentages do not add up to 100 because some of the respondents indicated more than one type of harm; the data on all respondents are presented after weighting by age. The n values refer to the number of respondents without weights.

Figure F-2: Harms of Prostitution Consumption for Consumers, according to the 2024 Consumption Survey, by Age Group (N = 327; in %)



Note: The data on all respondents are presented after weighting by age, for each measurement separately. The n values refer to the number of respondents without weights.

Figure F-3: Harms of Prostitution Consumption for Consumers, according to the 2024 Consumption Survey, by Type of Consumption (N = 327; in %)



Note: The data on all respondents are presented after weighting by age, for each measurement separately. The *n* values refer to the number of respondents without weights.

Figure F-4: Harms of Prostitution Consumption for Consumers, according to the Questionnaire for the Participants in the Alternative Program, before the workshop (N = 66; in %)

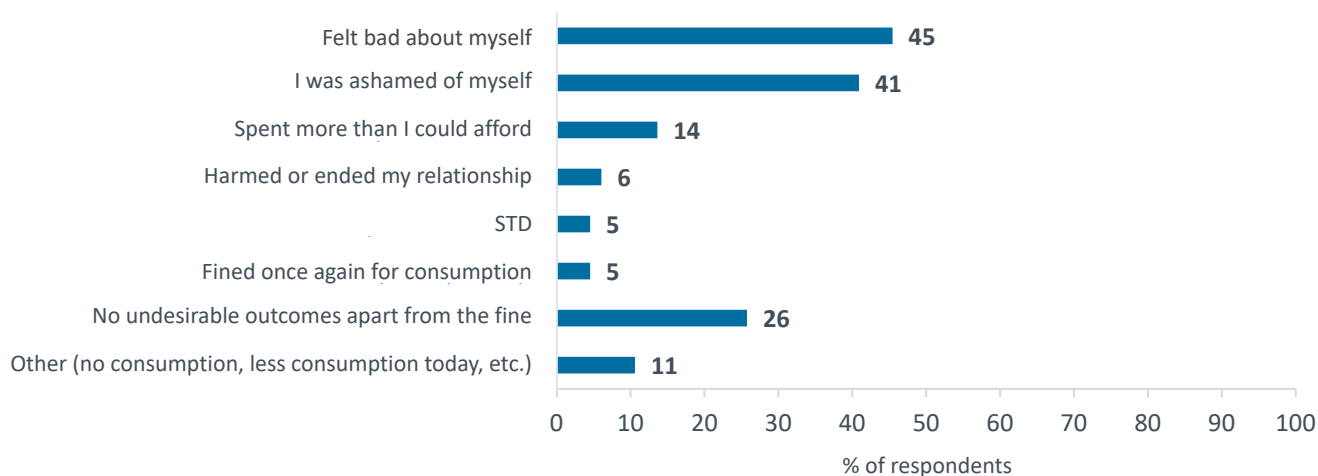


Table F-1: Consumers' Reports in the 2021 and 2024 Consumption Surveys ($n = 432$ and $n = 327$, respectively) on the Impact of the law, by Age Groups (in %)

	18–24		25–34		35–70	
	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024
No impact	43	45	43	41	51	39
Hadn't heard of the law before this survey	32	37	23	22	16	21
I now do it less	3	4	11	12	12	16
I do it in more hidden places and ways, keeping it discreet	7	10	7	6	7	14
I stopped doing it because of the law	11	0	8	9	9	5
I do or intend to do it only or mainly abroad	4	0	5	5	4	3
I do it more	0	4	1	4	2	1
I stopped consuming prostitution even before the law	0	0	2	2	0	1

Note: The data on all respondents are presented after weighting by age, for each measurement separately. The n values refer to the number of respondents without weights.

Table F-2: Consumers' Reports in the 2021 and 2024 Consumption Surveys ($n = 432$ and $n = 327$, respectively) on the Impact of the law, by Frequency of Consumption (in %)

	Past Consumption		Infrequent Consumption		Active Consumption	
	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024
No impact	49	48	41	38	52	39
Hadn't heard of the law before this survey	25	20	24	29	18	23
I now do it less	6	6	8	15	11	15
I do it in more hidden places and ways, keeping it discreet	11	14	10	3	8	1
I stopped doing it because of the law	3	4	9	9	8	18
I do or intend to do it only or mainly abroad	5	3	6	3	2	3
I do it more	1	1	2	2	0	3
I stopped consuming prostitution even before the law	1	3	1	2	0	0

Note: The data on all respondents are presented after weighting by age, for each measurement separately. The n values refer to the number of respondents without weights.

Appendix G: The Alternative Program

Table G-1: The Workshop Structure

	First Session	Second Session	Third Session
First part of session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Getting acquainted ■ Who is the woman in prostitution? Discussing the factors leading to prostitution ■ Initial discussion of perceptions and attitudes regarding prostitution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on women – a video about a prostitution “survivor” / woman in prostitution ■ Continued discussion of the factors leading women into prostitution ■ The contexts and the gendered social structure that enable prostitution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Public health nurse on the risks and diseases involved in consuming prostitution
Second part of session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Meeting with a representative of the Ministry of Justice: The law, the social issues behind it, its rationale, its enforcement, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on men – which men consume prostitution; discussing explicit and implicit motives ■ Discussing the harm involved in consuming prostitution ■ The harm to the woman in prostitution ■ Alternatives to the consumption of prostitution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Summary and processing of the workshop contents – discussing the legal, emotional, health and other aspects ■ Completing the survey questionnaires

Appendix H: Attitudes on Prostitution and Leaving It

Table H-1: Multiple Linear Regression Model for Predicting Support for the Law as a Function of the Sociodemographic Characteristics of Respondents to Public Attitude Surveys in 2021 ($n = 803$) and 2024 ($n = 804$)[^]

		<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	Exp(<i>B</i>)
Step 1	Year of measurement (2024)	0.042	0.117	1.043
	Age in years*	-0.011	0.005	0.989
	Gender (male)**	-0.643	0.118	0.526
	Nationality (Jew)**	-0.773	0.170	0.461
	Religiosity (religious)*^^	0.360	0.145	1.443
	Marital status (married)^^^	1.406	0.882	4.078
	Marital status (divorced / separated / widowed)^^^	1.450	0.883	4.265
	Degree of support for the law (constant)^^^^	0.883	0.924	2.418
	Nagelkerke R^2	0.070		
Step 2	Gender × survey year	-0.276	0.236	0.759
	Nationality × survey year	0.533	0.343	1.704
	Nationality × gender	0.066	0.344	1.068
	Nagelkerke R^2	0.073		
Step 3	Nationality × gender × survey year	-0.043	0.697	0.958
	Nagelkerke R^2	0.073		

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

[^]The results for each predictor are presented for the step in which it was entered into the model

^{^^} Religious respondents are those who self-identified as either "religious" or "very religious"

^{^^^} Reference group: single individuals

^{^^^^} Support for the Law: "to a great degree" or "to a very great degree" support for the law.

Table H-2: Factor Loadings Regarding Attitudes Toward the Law in Public Attitudes Surveys, 2021 and 2024

		Factor	
		1	2
Will reduce prostitution	Will encourage people to leave prostitution	.80	
	Will encourage people in prostitution to seek rehabilitation	.79	
	Will greatly reduce the extent of prostitution	.79	
	Will increase public awareness of the harm of prostitution	.74	
	Will expand services for rehabilitating people in prostitution	.74	
	Will encourage consumers to seek treatment	.73	
	Will increase the understanding that one does not pay for sex	.73	
	Will make men treat women with greater respect	.71	
	Will reduce the number of prostitution consumers	.71	
	Will empower people in prostitution	.59	
	Will increase the stigma against prostitution consumers	.56	
Will have a negative impact on people in prostitution	Will increase the stigma against people in prostitution^		.42
	Will increase the physical and mental risk of people in prostitution		.73
	Will increase the dependency of people in prostitution on pimps		.71
	Will exacerbate the financial hardships of people in prostitution		.62
	Will drive payment for sex under ground		.57
	Good clients will avoid consumption, and violent ones will remain		.54
	Will increase the price of sex services		.54
	Will cause the police to harass people in prostitution		.52
	Will not change the situation	Not in any factor	
Detailed explained variance		31%	16%
General explained variance		47%	
Cronbach's Alpha		0.91	0.77

Note: All statements were measured on a scale ranging from (1) "Not at all" to (5) "To a very great extent".

^This statement was included in both factors, and it was decided to include it under "Will have a negative impact on people in prostitution".

Table H-3: Attitudes Regarding Prostitution and Leaving It in the Public Attitude Surveys (N = 1,607), by Population Group and Gender; Means, SDs, and t-Test Results for Comparing Women and Men

	Jews					Arabs				
	Men		Women		<i>t</i> (1257)	Men		Women		<i>t</i> (346)
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Prostitution is a social phenomenon that offends human dignity	1.94	1.106	1.55	.870	6.91 <i>p</i> < .001	1.66	1.064	1.21	.600	4.89 <i>p</i> < .001
Prostitution is a social phenomenon that has a negative effect on men's treatment of women	2.03	1.155	1.54	.833	8.67 <i>p</i> < .001	1.70	.916	1.34	.641	4.20 <i>p</i> < .001
Most women in prostitution are interested in leaving it	2.71	1.021	2.48	.944	4.22 <i>p</i> < .001	2.61	1.03	2.51	.964	--
Women in prostitution cannot leave it without help	2.22	1.085	1.89	.955	5.58 <i>p</i> < .001	2.05	1.08	1.66	1.009	3.28 <i>p</i> < .001

Note: Measured on a scale ranging between (1) "Agree very much" and (5) "Completely disagree"