

LEGAL ISSUES

In Italy, prostitution – which means selling sex – IS NOT ILLEGAL. That applies for both men and women of whatever nationality. If the authorities (police, carabinieri, vigili, finanza, etc.) stop a sex-worker they cannot issue a fine (ask for money) or put her in prison or in a camp just because she gets paid for sex. They can only ask her to follow them if she does not have documents.

However, it IS ILLEGAL:

- to have or to manage a club, bar, massage parlour, shop, hostel or anything where there are people who sell and buy sex.
- To rent out a house, apartment or club to other people where prostitution is taking place.

However, renting out a house or apartment to a person who sells sex is not illegal, if she lives there. It's only illegal to ask for more money because she works as a sex-worker in this house.

- To convince or force a person to sell sex, and to earn money from the work of a person who exercises prostitution (also via the internet). This is a crime when it happens in Italy, or when the person is being sent to work outside Italy, or when she is sent to Italy from another country.

Italian law says that whoever favours or exploits the prostitution of others in any way can be sent to prison and made to pay a fine. This can also be applied to people who help (and do not exploit) sex workers, because they have a relationship of trust and affection with them. For example, a person who always drives a sex worker to work can be sentenced. Equally, an adult (a person who is older than 18) who is financially supported by a sex-worker can be sentenced, just as a person who rents out a house to a sex worker if she works in that house. Or even a regular customer.

A person, man or woman, can receive **a fine** between 16 and 93 euros, **BUT CANNOT BE ARRESTED**, if that person is trying to convince another person in public (on the street, in a club) to have sex, with words or gestures. Some municipalities (comuni), however, issue higher fines to street sex workers.

IN ITALY, **PROSTITUTION IS NOT CONSIDERED REGULAR WORK** (AND THEREFORE, DOES NOT GIVE ANY RIGHT TO PENSION, TO PERMESSO DI SOGGIORNO, OR TO ANY OTHER WORKERS' RIGHTS, WHETHER SELF-EMPLOYED OR NOT).

HOWEVER, THOSE WHO WORK AS SEX WORKERS, ACCORDING TO ITALIAN LAW, **STILL HAVE TO PAY TAXES**. In practice, a sex worker who has a bank account risks a fine for not having paid taxes if she has money in that account, which she could not have earned in another way other than with prostitution.

People who sell sex are often stigmatised for that reason, but at the same time, many clients demand their services. Supposedly **nine million people**, especially men, of all age groups, rich and poor, buy sex in Italy every year. Precisely because it is not recognized as work, but stigmatised, prostitution is a dangerous job, because many men, including law-enforcement agents, harass sex workers. But there are ways of protecting oneself.

IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE BEEN HARASSED, YOU CAN GET A LAWYER WITHOUT HAVING TO PAY. In Italy, there is **free legal aid (gratuito patrocinio)**: this means that people without income or money, asylum seekers and those appealing against a negative decision of the commission can **always** get a lawyer **for free**. In some cases, people who are exploited but don't have a permesso di soggiorno can get it, even if this a difficult process. In this guide, you will find a list of organisations which can help you.

HEALTH ISSUES

ALWAYS USE A CONDOM

Using a condom for any sexual intercourse (also oral or anal) protects you from HIV and other diseases. You can be infected with HIV by having sexual intercourse (also oral or anal) but also by getting in contact with blood from little wounds. Saliva does not transmit HIV.

Apart from HIV, you can also get other diseases like HPV, chlamydia, herpes, gonorrhoea, syphilis and hepatitis by having sex.

Getting tested for HIV and other diseases, and also having an abortion, is free and you can get it done in the hospital in Foggia, 1 viale Pinto, tel. 0881731111, ask for the maternity ward on the ground floor [reparto maternità]. It's open every Thursday from 2.00 until 4.00 pm. You can get medical checks for other diseases there as well. There are also other places where you can get checks and an abortion, they are called consultori (see the addresses below).

It's important to get checked regularly, in order to prevent diseases, don't wait until you feel ill!

You also need a condom in order not to get pregnant.

Don't ever clean the condom, if you clean it can break more easily. For oral intercourse, there are condoms with various flavours (strawberry, banana). Don't unroll the condom before putting it on. Be careful not to rip it with your finger nails or teeth when you open the packaging. Don't ever use more than one condom at a time, and don't ever use vaseline or other oils, they will damage the condom. There are water-based creams (lubricants) which you can use to make the intercourse easier.

If the condom breaks or remains inside, wash yourself immediately and try to push out the sperm as if you have to pee. If this happens, it's important to **get tested immediately**. Remember that **AMPICILLIN DOES NOT PROTECT YOU FROM PREGNANCY WHEN THE CONDOM BREAKS OR IF YOU DON'T USE IT**. There are other ways of not getting pregnant after having unprotected sex – you have to ask a doctor to get the **MORNING-AFTER PILL (pillola del giorno dopo) within three days after sexual intercourse**. You can go to a CONSULTORIO FAMILIARE to get this pill (see the addresses below for the province of Foggia). Or you can buy the PILLOLA DEI 5 GIORNI DOPO, the 5-day pill, which is called EllaOne, in any pharmacy: you can take this tablet within 5 days after unprotected intercourse, but the sooner you take it the better! You can get it without any prescription from the doctor and it costs about 35 euros: if the pharmacist asks for a prescription or a pregnancy test, tell them that the law was recently changed and EllaOne can be sold to those who are over 18 without a prescription.

When you have your period don't use cotton wool, it's difficult to take it out and the bits that remain inside can cause infections. Use sponges instead.

IF YOU ARE PREGNANT BUT DO NOT WANT TO HAVE A CHILD, REMEMBER THAT ABORTION IS FREE AND YOU CAN GET IT DONE EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE A PERMESSO DI SOGGIORNO (DOCUMENTS). BUT YOU HAVE TO GET IT DONE WITHIN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF THE PREGNANCY (which you can calculate starting from the first day of your last period). So it's important to remember when you had your last period and immediately do a test if your period is late. **You can buy the pregnancy test in any pharmacy** and you can do it from the first day after your period is due.

For having an abortion in hospital it's better to be accompanied because not all doctors do abortions and it can be difficult to get it done in time. If you are near Foggia, you can call this number in order to be accompanied: **340.7685267** or go to San Severo, 11 Vico Previdenza (behind the cathedral), every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm and from 5 to 7 pm.

IT'S BETTER NOT TO USE MEDICINES LIKE CYTOTEC TO HAVE AN ABORTION BY YOURSELF, because you can lose a lot of blood and it can cause death. Cytotec does not always work, especially when a woman has been pregnant for more than three months, and in any case, it's better to get an **ultrasound (ecografia) in hospital** in order to be sure that the pregnancy does not have any complications.

If you don't have any other choice, remember that you have to take **4 pills for 3 times every three hours (12 pills in total)**. **You have to keep the pills under your tongue for at least 30 minutes - don't swallow! When you take it, don't drink alcohol and don't take any other medication apart from pain killers. Don't take Cytotec if you have a serious illness like anaemia.** When you take Cytotec, it's normal to feel pain and start bleeding after a couple of hours. You can lose blood for many days after you have taken Cytotec, even for up to two weeks. If you don't lose blood it means you have not aborted. **However, if you continue to lose a lot of blood (more than two pads in one hour for more than two hours), if you have a high temperature, or if you are in a lot of pain for a long time, go to hospital immediately.** In any case, you can go to hospital after having taken the

pills, the doctors won't know that you have taken them, it could also be a spontaneous abortion. AFTER TWO WEEKS, GET TESTED A SECOND TIME IN ORDER TO BE SURE THAT YOU HAVE ACTUALLY ABORTED, IT'S ALSO POSSIBLE TO GET AN ULTRASOUND.

CONTACTS OF HEALTH HELP DESKS (CONSULTORI) AND OF ASSOCIATIONS IN THE PROVINCE OF FOGGIA

BORGIO MEZZANONE

VIA SANTA MARIA DEL GRANO, 2

MONDAY 4.00 PM – 6.00 PM; TUESDAY 9.00 AM – 1.00 PM

CERIGNOLA

VIA XX SETTEMBRE, 1 • Tel. 0885.419261/0885.419786

FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY 8.30 AM – 1.30 PM TUESDAY AND FRIDAY 3.30 PM – 6.00 PM

FOGGIA

CONSULTORIO N. 1

VIA ALVAREZ, 2 • Tel. 0881.884950-52-53-56

FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY 8.30 AM – 12.30 PM

MON. TUE. THU. 4.00 PM – 6.30 PM

CONSULTORIO N. 2

VIA DELLA REPUBBLICA, 26 • Tel. 0881.884962-3

FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY 9.00 AM – 12.00 PM

FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY 4.30 PM – 6.00 PM

CONSULTORIO N. 3

VIA GRECIA • Tel. 0881.884408-04-05

FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY 9.00 AM – 1.00 PM TUESDAY AND THURSDAY 4.00 PM – 6.30 PM

ORTA NOVA

CORSO UMBERTO I • Tel. 0885.419114/0885.419126

FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY 8.00 AM – 1.00 PM; WEDNESDAY 3.00 PM – 6.00 PM

SAN SEVERO

VIA FORMILE, 36 • Tel. 0882.200349

FROM MON. TO SAT. 8.00 AM – 2.00 PM; TUE. AND THURS. 4.00 PM – 8.00 PM

STORNARELLA

C.SO VITT. EMANUELE III, 4 • Tel. 0885.432779

TUE. AND WED. 9.00 AM – 1.00 PM; TUE. AND THURS. 3.00 PM – 5.00 PM

SELF-DEFENCE

In Italy any kind of physical, verbal or psychological violence is a crime. The law says that everybody has the right to defend him/herself against an aggression, and that whoever uses violence for self-defence should not be punished.

This means that if somebody threatens to harm you, your family or your children, or if somebody harasses you physically or sexually – that is, he hurts you or forces you to have sex with him – you have the right to defend yourself with all means. Don't be afraid to hurt your aggressor. If you can't run away, make use of all your strength to defend yourself. Everything can become a weapon (hands, feet, keys, your purse, your voice). If you need any assistance after you've been a victim of violence, there are some associations in Foggia that can help you. Here are the addresses:

Telefono Donna Foggia

Via della Repubblica, 54 • Tel: 800229346; 0881 772499

Sportello Antiviolenza "Filo di Arianna Coop. Sociale A.R.L."

Via Previdenza, 11 - San Severo Tel.: 340.7685267

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