

SEX PURCHASE IN SWEDEN AND GERMANY

BACKGROUND

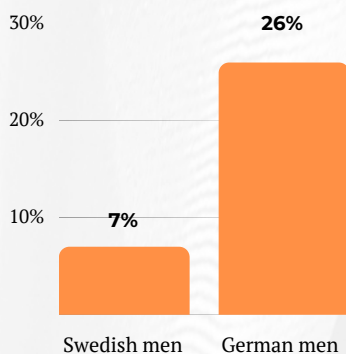
Sweden was the first country in the world to introduce a sex purchase law in 1999. The law criminalizes those who buy sexual acts or the procuring of others, but not those who sell sexual acts. Internationally, this model is called "The Equality Model" and has been highlighted as the most successful model to combat prostitution and trafficking. Several countries have therefore followed and introduced similar legislation, including France, Canada and Israel.

The most recent survey on sex purchase in Sweden was carried out in 2017 by the Public Health Authority. The Swedish Women's Lobby has therefore commissioned this survey in order to contribute with fresh numbers on the effects of the Sex Purchase Act. A comparison is also made with Germany. This is a country that at about the same time as Sweden, in 2002, went in the opposite direction as Sweden and decriminalized all aspects of the sex industry, including sex purchasing and procuring.

FEWER MEN BUY SEX IN SWEDEN COMPARED TO GERMANY

Like previous surveys, the results show that men constitute the vast majority of those who buy sexual acts. This is also the case in both Sweden and Germany. In our survey, 0 percent of the Swedish women answered that they have bought sex at least once and 4 percent of the German women. On the other hand, 7 percent of Swedish men answer that they have bought sex at least once. 5 percent of all Swedish men have also bought sex several times. In Germany, the numbers are higher. 26 percent of the German men have bought sex at least once and 16 percent of all German men have bought sex several times.

Figure 1: Proportion of men who state that they have bought sexual acts at least once



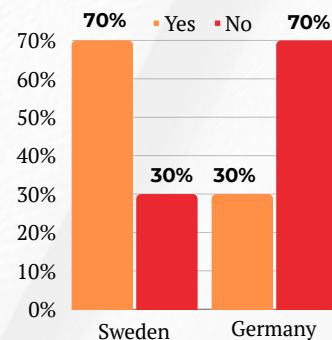
Special acknowledgement: To Assistant Professor. Max Waltman for his insights and help in formulating the survey questions.

It is also significantly more common that German men have influenced someone to perform sexual acts on them, which the person did not really want to do. In Germany, 12 percent of men answer "Yes" to this question. Among Swedish men, the corresponding number is 3 percent. In both countries, the majority state that the person they have coerced was a woman.

HIGH ACCEPTANCE FOR SEX PURCHASING IN GERMANY

Several studies have shown that since its introduction, the Sex Purchase Act enjoys strong support among the Swedish public, especially amongst women. Previous polls show that a majority of the Swedish population believes that buying sexual acts should be illegal. The current study shows the same result, with 70 percent of Swedish respondents answering "Yes" to the question of whether the purchase of sexual acts should be illegal. At the same time, the results show the opposite for Germany. In Germany, 70 percent instead answered "No" to the question of whether buying sex should be illegal. A comparison between the countries also shows that gender differences are virtually non-existent in Germany in the view of buying sex, while a gender difference can be found in Sweden. The results of this survey shows that a very high proportion of Swedish women think that buying sexual acts should be illegal, 91 percent. Amongst Swedish men the result is 63 percent.

Figure 2: Proportion of people who think that buying sexual acts should be illegal.



THE SURVEY QUESTIONS

- Do you think it should be illegal to pay another person with money or any other remuneration to be sexually with another person?
- To what extent have you paid with money or any other remuneration to be sexually together with another person?
- Have you ever influenced a person to perform sexual acts on you that the person didn't really want to do?

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The survey was carried out by Novus in Sweden in collaboration with Norstat in Germany. The data collection took place online during the period 2023/09/22- 2023/10/05. A representative sample of the population participated in the survey, with 1041 respondents in Sweden and 1004 respondents in Germany. The age of the respondents was between 18–84 years.

Margin of error At 1,000 interviews: For outcome 20/80: +/- 2.5%, for outcome 50/50: +/- 3.1%