



## PE:ER Project Newsletter

No.9, 2010

The PE:ER Project (Prostitution Exiting: Engaging through Research) began in June 2009, a joint research project between Eaves and London South Bank University (LSBU) to assess the effectiveness of interventions designed to support women in England who want to leave prostitution. Since then, we've been developing a research project that is academically robust, yet still places the needs of our research participants – women involved in, exiting or exited from prostitution – at the centre of our approach.

### January and February on PE:ER

Over the past couple of months, we have:

- \* Begun data analysis, LSBU Research Fellow Helen Easton spent two weeks at Eaves head office at the beginning of January to facilitate this process. The team worked intensively to prepare the data and transcripts for analysis, as well as developing skills using software packages SPSS and NVivo. Research Officer Helen Atkins and Link Officer Lisa Reynolds are continuing to analyse the interview transcripts, as well as the quantitative data, and write about the emerging themes.
- \* Held our sixth Advisory Group meeting on 31st January at Eaves head office in London, with seven Advisory Group members attending. The meeting focused on the progress of the research to date, in particular the field research drawing to a close and the progress of data analysis. Attendees discussed a variety of topics and areas of interest that had emerged so far from the analysis. The team would like to thank the Advisory Group for their invaluable advice, we are really grateful for the time that they give to the project.
- \* Presented at the Greater London Authority seminar on 7th February. Statutory and voluntary organisations attended the event which focused on exiting prostitution, with a number of speakers presenting around the topic. Helen Atkins and Lisa Reynolds presented on the background and methods of the PE:ER Project, as well as some preliminary findings.
- \* Said goodbye to our two volunteer Research Assistants, Donna Arrondelle and Sophie Madden. Thank you for all the time and hard work that you have given to the PE:ER Project, we wish you both the best of luck for the future.
- \* Welcomed two Research Interns, Mia Helt and Stine Als. Mia and Stine are university students from Copenhagen who will be volunteering full time on the PE:ER Project as part of their Erasmus semester.

### Service provider comments

As well as conducting interviews with women who are involved in, exiting or have exited from prostitution, PE:ER have also interviewed 35 service providers from statutory and voluntary organisations across the seven research sites. We have received really positive feedback from these interviews and gained some valuable information from the organisations.

"I found our meeting [stakeholder interview] this morning really productive and encouraging, it was...good to be involved with such needed research"

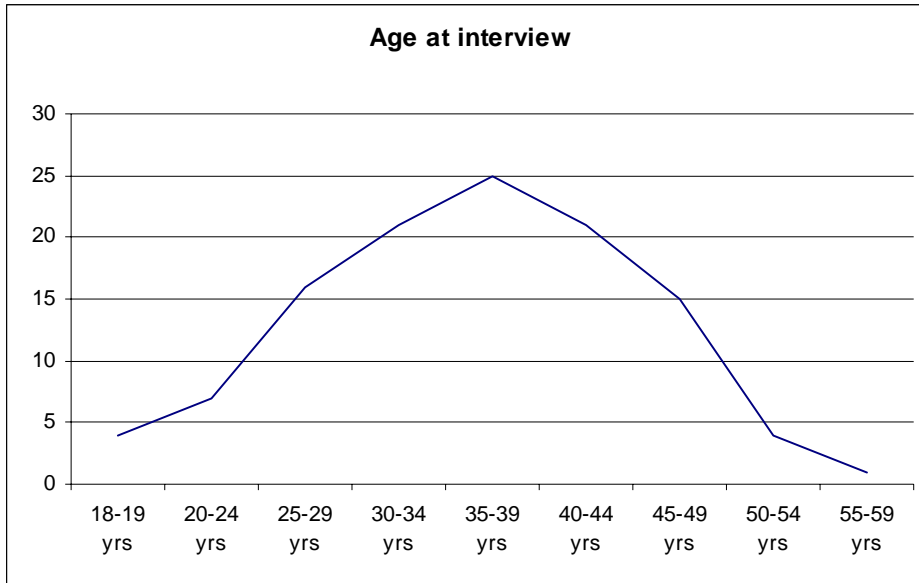
"It was a great pleasure to have you down. We all enjoyed it"

"I really enjoyed doing the PE:ER interview, I think it will add to a greater understanding of the needs of women wishing to exit"

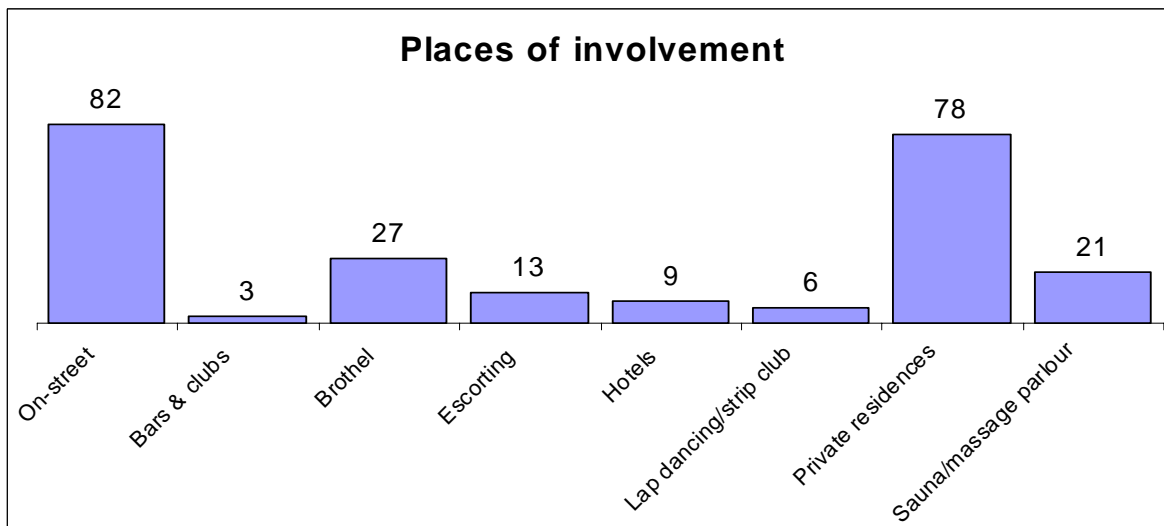
## Preliminary results

Over the past few months PE:ER have been analysing the data that has been collected from the women and service providers that we have interviewed. Initial findings\* from the PE:ER sample have already begun to emerge.

### Profile of PE:ER participants



The women who took part in the PE:ER research were aged between 19 and 55 years old. The chart above shows the number of participants in each age category. 25% of the women that we interviewed were aged between 35-39 at the time of interview. Whilst this age group is perhaps higher than some professionals have suggested for women involved in prostitution, given that the PE:ER research is focused on women in the process of exiting or who have exited, we would expect the ages of our sample to be higher than women involved in prostitution overall.

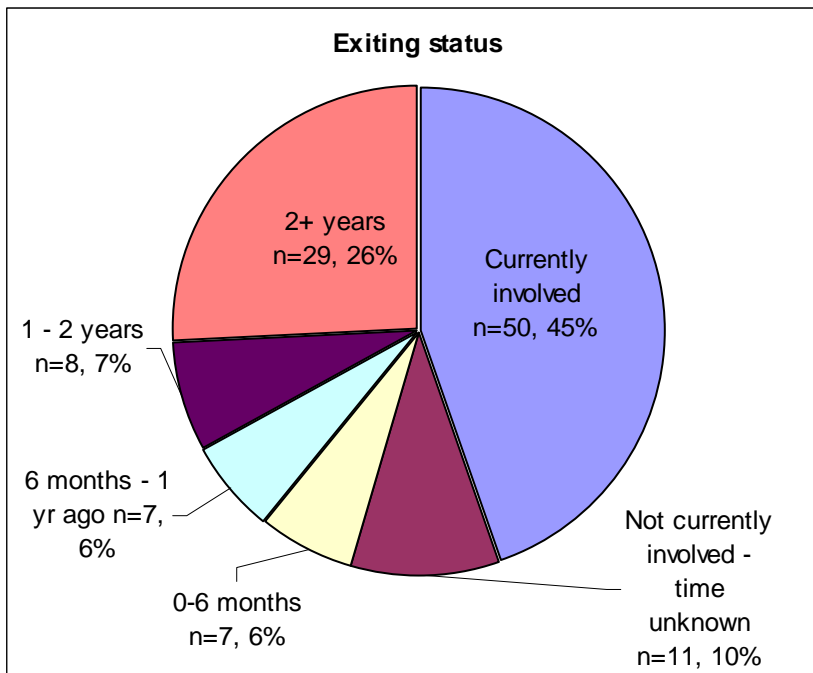


We interviewed women who were currently or had previously been involved in on-street and off-street prostitution, including escorting. We also interviewed women who had been trafficked into the UK sex industry. Women reported prostitution involvement in a range of locations and premises (see chart, above) and many participants had been based in several different places during the course of their involvement in prostitution.

\* The data and results that are presented are the outcome of initial analysis and are not conclusive findings, they may change following further analysis of the sample.

## Profile of PE:ER participants

55% of the women that we interviewed had exited from prostitution. The length of time that they had been exited for ranged from less than 6 months to 2 years or more, whilst 10% of participants were unsure of the length of time since they had exited.



- The age that women first entered prostitution ranges from 6 to 40 years.
- A large number of the women we interviewed have multiple physical, mental or sexual health issues.
- Almost two-thirds (64%) of participants reported having suffered childhood abuse.
- Nine out of ten participants (91%) used drugs and/or alcohol whilst involved in prostitution.

## Linking and tracking

A unique element of the PE:ER research has been the linking and tracking of the women who took part in the first round interviews. With their permission, the project's researchers signposted and referred women to any relevant support and advice that they would like or might need. Over 40 onward referrals were made following the interviews.

All participants were also offered the opportunity to stay in touch with the PE:ER Project. Link Officer Lisa Reynolds tracked those who expressed an interest in staying in touch, contacting them on several occasions between the first and second interview to see how they were and, if wanted, to link them into services.

From the 115 women that we interviewed, 109 women were contacted again (5 were not contactable):

- 77 women responded positively
- 45 women had more than 5 contacts
- 17 women had between 5 - 10 contacts
- 17 women had between 11 - 20 contacts
- 11 women had more than 20 contacts

## Workshops

### Prostitution, exit strategies and good practice in supporting women

Eaves is running a series of workshops for borough-level statutory agencies and voluntary service providers who focus on prostitution. The workshops aim to equip attendees with the knowledge required to assist those who want to exit prostitution.

Workshops will run over a day and a half on the following dates:

- 9th and 10th March 2011
- 13th and 14th April 2011
- 11th and 12th May 2011
- 14th and 15th June 2011

The training costs £150 (statutory agencies), £110 (voluntary agencies). If you would like more information or to book a place on a workshop please contact Louise Jenkins on 020 7840 7103 or [louise.jenkins@eaveshousing.co.uk](mailto:louise.jenkins@eaveshousing.co.uk).

### Save the date!

The PE:ER Project is holding an event to launch our research findings on Thursday 2nd June at London South Bank University. The event will include presentations from the PE:ER team, guest speakers, Q&A panels and discussion groups.

We are currently finalising the details of the launch event and further information will be available over the coming months.

### Thank you!

Thank you to all of the projects and people who have supported us and engaged with the project over the past few months.

Most of all, thank you to all of the women who have taken part in the interviews and continue to keep in touch, the research is only possible because of your generosity of time and openness.

### What's happening next...

Over the next couple of months, we are planning to:

- \* Continue with data analysis and report writing.
- \* Publish our interim findings at the end of March.
- \* Hold our seventh Advisory Group meeting on 1st April at Eaves head office in London.

## PE:ER close up

Stine joined the PE:ER Project at the beginning of February. She is studying for a BA in Social Work at the Metropolitan University College in Copenhagen. Stine has joined the PE:ER Project for her Erasmus semester at university.

### I choose the PE:ER Project for my Erasmus semester because....

Working with women has always been a dream job for me, as well as my goal with studying and becoming a social worker. I love working in a feminist organisation and I'm learning a lot from the work that the PE:ER Project is undertaking.

### What I like most about working on PE:ER is...

Feeling that you are making a difference. Being part of an organisation that is taking action and is not afraid to speak up, we don't see that a lot in Denmark.

### Over the next few months I will be...

Enjoying London! And taking in as much knowledge as I can! My friends and family are coming over to visit, my dad has never been to London so I'm really looking forward to showing him around.



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