

Kick-off Conference of The Social Study |
9 december 2025



DEVELOPING THE SEDES

**A CARIN-Based Scale of Sex Work Deservingness for the
Social Study**

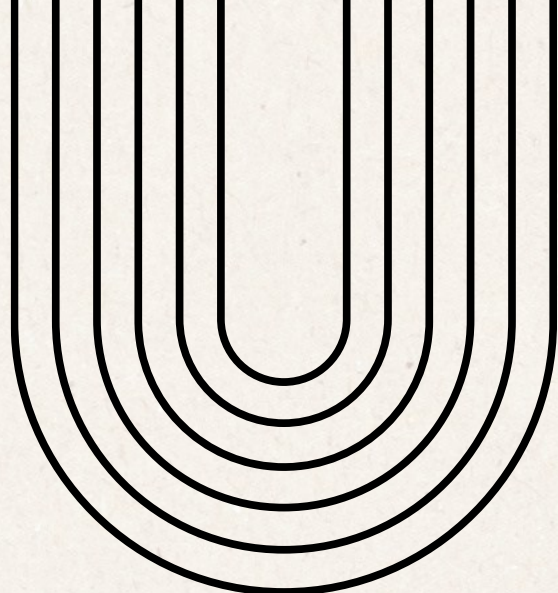
dr. David De Coninck
Contact: david.deconinck@kuleuven.be



Structure

1	Why sex work?
2	Theory: Deservingness & the CARIN criteria
3	Development of the SeDeS
4	Expected insights and follow-up

Why sex work?



Reason # 1

Legal reforms

- Belgium first country to recognize sex work as labour
- Decriminalisation (2022); 'legalisation' (2024)



Only 4 employers recognized...



Reason # 2

Stigma

- **Legal reforms ≠ social acceptance**
- Public perceptions remain polarized
- Stigma effects sex workers' ability/willingness to access services or protection



Reason # 3

Data

- Limited data on public views on sex work/prostitution
- Most work in the U.S. is on specific... are... ch

The Legality of Labor and Perceptions of Deservingness of Rights and Services for Sex Workers

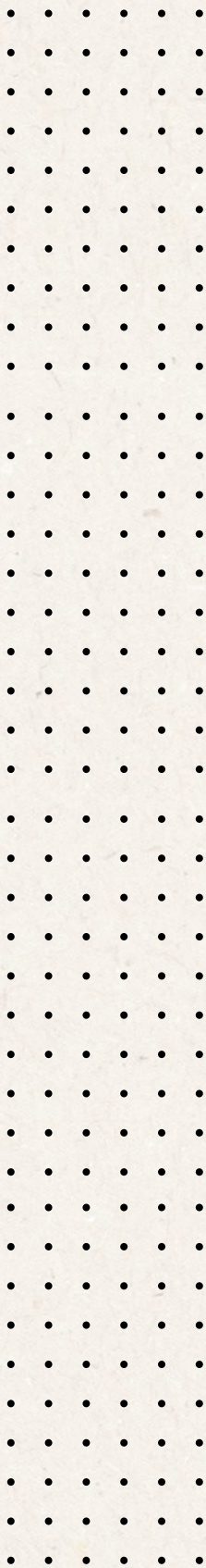
Original Paper | Published: 13 August 2024
Volume 53, pages 3609–3624, (2024) [Cite this article](#)

Deservingness

How much people feel someone (or which group) should receive help or support

Not an attitude, but a moral evaluation: “do they deserve benefits, protection?”

Widely used in welfare, migration, health care... research



CARIN - criteria

CONTROL

Are *target group* responsible for their situation?

ATTITUDE

Do *target group* show gratitude/effort/ respect?

RECIPROCITY

Do *target group* contribute or “give something back”?

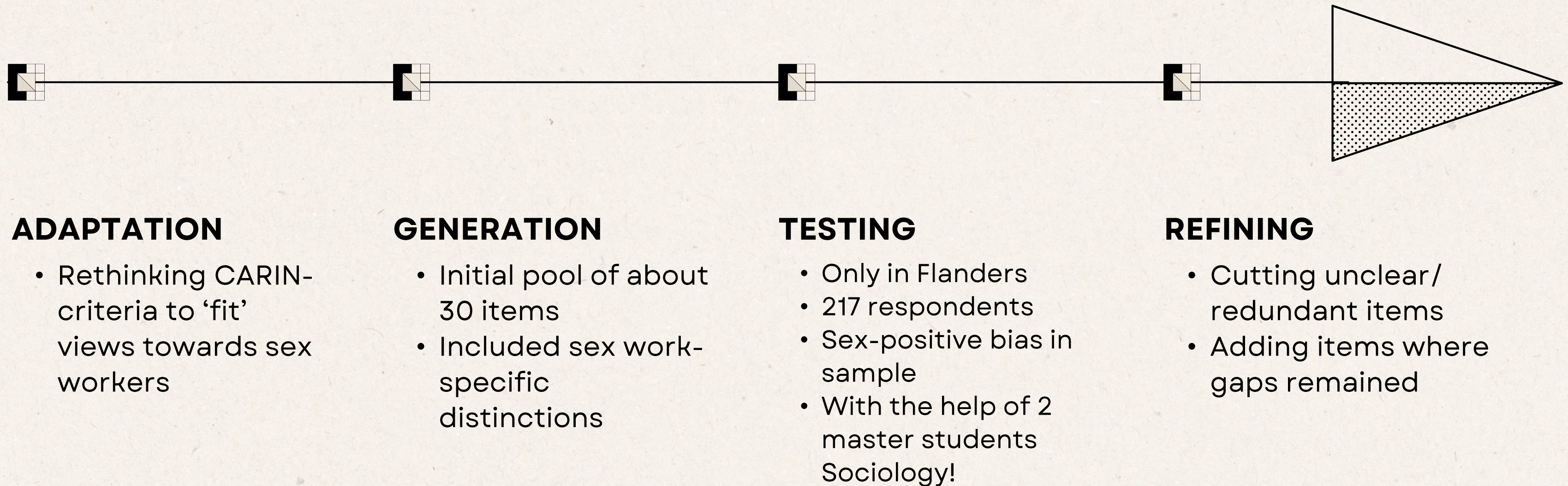
IDENTITY

Are *target group* “like us” (nationality, culture...)?

NEED

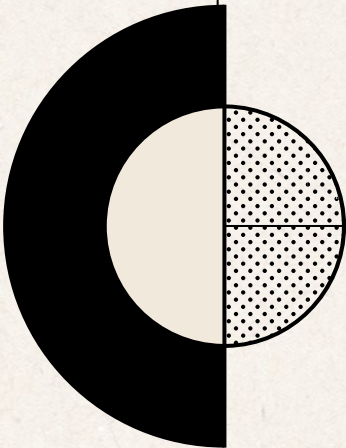
How vulnerable or in hardship are *target group* ?

Development of the SeDeS



19 items... and some extras

CONTROL	ATTITUDE	NEED	RECIPROCITY	IDENTITY
It is important to consider whether someone was forced or pressured into sex work when deciding on their right to public assistance.	Sex workers who receive public assistance should not complain about their circumstances.	Sex workers facing health risks or violence should be given priority when granting public assistance.	Making an effort to follow legal regulations (e.g., registering their business, health checks) should increase sex workers' right to public assistance.	When granting public assistance to sex workers, those who were born in Belgium should get priority over those who were not.



Active as a sex
worker?

Paid a sex
worker?

Know a sex
worker?

Expected insights

A C A D E M I C

High-quality data on sex work views; unique!

Extra traction for The Social Study? 😊

Extension of the deservingness framework to a new group

Follow-up projects

FWO-project with Uni of Cincinnati tbd

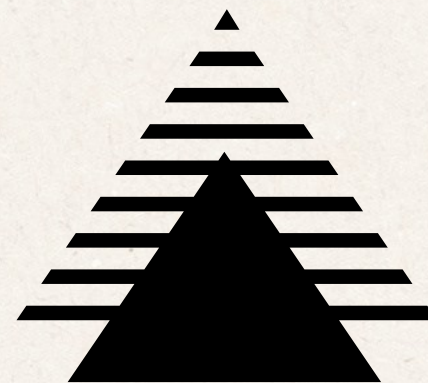
P O L I C Y

Reveal where stigmas remain despite legal changes

Anticipate/build public support for further reforms

Useful for NGOs, social services

e.g. UTSOPI



Interested in collaborating? Find me!

CONTACT ME

E-mail

david.deconinck@kleuven.be
