

Down by Law

Criminalization, Solidarity, and Survival in Europe

Edited by CrimScapes Research Group

Down by Law: Criminalization, Solidarity, and Survival in Europe is a collaborative graphic novel by ethnographers, artists, and activists that starkly and honestly illuminates people's stories of those whose lives have been shaped by the social and political implications of criminalization across Europe.

The near-total ban on abortion in Poland, new hate speech laws across Europe, a de facto ban of sea rescue in the Mediterranean, and the criminalization of sex work—these trends toward a harsher politics of criminalization, securitization, and threat are spreading throughout the continent. In eight moving, illustrated vignettes, readers encounter everyday people involved in search-and-rescue activism, sex work, internet content moderation, abortion activism, drug use. We set sail with civilians who take action to save the lives of migrants at sea who face increasingly militarized borders, follow the journey of a woman jailed for a bus fare she couldn't pay, see the impact of state neglect and violence on people who use drugs in Poland, and follow a migrant woman navigating the challenges of sex work policing who finds resilience in her community, and more.

These ethnographic stories not only bring to life alarming insights into criminalization across Europe but the hope and solidarity of everyday people in the face of increasing repression. The criminalized don't stay put. They adapt, resist, and survive. Their personal stories are rarely seen or heard, until now.

With contributions from Agata Chełstowska, Agata Dziuban, Aleksandra "Sasza" Stachowska, Asia Bordowa, Beate Binder, Friederike Faust, Florian Krynicki, Carmen Grimm, H-P Lehkonen, Janita-Marja Juvonen, Jan Peukert, Jérémy Geeraert, Joris Bas Backer, Justyna Struzik, Juulia Kela, Katarzyna Urbaniak, Monique Horstmann, Salla Sariola, Sylvain Adam, Todd Sekuler, Valerie Assmann.

ABOUT THE EDITORS

The **CrimScapes Research Group** consists of twelve ethnographers based in Germany, Finland, France, and Poland who came together to explore what they call "landscapes of criminalization." Together with a large number of civil society initiatives and artists, they render visible the lifeworlds that arise from the increasing criminalization of sex work, drug use, search and rescue activities, abortion, HIV/AIDS, the punishments for poverty, and abuse in women's prisons. They reveal how the global trend towards punishment and criminalization leads to experiences of chronic crisis and manifold strategies of solidarity and survival in Europe. Find them online at www.crimscapes.de.

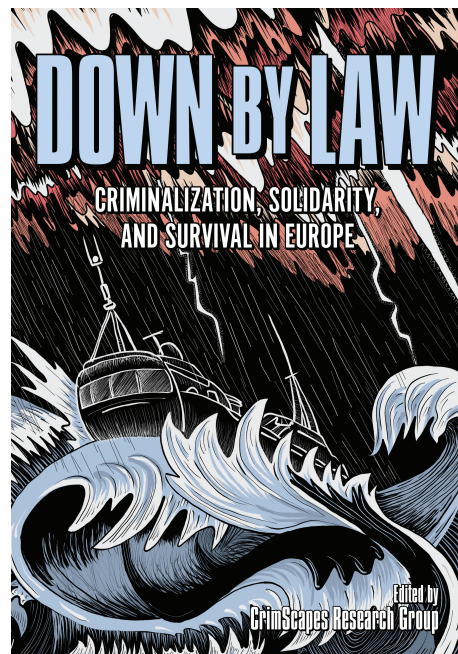
ACCOLADES

"These ethno-graphics unveil the multiple forms of criminalization across Europe, from sex work to abortion practice, from to drug use to hate speech, and even from the poor unable to pay their fines to humanitarian workers conducting search and rescue operations at sea. They provide an inquiry into the dark side of contemporary societies."

—Didier Fassin, author of *Policing the City: An Ethno-Graphic*

"*Down by Law* illustrates graphic stories of the everyday criminalization of sex work, abortion, drug use, poverty, HIV/AIDS, and refugee search-and-rescue missions, as well as the harmful effects of the regulation of online hate speech. It takes the reader from the prison cell to the streets, to the surveilled seascapes and online landscapes of digital oppression in various places in Europe and does the work of undoing the criminalization of everyday people, especially racialized and gendered, in our imagination. Abolition speaks to the power of imagining worlds otherwise; this creative-collaborative novel is a great, much-needed, and inspiring contribution to that project."

—Vanessa E. Thompson, coauthor of *Abolitionism*



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