



The European Parliament calls on Member States to implement all the components of the Abolitionist model on prostitution!

CAP International, a coalition of 35 grassroots and survivor organizations operating in 28 countries, which last year supported nearly 18,000 persons in prostitution, welcomes the adoption of the [Report on the regulation of prostitution in the EU: its cross-border implications and its impact on gender equality and women's rights](#), which will give become a **European Resolution**. This vote is a major victory for prostituted persons, as it recognises prostitution as a form of violence and calls on EU Member States to implement all the components of the Abolitionist Model.

First, the EU Parliament states that **prostitution is neither a form of work nor an individual choice, but a system of violence based on multiple patterns of discrimination**: *Prostitution is not an individual act whereby a person rents out their body for money, but rather an organized system for profit that is inherently violent, discriminatory and deeply inhumane and which operates like a business and creates a market where pimps plan and act to secure and grow their markets and where sex buyers play a key role in incentivizing them. (...)*

The Parliament emphasizes that the gender-specific nature of prostitution and its exploitation reflects and replicates the prevailing power relations; stresses that intersectional discrimination further exacerbates this power imbalance; underlines that the majority of people in prostitution are women, which widens the inequality gap between the genders; underlines, further, that prostitution and sexual exploitation are both a cause and a consequence of the unequal treatment of women and men, sexism, racism, ableism, poverty and social exclusion and replicate and perpetuate stereotypes about women and men and other genders and marginalised groups in general.

The EU Parliament **calls for the adoption of the Abolitionist Model by adopting all its components**.

First, the **criminalisation of the purchase of a sexual act**: *The Parliament calls on Member States to ensure that it is punishable as a criminal offence to solicit, accept or obtain a sexual act from a person in exchange for remuneration, the promise of remuneration, the provision of a benefit in kind or the promise of such benefit.*

The EU Parliament also calls for the **criminalisation of all forms of pimping**: *The EU Parliament calls on the Member States to ensure that it is punishable as a criminal offence to exploit the prostitution of another person.*

The EU Parliament also calls for the **decriminalisation of prostituted persons and their access to a comprehensive exit pathway, as implemented by Abolitionist organisations and countries such as France in particular**: *The Parliament calls on the Member States to take action in the areas of prevention, decriminalization of people and especially women in prostitution (...) Notes that the majority of women in prostitution would like to leave it and that, consequently, efforts should be made to promote alternatives and exit routes so that women who wish to do so have the confidence and support, including help from the state, to build a life free from violence and prostitution.*

Finally, the **EU Parliament strongly criticises the "sex work" approach implemented in Germany, Holland and Belgium, which decriminalises and normalises pimping and the purchase of sexual acts, and recognises the positive impact of the Nordic/Equality Model**: *The Parliament notes that the decriminalization of pimping and of the purchase of sex increases demand, empowers the demand side and normalizes sex buying; underlines that the stigmatization of people in prostitution nevertheless persists in this system; notes that only if demand is reduced can the number of those exploited in it, shrink. (...) The Parliament stresses that human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, including child sexual abuse, is increasing due to high demand (...) this is particularly visible in countries with a liberal regulatory model, whereas Member States such as France and other countries that follow approaches like the*

Nordic/Equality Model are no longer big markets for human, trafficking (...) highlights the (Nordic) model's positive effects on the rights of people, in particular women, in prostitution, the normative effect in society and the fight against human trafficking.

Recognition of **prostitution as a system of violence**, call to **criminalise the purchase of sexual acts and pimping, decriminalisation and support for persons in prostitution** via the provision of **exit pathways**: the EU Parliament has just manifested a strong support for the **widespread adoption in Europe of the abolitionist model in all its components**, and a clear **rejection of regulatory systems** that decriminalise and legalise the entire prostitution system.

This decision is a **step forward in terms of equality between women and men, social justice** and the protection of **minorities**. This is a major victory for the Abolitionist movement and a clear call to Member States to adopt abolitionist legislation, as Sweden, Ireland and France have already done.

This is also a **strong signal sent in the context of the ongoing procedure against the French abolitionist legislation at the European Court of Human Rights**: The positive impact of the abolitionist model is recognised in Europe, and the majority of democratically-elected representatives of the European peoples subscribe to this model.

Press contacts: **Jonathan Machler**, Director, jonathan@cap-international.org / +33651267771 ; **Héma Sibi**, EU Advocacy Coordinator, hema@cap-international.org / +33698394074