

FOR A FEMINIST, ANTIRACIST, AND EQUAL EUROPE: ABOLISH THE PROSTITUTION SYSTEM

Manifesto of feminist, survivor-led and grassroots NGOs for the 2024 EU elections

We feminist, survivor-led and grassroots NGOs, call on candidates to the EU elections to support the **Equality Model** recognising **prostitution** as a form of **violence** against women.

We observe that throughout the world, prostitution is a violence that first and foremost impacts women and girls from **discriminated communities**: Indigenous, migrant, refugee, poor women and girls, those from oppressed castes or minorities. Europe does not escape this reality: 70% of prostituted persons are migrant women¹!

In Europe, hundreds of thousands of women are victims of the prostitution system every year for a sole reason: to satisfy the male demand for the **purchase of sexual acts**. At a time when women and girls are facing increasing inequalities and a backlash on their most fundamental rights, we call on the EU to harmonise legislations on prostitution towards the Equality Model protecting **persons in prostitution** and tackling the **impunity** of perpetrators.

Fighting the prostitution system is a way towards a Europe of equality between women and men, anti-racism and social justice!

WE OBSERVE THAT:

- ◆ Prostitution is a form of **violence**: the repetition of sexual acts without desire but that are socioeconomically, physically or psychologically coerced is in and of itself a violence;
- ◆ Prostitution is an **obstacle to sexual freedom** and to a sexuality free of all constraints, including economic ones;
- ◆ Prostitution is a **violation of human dignity** as enshrined in International Human Rights Law²;
- ◆ Prostitution is **neither sex nor work**, but a system of sexual and economic exploitation of the most vulnerable;
- ◆ The demand for the **purchase of sexual acts** is at the **root** of the **prostitution** and **trafficking** of women and girls;
- ◆ Both **prostitution** and **trafficking** in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation **explode** in countries that have **regulated** prostitution.

1. Brussels Call, Her Future is Equal: [Towards Equality: Progress, Challenges and Next Steps](#)

2. [Prostitution under International Human Rights Law: An Analysis of States' Obligations and the Best Ways to Implement Them](#)

OUR DEMANDS:

We call on the candidates to endorse an **EU approach based on the Equality Model** and to harmonise the EU legislation on prostitution towards it by adopting legislative provisions aiming at:

1. Recognising prostitution as a form of violence
2. Decriminalising persons in prostitution
3. Guaranteeing support services and exit pathways to persons in prostitution
4. Ending demand by prohibiting the purchase of sexual acts and penalising:

“Soliciting, accepting or obtaining relations of a sexual nature from a person in prostitution, including on an occasional basis, in exchange for remuneration, a promise of remuneration, the provision of benefits in kind or the promise of such benefits.”³

5. Prohibiting pimping in all of its forms by penalising:

*“1. Procuring, hiring, or enticing another person for the purpose of prostitution, even with the consent of that person;
2. Obtaining any profit from the prostitution of another person;
3. Helping, assisting, or protecting the prostitution of another;
4. Maintaining, monitoring, running, financing, or managing a brothel or any place suspected of accommodating prostitution;
5. Knowingly letting or renting a building or other place or any part thereof for the purpose of the prostitution of others.”⁴*

We further call on candidates to the EU elections to reject:

- ◆ Any distinction between **“free prostitution”** and **“forced prostitution”**
- ◆ Any measure aimed at **decriminalising pimping** and the **purchase of sexual acts**
- ◆ Any **assimilation of prostitution to so-called “sex work”** and use of this term in contradiction with the UN and EU agreed language.

SIGNATORIES:

The **Coalition for the Abolition of Prostitution** (CAP International) is a coalition of 35 grassroots and survivor-led organisations providing direct support to 18,000 victims of prostitution and trafficking for sexual exploitation in 28 countries.

³ §41 of [European Parliament resolution of 14 September 2023 on the regulation of prostitution in the EU: its cross-border implications and impact on gender equality and women’s rights \(2022/2139\(INI\)\)](#)

⁴ Based on Article 1 and 2 of the UN [Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others](#) (1949)

The **Brussels'Call** is a partnership coalition of over 120 civil society organisations, as well as survivors and experts, committed to working at the international, European, Member State and local level to end prostitution and sexual exploitation in Europe.

Full list:

International NGOs: Coalition for the Abolition of Prostitution - European Women's Lobby - European Network of Migrant Women - European Feminist Initiative - Equality Now - Aretusa - Coalition Against Trafficking in Women - International Coalition for the Abolition of Surrogate Motherhood - SPACE International - Réseau méditerranée contre la traite des femmes - Zeroimpunity **Outside Europe:** Apne Aap - Breaking Free - Cecym - Comisión Unidos vs Trata - Concertation des luttes contre l'exploitation sexuelle - Crisis Center for Women - Eva Center - Empoderame Foundation - KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation - Maiti Nepal - People Serving Girls at Risk - Sawa - South Kolkata Hamari Muskan - Talita Asia - Vancouver Rape Relief & Women's Shelter - Wahine Toa Rising - **Austria:** African Women's Association - lightup.austria - Verein Feministischer Diskurs - **Belgium:** Conseil des Femmes Francophones de Belgique - Nederlandstalige Vrouwenraad - Femmes et Santé - Femmes Prévoyantes Socialistes - Generation Abolition - isala asbl - Le Monde selon les Femmes - Osez Le Féminisme Belgique - Université des Femmes - Synergie Wallonie pour l'Égalité entre les Femmes et les Hommes asbl - **Bulgaria:** Bulgarian Women's Lobby - Amalipe Center for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance - Gender Project for Bulgaria Foundation - Demetra - Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation - **Croatia:** Women's Network Croatia - Centre for Women's Studies - Centre for Women War Victims - ROSA - PETRA Network of NGOs for the Prevention and Elimination of Trafficking in Women - Women's Association "IZVOR" - **Cyprus:** Cyprus Women's Lobby - Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies - **Czech Republic:** Aperio - Birth Centre "U čápa" - Czech Doula Association - Czech Women's lobby - Fórum 50% - Help in need - **Denmark:** Women's Council in Denmark - Danish Women's Society - KFUKS Sociale Arbejde / YWCA's Social Work Denmark - The Nest Copenhagen - Reden International (nest International) - Reden København - KFUKS Social work - **Estonia:** Estonian Women's Associations Roundtable - **Finland:** NYTKIS - The Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations - Exit Prostitution Finland - MONIKA - Multicultural Women's Association - Vapauta Uhri - **France:** CLEF - Coordination française pour le LEF - Mouvement du Nid - Fondation scelles - Amicale du Nid - Association française des Femmes des Carrières Juridiques - Conseil National des Femmes françaises - CNIDFF - Collectif Droits des Femmes - Collectif de Pratiques et de Réflexions Féministes "Ruptures" - Comité Permanent de Liaison des associations abolitionnistes - Les effRONTÉ-e-s - Équipes d'Action contre le Proxénétisme - Espace Simone de Beauvoir - Femmes pour le dire, Femmes pour agir - Femmes solidaires - Forum Femmes Méditerranée - L'Assemblée des Femmes Paris Ile-de-France - Le monde à travers un regard - Ligue du Droit International des Femmes - Marche Mondiale des Femmes France - Mémoire traumatique et victimologie - Osez le Féminisme - Réussir l'égalité femmes-hommes - ZéroMacho - Zonta Clubs de France - **Germany:** EMMA - Bündnis Nordisches Modell - KARO e.v. - Maisha e.V. Maisha African Women - Sisters - für den Ausstieg aus der Prostitution! e.V. - SOLWODI Baden-Württemberg e.V. - TERRE DES FEMMES - Menschenrechte für die Frau e.V - KOFRA - Kommunikationszentrum für Frauen zur Arbeits- und Lebenssituation - Bürgerinitiative gegen Bordell (Citizen's initiative against brothels) Marburg - Ostalb-Bündnis' - Gemeinsam gegen Menschenhandel e.V. (Together against Trafficking) - SOLWODI Deutschland e.V. - **Greece:** Coordination of Greek Women's NGOs for the EWL - Greek League for Women's Rights - Research Centre of Women's Affairs - **Hungary:** Hungarian Women's Lobby - Hungarian Baptist Aid - MONA - Foundation for the Women of Hungary - **Iceland:** Stigamot - **Ireland:** National Women's Council of Ireland - Ruhama - Immigrant Council of Ireland - Sexual Violence Centre Cork - **Italy:** LEF Italia - Resistenza Femminista - Be Free cooperative - IROKO Onlus - Associazione Aura - Weavers of Hope - **Latvia:** Women's NGO cooperation network - Marta Center - **Lithuania:** Caritas Lithuania - Klaipedia social and psychological services center - Lithuanian Women's Lobby - Missing Persons' Family Support Center - **Luxembourg:** Coordination luxembourgeoise du LEF - Conseil National des Femmes du Luxembourg - Femmes en détresse - **Macedonia:** Macedonian Women's Lobby - Association for equal opportunities 'Ezerka' - Struga - Organisation of women of Skopje - Organisation of women of municipality Sveti Nikole - Organsiation of women "Radika" - **Malta:** Dar Hosea - Malta Women's Lobby - **Norway:** FOKUS - Women's Front - **Poland:** Polish Women's Lobby - Network of East-West Women - **Portugal:** Associação de Mulheres contra a Violência - Associação Ser Mulher - Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights - Coolabora - Association for Studies, Cooperation and Development - Movimento Democrático de Mulheres - Mén Non - Associação das Mulheres de São Tomé e Príncipe em Portugal - O Ninho - Portuguese Network of Young People for Gender Equality - **Romania:** Romanian Women's Lobby - **Serbia:** Autonomous Women's Centre - **Slovakia:** Slovakian Women's Lobby - **Slovenia:** Slovenian Women's Lobby - Association for nonviolent communication - CEE Network for Gender Issues - Society Kljuc - **Spain:** LEM Espana, Coordinadora Española para el lobby europeo de mujeres - Comisión para la investigación de los malos tratos a mujeres - Gredi Dona - FeMAB - EMARGI - ASOCIACIÓN LA SUR - ASOCIACIÓN LIBERATA - **Sweden:** Swedish Women's Lobby - Swedish Association of Women's Shelters and Young Women's Empowerment Centres - Business and Professional Women Sweden - Nätverket mot Traficking - Real Stars - SKV - Sveriges Kvinnors Vänsterförbund - Swedish Ecumenical Women's Council - Swedish National Committee for UN Women - The Swedish Union of Soroptimist International - Talita Sweden - Kvinnofronten - 1000 Möjligheter (1000 Opportunities) foundation - Institute for Feminism & Human Rights - **Switzerland:** End Demand Switzerland - **UK:** UK Joint Committee on Women - National Alliance of Women's Organisations - Northern Ireland Women's European Platform - Women's Equality Network Wales - Anti Porn Men project - End Violence against Women Coalition - Hibiscus Initiatives - The Nia project - Scottish Women's Aid - Women@the well - Women's Support Project - Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre - Dundee & Angus - FiLiA - International Alliance of Women - Nordic Model Now!