
EU Parliament: prostitution in Europe, reduce demand and protect women. Fight human trafficking

The European Parliament calls for measures at EU level to address prostitution and its impact on gender equality. The report on prostitution in the EU, its cross-border implications and impact on gender equality and women's rights was adopted in Strasbourg today with 234 votes in favour, 175 against and 122 abstentions. The text, which divided MEPs, argues that “the asymmetry between national rules on prostitution within the EU, given its cross-border nature, leads to more victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and makes for fertile operating ground for organised crime”. MEPs call on Member States to “assess existing legislation to avoid any loopholes that allow criminals to act with impunity, while the Commission should develop common EU guidelines guaranteeing the fundamental rights of people in prostitution”. Prostitution and trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation “exist because there is a demand for them”, MEPs note. Reducing demand is therefore “key to prevent and reduce human trafficking”, the document approved in plenary reads, adding that this “must be done in a way that does not harm those in prostitution”. Member States are therefore encouraged to take urgent measures to counter online advertising that directly or indirectly encourages prostitution or seeks to attract buyers.

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