

Reducing Harm for Migrant and Vulnerable Sex Workers

The Congress of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Athens, Greece, on 24-26 October 2019:

Endorses:

- the enlightenment approach of rationalism and science for ALDE policy based on evidence, research, and liberal principles.

Recognises:

- long-standing tensions around sexual activity, same-sex activity, and sex work, between differing legal approaches, and among different groups;
- there are differences in the way sex work is currently managed by European Member States.

Notes the:

- complex inter-sectional nature of sex work, in which all genders and sexualities engage in the ever-evolving economies in the EU;
- harm done to sex workers under systems that criminalise and stigmatise the sex workers;
- fundamental importance of consent to any sexual activity.

Believes that:

- Governments and Parliaments and ALDE and Renew Europe groups within the European Parliament should use every means possible to prevent harm and not exacerbate it;
- criminalisation of sexual activity does not prevent it happening but drives it underground out of reach of support and enforcement bodies;
- most sex workers, most notably migrant workers, remain vulnerable;
- the stigma of sex work has a bad effect on people in it, preventing them asking for help when they need it, and deportation, on the grounds solely of sex work is unacceptable.

Therefore endorses rational approach to policy on sex work and sexual activity that prioritises a rational approach that focuses on harm reduction, and calls on Member States to:

- focus law enforcement on non-consensual activity and reducing harm to sex workers by decriminalising sex work;

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- strengthen laws to address coercion into sex and sex work on the grounds of fear, force, or fraud, including trafficking within and between states;
- provide support for people trying to leave sex work, including support for organisations and healthcare providers, offering education and training;
- consider prostitution as an activity in which sex workers should be entitled to labour rights, so that their protection is strengthened;
- use multi-agency approaches to help sex workers and combat crimes against them and the wider community.

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