

Amendment: “Support for Student Sex Workers”

1.

Before “Actions”, insert –

Freedom of expression

1. Nothing under this motion should prohibit discussion or criticism about, or in relation to, the subjects addressed within the motion.

2.

Actions

a. As an amendment to “Action 1”, strike out –

- “the full decriminalisation of sex work and campaign against any attempted to introduce the Nordic Model in Scotland (1) and the UK”

and insert –

- “the decriminalisation of those who sell sex and campaign against any attempt to introduce legislation in Scotland and the UK that would criminalise the seller.”

b. As an amendment to “Action 2”, after listed organisations, insert –

- “as well as survivor led organisations such as Nordic Model Now and SPACE International,”

c. As amendment to “Actions 4”, strike out –

- “For the Students' Association to pressure the university to declare their support for student sex workers and state they will not be penalised for seeking support.”

And insert –

- “For the Students' Association to ask the university to state that students will not be penalised for seeking support for issues arising from their involvement in sex work.”

d. As amendment to “Actions”, strike out “Action 5” (potential ethical and legal issues for Edinburgh University Students’ Association acting as publisher for this information).

3.

Background

a. As amendment to “Background 4”, strike out – (incorrect citation)

- “Transgender Europe’s report declares that 62% of murdered trans and gender-diverse people in Europe are sex workers”

And insert –

- “Transgender Europe’s report showed that out of 2,343 reported killings of trans and gender-diverse people in 69 countries worldwide between 2008-2016, 1,834 of which were reported in Central and South America. Further analysis of this data shows that 62% of all murdered trans and gender-diverse people whose profession was known were sex workers. In the top two countries with the highest number of murders, Brazil (938) and Mexico (290), prostitution is legalised.” [[1](#), [2](#), [3](#)]

b. As an amendment to “Background”, insert, at end –

- “Research shows that the majority of students involved with the sex industry are engaged in indirect sex work, are usually involved for less than six months, and the

work is not a regular form of income. Their motivations and experiences will be substantially different to full-time sex workers. [4]

- Several women involved in prostitution have been killed in New Zealand since the introduction of full decriminalisation in 2003. [5, 6, 7, 8] In Sweden, since passing the 1999 law that criminalises the purchase of sex but decriminalises the selling, not a single sex worker has been killed while working. [9, 10]
- A 2012 paper in the journal World Development found: “Countries with legalised prostitution have a statistically significantly larger reported incidence of human trafficking inflows.” [11]
- United Nations (UN) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Article 6, states that: “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.” [12]
- According to a 2006 report for the UN Commission on Human Rights, “prostitution as actually practised in the world usually does satisfy the elements of trafficking. It is rare that one finds a case in which the path to prostitution and/or a person’s experiences within prostitution do not involve, at the very least, an abuse of power and/or an abuse of vulnerability.” [13]”

c. As amendment to “Background”, strike out “Background 6” (no evidence provided for second claim).

4.

Beliefs

a. As an amendment to “Beliefs 1”, before “sex work is work”, insert –

- “Supporters of full decriminalisation believe that”

And after “puts food on the table”, insert –

- “Supporters of the Nordic or Swedish Model believe that prostitution is inherently exploitative and that full decriminalisation of the industry increases the risk of harm and trafficking.”

b. As an amendment to “Beliefs 3”, strike out –

- “(known as the ‘Nordic Model’) are often brought forward in the name of anti-trafficking programmes, when in reality they are laws which aim to control what people can and can’t do with their own bodies.”

And insert –

- “and decriminalise all those who are prostituted (known as the ‘Nordic Model’) are laws which aim to reduce the demand that drives sex trafficking.

c. As an amendment to “Beliefs 5”, before “criminalisation”, insert –

- “Supporters of full decriminalisation believe that”

d. As an amendment to “Beliefs”, insert, at end –

- “Many feminists, human rights campaigners, organisations, and those involved with or exited from the sex trade, support the approach of the Nordic or Swedish model.”
- “Supporters of full decriminalisation and the Nordic Model both believe that those who sell sex should be decriminalised and safe from harm.”

Should these amendments pass, the motion would read:

Support for Student Sex Workers

Freedom of expression

1. Nothing under this motion should prohibit discussion or criticism about, or in relation to, the subjects addressed within the motion.

Actions

1. To support and campaign for the decriminalisation of those who sell sex and campaign against any attempt to introduce legislation in Scotland and the UK that would criminalise the seller.
2. To support and signpost to sex worker led organisations, such as the English Collective of Prostitutes, SWARM, and SCOT-PEP, as well as survivor led organisations such as Nordic Model Now and SPACE International, who work to improve the lives of sex workers across the UK and beyond.
3. To support student sex workers that are being outed, targeted, faced with prejudice and discrimination or harassed in the university for their status as sex workers.
4. For the Students' Association to ask the university to state that students will not be penalised for seeking support for issues arising from their involvement in sex work.

Background

1. Sex work refers (but is not limited to) escorting, lap dancing, stripping, pole dancing, pornography, webcamming, adult modelling, phone sex, and selling sex.
2. Increasing living costs, tuition fees and cuts to grants means it is likely students may choose to enter sex work to fund their studies ([1](#)). In particular this year, due to the pandemic students may choose to enter online sex work.
3. Whilst sex work is not illegal in the UK, it is still criminalised, sex workers who work on the street can be picked up on soliciting or anti-social behavioural order charges, and sex workers who work together indoors for safety can be charged with brothel keeping.
4. Transgender Europe's report showed that out of 2,343 reported killings of trans and gender-diverse people in 69 countries worldwide between 2008-2016, 1,834 of which were reported in Central and South America. Further analysis of this data shows that 62% of all murdered trans and gender-diverse people whose profession was known were sex workers. In the top two countries with the highest murders, Brazil (938) and Mexico (290), prostitution is legalised. [[2](#), [3](#), [4](#)]
5. A number of international human rights organisations support the full decriminalization of sex work including Amnesty International, Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women; Human Rights Watch; UNAIDS; the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health; Transgender Europe and the NUS Women's and LGBT+ campaigns.
6. Research shows that the majority of students involved with the sex industry are engaged in indirect sex work, are usually involved for less than six months, and the work is not a regular form of income. Their motivations and experiences will be substantially different to full-time sex workers. [[5](#)]
7. Several women involved in prostitution have been killed in New Zealand since the introduction of full decriminalisation in 2003. [[6](#), [7](#), [8](#), [9](#)] In Sweden, since passing the 1999 law that criminalises the purchase of sex but decriminalises the selling, not a single sex worker has been killed while working. [[10](#), [11](#)]

8. A 2012 paper in the journal *World Development* found: “Countries with legalised prostitution have a statistically significantly larger reported incidence of human trafficking inflows.” [\[12\]](#)
9. “United Nations (UN) *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW), Article 6, states that: “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.” [\[13\]](#)
10. “According to a 2006 report for the UN Commission on Human Rights, “prostitution as actually practised in the world usually does satisfy the elements of trafficking. It is rare that one finds a case in which the path to prostitution and/or a person’s experiences within prostitution do not involve, at the very least, an abuse of power and/or an abuse of vulnerability.” [\[14\]](#)”

Beliefs

1. Supporters of full decriminalisation believe that sex work is work, like any other job. While it is stigmatised and often precarious work, it is work that pays the rent, bills, and puts food on the table. Supporters of the Nordic or Swedish Model believe that prostitution is inherently exploitative and that full decriminalisation of the industry increases the risk of harm and trafficking.
2. Regardless of the reasons for entering into sex work, sex workers of all backgrounds deserve to have their rights protected.
3. Efforts to criminalise the purchase of sex and decriminalise all those who are prostituted (known as the ‘Nordic Model’) are laws which aim to reduce the demand that drives sex trafficking.
4. Decriminalisation would ensure that sex workers feel able to report unsafe clients or violence at work without the worry of criminal repercussions, and that those who wish to leave the sex industry are not left with criminal records as a result of their job. They can also report suspected cases of trafficking to police without self-incrimination.
5. Supporters of full decriminalisation believe that criminalising the purchase of sex puts sex workers, especially those who work on the street, in danger [\(15\)](#). Decriminalisation reduces police abuse, harassment and violence against sex workers [\(16\)](#).
6. Many feminists, human rights campaigners, organisations, and those involved with or exited from the sex trade, support the approach of the Nordic or Swedish model.
7. Supporters of full decriminalisation and the Nordic Model both believe that those who sell sex should be decriminalised and safe from harm.