

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A CALL FOR LEGAL REFORM: ADVOCACY FOR VICTIMS AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR OFFENDERS

Berlin, Germany – WWP EN, a dedicated advocate for human rights and gender equality, is issuing a heartfelt plea to Ministries of Justice across Europe, with a particular focus on Germany and France, to address critical legal issues concerning sexual exploitation, consent, and accountability for perpetrators of sexual and domestic violence.

We are very concerned about what we're seeing at a European level with the pushback on the Directive of violence against women and domestic violence. As we know, the European Commission has produced a document currently sitting with Member States. What is happening is that many of the essential aspects considered and included in the Directive by the European Parliament are being attacked and are at risk of being eliminated from the Directive.

EMBRACING A NEW FRAMEWORK ON CONSENT AND MEN'S ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

WWP EN firmly believes that Europe and its Member States must include rape in the Directive and need a different framework on consent and men's accountability for sexual and domestic violence. It is imperative that the notion of "sexual exploitation" includes exploitative elements related to obtaining power and domination over another person for sexual gratification. This expanded framework paves the way for adopting a comprehensive definition of non-consensual acts, ensuring that these acts are understood as those performed without a woman's voluntary and informed consent or in situations where the woman cannot exercise her free will due to physical or mental conditions. This includes unconsciousness, intoxication, sleep, illness, bodily injury, or disability.

We emphasize that consent should be recognized as a dynamic and ongoing process which can be withdrawn at any moment during a sexual act. Consent should be recognized only when it is clearly expressed, whether verbally or physically, and should not be assumed from a woman's silence or past sexual history. It is completely unfathomable that a European Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence should not include rape.

REJECTING A FIRST-TIME PASS FOR SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC OFFENDERS

WWP EN vehemently supports the notion that first-time offenders of sexual and domestic violence should be held accountable beyond criminal charges. There is absolutely no reason why we should wait for a second conviction to respond with specific rehabilitation programs. We must not grant a first-time pass for such heinous offenses. It is crucial to unveil the misogyny inherent in such positions and reaffirm women's human rights and men's accountability when they commit violence.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC OFFENDERS: EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION

WWP EN firmly believes that perpetrators of sexual and domestic violence should be subject to accountability and rehabilitation from their first offense. Delaying action until a second offense occurs is both unjust and dangerous. We urge Ministries of Justice to take immediate steps to establish and enforce perpetrator programs after the first offense. Holding offenders accountable for their actions and providing them with the necessary support for rehabilitation is not only a matter of justice but also a crucial step in preventing further harm to potential victims.

WWP EN stands committed to working collaboratively with Ministries of Justice, NGOs, and civil society to advance these critical legal reforms. Together, we can create a safer, more just, and equitable society for all.

For media inquiries and further information, please contact Alessandra Pauncz at alessandra.pauncz@work-with-perpetrators.eu.

About WWP EN

WWP EN was founded in 2014 and is a membership organization including perpetrator programs, research institutes, and victim/survivor support services. Our main goal is establishing accountable, effective, victim-centred, and gender-informed perpetrator work across Europe.