

# Appeal against Prostitution

## To: the German federal chancellor and the Bundestag

Prostitution is "the world's oldest profession"? Prostitution is "a job like any other"? Prostitution will always exist; abolishing it is utopian? Wrong. Not all that long ago, the abolition of slavery was seen as a utopia. And even though slavery has by no means disappeared entirely, it would be unthinkable for an enlightened democratic state to tolerate or indeed propagate slavery today.

Yet that is exactly what Germany is doing with prostitution. The state tolerates, in fact even supports this modern form of slavery (referred to internationally as "white slavery"). The reform of the German Prostitution Act in 2002, allegedly intended to benefit the estimated 700,000 women (mean value) in prostitution, bears the hallmarks of the traffickers in women and their lobbyists. Since then, Germany has become the hub of Europe's traffickers and a paradise for sex tourists from the neighbouring countries. A path taken only by Germany – even the Netherlands is backtracking on prostitution. The Scandinavian states have long since introduced bans and punishments for purchasing sexual acts. And France and Ireland are in the process of doing the same.

Around the world, trafficking in women and prostitution, two inseparably linked phenomena, now offer the highest profit rates (over 1000 per cent) alongside the arms and drug trades. The women do not benefit from this profit. Even among the minority of prostitutes of German origin, often victims of sexual violence even as children, 90 per cent end up in poverty in old age. Not to mention the non-German women who become involved in prostitution by force or for reasons of poverty.

The prostitution system is both an exploitation and a continuation of the traditionally evolved inequality between men and women (and countries/continents). The prostitution system degrades women to a gender for sale and overshadows sexual equality. The prostitution system brutalizes sexual desire and violates the human dignity of men and women – including that of so-called "voluntary" prostitutes.

That is why we are calling for:

- A change of legislation, putting a stop to the deregulation of trafficking in women and prostitution as quickly as possible and protecting women and the minority of male prostitutes.
- Prevention in Germany and the countries of origin, along with help for women to exit prostitution. And protection from deportation for witnesses, plus right of residence.
- Public information on the consequences of purchasing women, beginning in schools, etc.
- A ban on purchasing sexual acts and, if necessary, punishment for those who buy women, without whom this market in human beings would not exist.
- Measures to curb the prostitution system in the short term and to abolish it in the long term.

A life of human dignity is conceivable.

*I sign the Appeal against Prostitution:*

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*Signature*

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*Firstname, Name, Profession*

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*Adresse*

*redaktion@emma.de*

*www.emma.de*

*Fax 0049/221/60 60 60 29*

*postal adress: EMMA, Bayenturm, 50678 Köln*