**THE LEFT for a world without prostitution!**

We, members, office-holders and divisions within the German LEFT PARTY, consider prostitution an expression of patriarchal relations of power and violence, which we want to overcome. We want to live in a world without prostitution!

* We ask that the German LEFT makes the overcoming of prostitution its unmistakable goal!
* We ask further for a serious, unprejudiced discussion within the party regarding the question how this goal can be achieved! This includes a study of the Nordic sex purchase bans. We turn to the leaders of the Party, as well as to the youth organizations solid and SDS, to organize thorough debates on these issues.
* Of our parliamentary group in the Bundestag we expect that they
  + consider and study seriously the Nordic sex purchase bans, and inform themselves directly in Scandinavia on the reality of this ban.
  + hear not only the prostitution lobby, but also invite the women and men who have exited prostitution to their hearings.
  + take back their decision against a sex purchase ban.
* We kindly ask all LEFT members who share this view to sign our petition and to suggest it in their local chapters for support.

Explanatory statement:

*“The prostitute […] does not have the rights of a person: within her, all forms of suppression and slavery are united.” (Simone de Beauvoir, “The other Sex”)*

*“The constantly deteriorating social conditions, hardship, allurement, […] provide the candidates from all classes of society. […] Under such conditions the trade with women’s flesh has developed huge dimensions. […] Germany enjoys the sad fame to be a women’s market for half of the world.” (August Bebel, “Women Under Socialism”)*

The Federal Government suspects that there are about 400.000 prostitutes in Germany. Their life is characterized by insecurity, violence, poverty and often drug addiction. Psychological and physical suffering resulting from the experience of violence is frequent. The large majority of prostitutes do not have sufficient access to social security. Poverty in old age is hard to avoid. Many prostitutes are brought to Germany from Eastern Europe or non-European countries by human traffickers. They are without protection from pimps and brothel owners. The liberalization introduced in 2002 did not change a great deal about these conditions. However, running a brothel, pimping and advertising for prostitution are today possible in a largely unchallenged way. Human trafficking and brothel ownership have become a billion industry. In the perspective of foreign countries, Germany has turned into a platform for human trafficking in Europe and into an aim for prostitution tourism. How can we put an end to this development? The first basic clarification we would like to achieve is that our party will recognize prostitution as an expression of violence and power relations and make it a goal to overcome it.

Since 1999 and 2009, Sweden, and Norway and Iceland respectively, have laws which criminalize the buying of sexual acts. By this new approach, only the buyer is persecuted, not the prostitute. In France, the UK, Canada, Lithuania, South Korea, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, similar laws are in preparation or have already been passed. The European Parliament has recently asked the European public to give attention to the issue of prostitution. The Parliament’s resolution supports a sex purchase ban in line with the Swedish model and has been supported by the majority of European Left Parties. We would like also our party, the German LEFT, to consider this ban seriously. This will involve studying the experiences made in Sweden, Norway and Iceland.

We are unhappy with the fact that our parliamentary group in the Bundestag with their decision from October 14th, 2014, has given the impression that our party is against a sex purchase ban. Only a party convention could make such a decision. Also, we expect our parliamentary group to inform themselves seriously in case of such decisions.

We kindly ask all members and divisions of the Party to support our petition “THE LEFT for a world without prostitution!”

Sign the petition online: [www.linke-gegen-prostitution.de](http://www.linke-gegen-prostitution.de)

There is one petition for members and one for non-members of the German LEFT Party.