

**Submission by RadicalGirlsss, the Young Women’s Group of the European Network of Migrant Women (ENoMW) to the CEDAW Committee in connection with**

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**The Draft General Recommendation on Trafficking in Women and Girls in the Context of Global Migration (Draft General Recommendation on TWGCGM)**

**15  May 2020**

Dear Honorable CEDAW Committee Members:

We thank the CEDAW Committee for the opportunity to submit these comments to the Draft General Recommendation on TWGCGM based on Article 6 of the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

We, the undersigned, are all members of the European Network of Migrant Women and make up its young women’s group, Radical Girlsss. As young migrant women, we felt compelled to add our own comments that you will find below.

Respectfully yours,

Radical Girlsss members

Suggested edits are in red.

**Title**: General Recommendations on Trafficking in Women and Girls in the Context of Global Migration and the Exploitation of Prostitution

Overall recommendation 1: In the draft, there are several occasions in which the text refers to “women and children” rather than “women and girls”. We acknowledge that boys and young men are also victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation, however, CEDAW as a Core Human Rights Treaty concerns exclusively women as right holders and, specifically,  in the context of sexual exploitation the vast majority of victims are women and girls. We ask the Committee to be consistent in using “**women and girls**” throughout the text to reflect the purpose and scope of the Convention.

Overall recommendation 2: Article 1 of the CEDAW states that discrimination against women is based on **sex**. It is crucial as violence against women and girls is directly linked to their sex. This should be highlighted consistently throughout the document.

Overall recommendation 3: The recommendations should be applicable even when trafficking in women and girls and the exploitation of prostitution takes place through current and future information and communication technologies. Particular emphasis should be placed on prostitution that is disseminated online in the form of **pornography**. Indeed, this form of prostitution has the same or worse characteristics and consequences on women and girls. It is violence against women and girls and it also participates in maintaining the problem as it perpetuates the normalisation of rape, torture and murder of women and girls.

**Para 2**: According to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (the Committee), the phenomenon persists due to States parties’ *failure to effectively address the root causes of trafficking in women and girls and to discourage the demand that fosters the exploitation of women and girls, which leads to trafficking.*”

Replace with: According to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (the Committee), the phenomenon persists due to States parties’ failure to effectively address the root causes of trafficking which includes the demand for prostitution that foster the exploitation of women and girls, which leads to trafficking.

**Para 20:** Trafficking in women is rooted in *gender-based* discrimination, *gender-based* structural inequality and the feminisation of poverty compounded by growing global inequalities and the demand for cheap and/or forced labour, *including the demand for sexual exploitation*.Women and girls continue to be the prime targets of traffickers, especially for the purpose of sexual exploitation, due to pervasive and persistent gender inequality resulting in an economic, social, and legal status that is lower in comparison than that which is enjoyed by men and boys.

Replace with: Trafficking in women is rooted in sex-based discrimination, sex-based structural inequality and the feminisation of poverty compounded by growing global inequalities and the demand for cheap and/or forced labour and the demand for prostitution.

Reasoning: The segment ‘the demand for cheap and/or forced labour, *including the demand for sexual exploitation*’ suggests that sexual exploitation is a demand for labour when the two are clearly separate.

**Para:** 25. Review statistical methodologies and conceptual frameworks related to data collection to include indicators that reflect States’ systemic responses to trafficking, including by:

c)Collecting and publishing data on trafficking in women and girls, and specifically on:

 iii. *Its potential link with bonded labour, domestic servitude, child and forced marriage.*

Add:  Its potential link with bonded labour, domestic servitude, child and forced marriage and the exploitation of prostitution.

**Para 28**: Women’s rights framework to human development: Take responsibility, in view of the Sustainable Development Goals, to address the root causes of trafficking, in particular: the acceptance and normalization of gender-based violence against women (Goals 5, 11 and 16); the vulnerability of women to poverty (Goal 1); the concentration of women in insecure and vulnerable work and their lack of decent work opportunities (Goal 8) and the limited access for women and girls to education, (Goal 4); inequalities within and between countries (Goal 10); and insecurity as a result of conflict (Goal 16) or as a result of climate change-induced disasters and natural hazards.

Recommendation**:** In this paragraph, more stress should be given on male behaviour: male demand for prostitution should be included in the root causes of trafficking.

**Para 62:** Address trafficking in corporate supply chains:

c) Establish a code of conduct drafted, including zero tolerance policies to *sexual exploitation*, with the direct input of the workers whose interests it is designed to protect;

Replace with: Establish a code of conduct drafted, including zero tolerance policies to sexual harassment with the direct input of the workers whose interests it is designed to protect

Reasoning: Sexual exploitation is not work.

**Para 68: j)** Empower communities through support and consultation to build strong allies for anti-trafficking efforts, including faith-based actors, who could provide critical information about trafficked women. These community-led systems should be established at locations and among groups where there may be trafficked women; including sites where forcibly displaced women and migrants are accommodated, registered or detained.

Recommendation: It is not clear why ‘faith-based actors’ should be involved when they might be the very ones disseminating religious and cultural beliefs discriminating against women and girls. In secular countries, those leaders are not liable to a mechanism that would require them to act the way civil servants do; it is not clear how they would thus become allies.