

IPPF EUROPEAN NETWORK
Policy Paper
ABORTION

The IPPF European Network believes that abortion should be legal, safe and accessible to all women living in Europe, for reasons of

HEALTH: to safeguard women's health, and to reduce mortality and morbidity as a result of unsafe and illegal abortion

CHOICE: to ensure that women have the information needed to exercise self-determination, sexual and reproductive freedom and sexual equality, and access to confidential counselling and services to regulate their fertility

RIGHTS: to protect women's basic human rights and ensure that these rights are not legally impaired or compromised

The IPPF European Network further believes that:

- abortion is a fundamental sexual and reproductive right and should be available at the request of any woman
- where abortion is still illegal, it should be decriminalised
- the quality and confidentiality of abortion services must be guaranteed, and the rights of the client respected, particularly in relation to young people and adolescents
- women have the right to non-judgmental counselling and objective referral in case of legitimate conscientious objection of the provider
- abortion services should be integrated into reproductive and sexual health services, and also offer contraceptive and sexual health advice and counselling to women after abortion
- it is the responsibility of health service institutions to provide abortion within the terms of existing national legislation
- providers of services to the victims of sexual violence and abuse (including trafficking) and to refugees and migrants must be fully trained in the provision of services and counselling to these individuals
- abortion providers should consider their own value system in order to be able to respect a woman's value system and this should be part of the training of all medical and counselling staff
- information concerning women who have sought abortion should be kept strictly confidential and not be disclosed to any source

The IPPF European Network and its FPAs promote and defend universal access to legal, affordable, quality and client-oriented abortion services in all European countries. These services must give all women

- confidentiality, respect and professional service;
- freedom to choose their own doctor or medical practitioner;
- informed choices about the method of abortion to be used;
- high quality and professional advice and counselling, before and after the procedure.