

MANIFESTO OF THE SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES ON THE BILL OF THE NEW LAW ON ABORTION

Before the approval, in the Ministry Cabinet of December 20th, 2013, of the bill for the new law on abortion which will bring about the abrogation of the present "*Law on sexual and reproductive health and voluntary interruption of pregnancy (IVE)*" in force since 2010, the undersigned Scientific Societies consider that:

1. It is pertinent to remind that the majority of the international resolutions on sexual rights and recommendations on sexual and reproductive health insist on the need to guarantee the couples' decision, taken free and with responsibility, on the amount of children, when to have them and to dispose of the information and the corresponding means¹. In a particular way, everybody's right (also women's) respect to their physical integrity and to the free disposition of their body. In this context, the last choice to resort to abortion or not should correspond to the women², who should have at their disposal the effective means to carry it out in an effective and secure way (eliminating dangerous abortions)³ and without any type of coercion. The prohibition of abortion does not contribute to diminish its rate. There is little relationship between the legality of abortion and its incidence, and there is a strong association between legality of abortion and its security⁴. Finally the cost to carry out a safe abortion is ten times smaller than the cost to treat the consequences of an insecure abortion⁵.

2. The present one is not only a "*law on abortion*". It emphasizes its preventive character, proposing several actions to improve the guidance and education in sexual and reproductive health. In spite of this, it shows a lot of positive aspects in the regulation of abortion:

1. It gives women and sanitary professionals legal security
2. It grants women the right to be protagonist on a decision that affects their physical, psychological, sexual and reproductive integrity.
3. It has allowed abortion in conditions of justice, fairness and security for the women's health and life.
4. It is respectful and protective with the viable foetus.
5. It has not supposed an increase in the rate of abortions, as the last published details confirm.
6. It locates our country within the context of the great majority of countries in our environment..

7. It is respectful with the greater part of international resolutions on sexual and reproductive health.
 8. Finally, but not less important, it has been developed within social normality and acceptance.
3. The law “Gallardón”, its bill, allows abortion in two suppositions: rape, during the first twelve weeks and life threatening danger for the woman’s physical or psychological health, until week 22, which will suppose:
1. Abortion will be a crime, it will stop being a resource (the last one), which allows women to decide on their maternity before an unwished pregnancy.
 2. Outlawing more than 90% of the abortions carried out in recent years.
 3. It will put at risk the physical, psychological and sexual health as well as the life of thousands of women who, before a prohibitive law, will continue aborting in conditions of secrecy and insecurity.
 4. It will cause enormous suffering to mothers, parents and children who are expected, when they are committed to continue with pregnancies that show abnormal or serious malformations of the foetus (about 3000 cases/year). It does not consider very serious pathologies and with delayed diagnosis (after week 22). These are especially complex and cruel situations, as generally speaking, they are really wanted pregnancies.
 5. Not taking into account the international resolutions on sexual and reproductive health, which recognize women’s right to decide on their maternity and which includes the need to facilitate access to safe abortion.
 6. It supposes an attack to women’s dignity, privacy and free choice by being in command of their decisions on their health, collaborating to structuring violence against women.
 7. It moves us away from the majority of countries in our environment, being this one of the most restrictive laws in the European Community.
 8. It will cause greater sanitary cost because of the treatment of the consequences of insecure abortions.

And, consequently, we manifest that:

1. The present *Law on sexual and reproductive health and IVE* respond in an adequate way to the reality and needs of our country, it is socially accepted; it warrants women the

decision on their maternity and allows the access to abortion in conditions of freedom, equality and security.

2. The reduction of the abortion rate in our country will not be reached with restrictive laws but by means of the development of sexual education and offering access to secure and efficient contraception, in the way contemplated in the present regulation.

3. The modification of the present legislation is unnecessary, that is why we demand the retirement of the bill of an inadequate, unjust and dangerous law for women's health and life.

1. UNO. Action Programme of the Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994) and Platform of Action of Peking (Peking, 1995).

2. Resolution 1607 (2008) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

3. Strategy of reproductive health of WHO (2004),

4. Report on sexual and reproductive health. European Parliament. September 2013.

5. Sexual and reproductive health: facts and numbers on abortion in the European region. WHO, 2012.

6. Voluntary interruption of Pregnancy- Definitive data corresponding to the year 2012. Ministry of Health, Social Service and Equality.

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