

Resolution on the criminalisation of sexual education in Poland

2019/2891(RSP) - 14/11/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 471 votes to 128, with 57 abstentions, a resolution on the criminalisation of sex education in Poland.

Members expressed deep concern over the extremely vague, broad and disproportionate provisions in the draft law, which de facto seeks to criminalise the dissemination of sexuality education to minors and whose scope potentially threatens all persons and in particular sex educators, including teachers, healthcare providers, authors, publishers, civil society organisations, journalists and parents or legal guardians, with up to three years in prison for teaching about human sexuality, health and intimate relations. Proposals have been made to increase these penalties to five years.

Request to the Polish authorities to refrain from adopting the proposed draft

Parliament condemned the recent developments in Poland that set out to misinform, stigmatise and ban sexuality education, and in particular the harsh, inappropriate and erroneous content of the justification provided for by the draft law. It called on the Polish Parliament to refrain from adopting the proposed draft law and to ensure that young people have access to comprehensive sexuality education and that those who provide such education and information are supported in so doing in a factual and objective manner.

Providing better education for young people

Members encouraged all Member States to provide comprehensive and age-appropriate information on sex education in schools. They reaffirmed that access to comprehensive and gender-sensitive information, sexuality and access to sexual and reproductive health care, including contraceptive methods and safe and legal abortion, were essential.

As part of this education, they stressed the importance of teaching young people about relationships based on gender equality, consent and mutual respect to prevent and combat gender stereotypes, homophobia, transphobia and gender-based violence.

Financing support to civil society

Recognising the important role of civil society in providing sexuality education, Parliament called for adequate funding to be available for the organisations concerned through different funding instruments at EU level, such as the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021 - 2027 [Rights and Values](#) programme and other EU pilot projects that could have an impact on this field.

Respect for fundamental rights

Members recalled that education is not only a fundamental right but also an indispensable condition for the enjoyment of other fundamental rights and freedoms as guaranteed by Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), the Polish Constitution and the Charter.

The Council was called on to address this matter and other allegations of violations of fundamental rights in Poland in the context of its current hearings on the situation in Poland, in accordance with Article 7(1) of the TEU.

