

## **FEMALE SEX WORKERS AND WOMEN WHO USE DRUGS.**

Dear delegates, thank you for this opportunity to talk about the situation of women from Republic of Moldova who are rarely listened to and heard - women who use drugs and women sex workers.

My name is Ala Iațco and I am representing the Union for HIV prevention and Harm Reduction.

Today I will speak about 4 issues of concern:

1. **FIRST** - I would like to inform you that women drug user and women involved in commercial sex in Moldova are 2 phantom groups, whose situation are not assessed and are not reflected in disaggregated health and social statistics.
2. **SECOND** - both groups of women live in physically and emotionally unsafe environments, marked by violence, stigma and discrimination, isolation, economic vulnerability, poverty and HIV / AIDS. More importantly, there are no support services and programs addressed to them within the state social and medical system!
  - The Government does not have specific policies in order to provide trainings and educational programs, social support and care, including specific maternal and child health services.
  - According to the Minimum Quality Standards regarding social support: women, who use drug, including alcohol, are not entitled to the services of the Shelter Centers.
  - The drug care system in Moldova is largely focused on the record of people marked by addictions. So, there are no comprehensive programs taking into account the needs of women drug users, including the available opioid substitution treatment are not gender sensitive and geographically available. Along with the lack of adequate medical care, current legislation facilitates the penalty for consumption, and alternatives to detention are not implemented.
3. **THIRD** - Moldova has a discriminatory practice of sanctioning sex work, based on the current provision of the Contravention Code.
4. **And LAST** - Discriminatory attitudes of the police officers, health and social workers, it is common encountered and is reflected in the stable number of cases of illegal transmission of personal data, refusal to provide medical care and specific treatments, registered by specialized paralegals.

**We ask the honorable delegates to strongly recommend Moldova to:**

1. **Implement and integrate in the National Health Policy specific programs addressed to women who use drugs and women sex workers.**
2. **Address the issues related to the access to shelters for women who use drugs.**
3. **Revise the national legislation in the context of decriminalization of drug use and commercial sex and apply alternative solutions for integration and social rehabilitation of women in this context.**
4. **Consolidate the capacities of the narcological system in order to provide comprehensive, qualitative and gender sensible services for addicted people.**