



European Junior Doctors

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Statement on women's sexual and reproductive health rights

with a comment to the decisions of the *Supreme Court of the United States of America* and *Germany's Bundestag*.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) are recognized in international law and by the EU institutions as human rights and are inextricably linked to the achievement of public health policy goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals. As conceptualized by the WHO guidelines "People have a range of sexual and reproductive rights, which are relevant to information and services across the continuum of care for abortion".

Every woman around the world must have the right to make every decision about her body. If a woman decides that a pregnancy should be terminated this has to be respected. Evidence shows that restricting access to legal abortion care does not substantially reduce the number of procedures, on the contrary reduces the number of safe procedures, resulting in increased morbidity and mortality.

States must ensure that individual physicians have the right to invoke a conscience clause; provided that this clause does not interfere with a patient's right to full access to healthcare and services. In the same way, governments must protect doctors who perform these procedures, creating frameworks and enabling safe environments for these procedures, both for patients and professionals. Also, accessibility needs to be ensured in order to allow for a real application of these measures. That is why it is unacceptable that lawmakers invade one of the most personal and key decisions of a woman and the professional decision making of a physician in the way the Supreme Court of the United States of America paved the way today.

Whilst the United States of America yeeted themselves back 50 years into the past, fortunately there is a positive example of women's rights right here in Europe: The Bundestag of Germany decided to remove a paragraph that forbid physicians to publicly inform about abortions. With the removal, women will now have easier access to information provided by physicians.

EJD calls on all governments and lawmakers to respect the autonomy of women to decide whether to continue or terminate a pregnancy. Physicians must be allowed to provide the best possible care to women up to the modern standards. Nobody must be afraid of prosecution if an abortion is performed up to medical ethics and standards and nobody must be deprived of the fundamental right to SRHR.