



Cynulliad Genedlaethol Cymru National Assembly for Wales Senedd

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Northumbria Law School student addresses Welsh Parliament

Northumbria Law School PhD student, Becca French, has addressed the Welsh Parliament (Senedd Cymru) to share her experience and legal expertise in support of the "Safety First Wales" proposal, advocating for the decriminalisation of sex work.

The event was sponsored by Member of the Senedd Mabon ap Gwynfor.

With a strong foundation in the UK's sex work policy discussions, Becca's expertise extends through a range of research and advocacy initiatives.

Alongside her doctoral studies, she has actively engaged in projects addressing sex work issues and is a published voice within the UK and European policy landscapes. Earlier in 2023, Becca was invited to brief the European Sex Work Association in Brussels on the health and welfare of sex workers. She also organised the Sex Work Research Network's international PGR conference in Leeds, October 2024, which fostered interdisciplinary discussion among scholars, activists, postgraduate researchers, and sex workers to explore pressing issues in sex work research.

Becca and her Supervisor at Northumbria Dr Laura Graham - a prominent expert in sex work and legal studies – secured a Socio-Legal Studies Association (SSLA) Impact Award grant of £1,250, providing bursaries for sex workers to attend the Leeds conference, reinforcing the principle of inclusion in research. Dr Graham also contributed as a keynote speaker, sharing insights with students globally and providing practical feedback to early-career researchers.

Commenting on the strength and value of the research, Dr Graham said: “Becca’s invitation to address the Welsh Parliament is a testament to her impactful work. Her invitation reflects the quality and relevance of her research within the field of sex work law. Engaging with policymakers in this way before completing her PhD highlights the timeliness and importance of her contributions to the discourse around sex work legislation.”

Becca stated: “Safety First Wales is an initiative that puts the rights of sex workers first, calling for decriminalisation and the protection of sex workers rights in law and policy. My statement on behalf of myself and the Sex Work Research Network supports this briefing by highlighting the abundance of research on the harms of criminalisation. It also draws attention to the frustration felt by me and many others that this research is not reflected in law and policy. Safety First Wales have created an excellent and informative briefing; I hope that with the support they receive by myself and others today, the briefing will impact policymakers and initiate change.”

The invitation from Safety First Wales to Senedd Cymru also demonstrates the influence of Northumbria Law School’s research on critical social issues such as sex work, gender, and sexuality. Becca French’s contributions underscore the School’s commitment to innovative research that bridges academic scholarship with real-world policy impact.

For more information on Northumbria Law School please visit
www.northumbria.ac.uk/law

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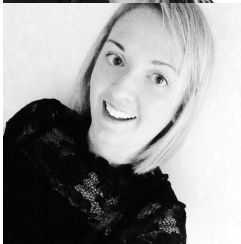


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