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Russian Lawmaker Says Sexual Harassment Legislation Would Be 'Excessive'

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State Duma member Tamara Pletneva **Sergei Savostyanov/TASS**

A senior Russian lawmaker has suggested that possible legislation against sexual harassment would be unnecessary and could turn Russian women into overly sensitive Europeans.

At least five women journalists have stepped up to accused State Duma deputy Leonid Slutsky of sexual harassment in the past month, sparking a nationwide debate about the necessity for legislation to address the problem.

Related article: BBC Journalist Accuses Russian Deputy of Sexual Harassment With Audio Recordings

Tamara Pletneva, the head of the State Duma's committee on family, women and children,

told the Govorit Moska radio station on Friday that legislation against sexual harassment would be "absolutely excessive."

"If we sign something like that into law, we will start looking like European women, who can't be touched at all and see everything as harassment, while maybe [secretly] dreaming about it," Pletneva said.

"Only those who probably want it themselves and who provoke get harassed," she added.

In response to the allegations against Slutsky last week, Pletneva suggested that female journalists should "dress more appropriately in a government institution instead of walking around with bare belly buttons."

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