

6. Legalisation of prostitution means legalisation of violence against women.

Prostituted women experience two forms of violence, paid and unpaid. Paid violence includes the everyday acts that prostituted women are paid to endure. The unpaid violence is composed of the rapes and beatings that the women do not receive payment for, and which are carried out by male buyers, pimps and passers-by. When states legalise prostitution, however, they give the seal of approval to the everyday violence of prostitution.

Evidence of the violence of everyday prostitution is available in the safety tips that sex work organisations provide. For instance, a Victorian government-funded website (sexworker.org.au) advises women in escort prostitution to be careful when using local anaesthetic in the vagina to numb the pain, because this might obscure more serious injuries.

Women in prostitution suffer pain, abrasion and bleeding of vagina and anus. They dissociate emotionally to survive the abuse (Farley, 2004). Governments should not be organising or profiting from this form of violence against women.

7. Legalised prostitution prevents the equality of all women.

When governments establish legal prostitution industries they show their approval of serious harms to the equality for women.

At least half of the male buyers have wives or female partners who cannot have equal relationships because the men lie or expect them to accept their prostitution behaviour.

Women cannot have equality in the business and professional world when prostitution is legalised, because male business executives, politicians and professionals use prostitution to create networking possibilities, and to offer bribes and inducements in ways unavailable to women workers.

When prostitution is legalised brothels become part of the streetscape, creating problems for women passers-by who are accosted by male buyers, and educating children that the purchase of women is acceptable.

The status of all women is reduced when one group of women is separated off for men's commercial sexual use.

For a full list of references, go to:

www.catwa.org.au/files/images/Pamphlet_Bibliography.pdf

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7 Reasons for Not Legalising Prostitution

Coalition Against Trafficking in Women Australia
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When state governments legalise prostitution they say that this will solve a number of problems from organised crime and corruption to street prostitution. In fact, the opposite is the case.



The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women Australia (CATWA) is the Australian branch of CATW International, a Non Governmental Organisation that has Category II consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. It works locally and internationally to end all forms of sexual exploitation of women, especially in relation to issues of prostitution and trafficking in women.

1. Legalisation does not control the prostitution industry. It expands it.

There is much evidence to show that rather than controlling the sex industry, the legalisation of prostitution allows it to expand enormously. In Victoria, where brothel prostitution has been legal since 1984, the number of licensed 'sexual service providers' increased to 184 in 2004, compared to 40 at the time the legislation was passed (Sullivan, 2005: 5). This does not include the illegal prostitution sector, which is estimated to be considerably larger than the legal industry.

A similar situation can be found in New South Wales, where brothels were decriminalised in 1995. Within a five year period, the number of brothels had tripled such that by 1999 there were an estimated 400 to 500 brothels (both legal and illegal) operating in Sydney (Sullivan and Jeffreys, 2001). This shows that legalisation creates an environment in which prostitution is allowed to flourish and grow, rather than serving to contract the industry.

2. Legalisation increases sex trafficking.

The legalisation of prostitution leads to significant growth in sexual exploitation and trafficking. In a recent cross-section of 150 countries, economists from Germany and the UK found that legalising prostitution leads to an expansion of the "prostitution market" and that, on average, legalised prostitution also leads to "increases in human trafficking flows" (Cho, Dreher & Neumayer, 2012).

The central problem is that legalisation normalises, and even promotes, prostitution. Legalisation therefore tends to increase demand for prostitution overall, ultimately leading to increased trafficking.

For example, the 2007 US State Department *Trafficking in Persons* report contends that the legalisation of prostitution and related activities (such as pimping and maintaining brothels) "encourage the growth of modern day slavery by providing a façade behind which traffickers for sexual exploitation operate" (US State

Department, 2007). The report also concludes that where prostitution is tolerated, there is a greater demand for victims of human trafficking.

3. Legalisation of prostitution promotes organised crime and corruption.

Corruption and organised crime continue to be integral parts of legal systems of prostitution. According to the Office for Police Integrity (Victoria), the sex industry is a 'high risk policing area' where 'problems of corruption are more widespread' than official figures indicate, with complaints of police intimidation, discrimination and predatory sexual behaviors (OPI, 2008:4-5).

There is also evidence of council corruption involving 'sex businesses' (Sullivan, 2010:98), including a recent case in Victoria, involving City of Yarra official, Ken Wolfe. Wolfe received monthly bribes over a five-year-period (2005-2010), in return for tip-offs about raids from the Yan organised crime syndicate (McKenzie and Beck, 2011a).

There are numerous examples of the involvement of organised crime in legal prostitution in Australia. For example, in Melbourne, investigations have revealed 'Chinese organised crime syndicates' running 'multimillion-dollar prostitution rackets' by bribing officials (McKenzie and Beck, 2011b). The convicted criminal Tony Mokbel secretly owned the licensed Top of the Town brothel in Melbourne and used it to launder approximately \$2 million (Moor 2007). Also, at least two of Mokbel's known criminal associates have held brothel licenses in the past (ibid).

4. Legalisation leads to increases in street prostitution and harms communities.

The legalisation of prostitution does not get prostituted women off the streets. Instead, in states where prostitution has been legalised, the occurrence of street prostitution continues unabated. In the

Victorian context, it is acknowledged by the government that since brothel prostitution has been made legal, street prostitution has expanded (Attorney-General's Street Prostitution Group, 2002: 44). This also has the effect of increasing harassment of residents and their children, from buyers in areas where street prostitution is prevalent.

Research from the prostitution district of St. Kilda in Melbourne shows that residents are often left to intervene in abuse being carried out by pimps against prostituted women, and that the stalking of residents' children by prostitution buyers is not uncommon (Rave 2011). In this respect, legalisation fails both to eliminate the problem of street prostitution and to alleviate the effect that prostitution has on communities. In addition, under legalisation communities must accept the existence of brothels in their local areas.

5. Legalisation creates 'pimp states'.

The legalisation of prostitution creates a situation where the state profits from the sexual exploitation of women. Under systems of legalisation, the state taxes and licences or regulates various forms of prostitution such as brothels and escorting, and introduces measures such as health and safety codes. Under legalisation, the profits that individual pimps would have made in illegal systems of prostitution are simply transferred to the state through taxes and licence fees. The state itself, essentially, becomes the pimp.

The European Women's Lobby understands that such states collude in promoting women's inequality and that they create "a group of women who are excluded from the protection afforded under national and international human rights law" (O'Connor and Healy, 2006: 26).