



**Submission to the
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee on the
inquiry on strategies to prevent and reduce criminal activity in Queensland**

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Contents

Introduction	3
Illegal Prostitution.....	3
Sex Trafficking	4
Legal Prostitution and Sex Trafficking.....	6
Other criminal activity	7
Underage prostitution	8
The Nordic approach.....	9
Exit programs	10
Conclusion.....	11

Introduction

The Australian Christian Lobby (ACL) welcomes this opportunity to submit to the inquiry on strategies to prevent and reduce criminal activity in Queensland.

This submission will focus on a particular issue which has a significant impact on criminal activity and which the ACL has been actively engaged in for a number of years. As discussed below, legalised prostitution is known to be correlated to an increase in illegal prostitution and illegal brothels, sex trafficking, and underage prostitution. It is also related to higher rates of other types of crime, including organised crime.

After discussing the link between prostitution and criminal activity, this submission presents the successful Nordic approach to prostitution, pioneered in Sweden in 1999 and spreading through Scandinavia and to other countries around the world.

Illegal Prostitution

The rationale behind legalising prostitution is to reduce the harm of an illegal prostitution industry. Unfortunately, legalising prostitution only increases illegal prostitution, because it normalises prostitution in society and increases the demand for it.

Queensland legalised prostitution in 1999.

Queensland's Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) commented in 2004:

*The rationale underlying much prostitution legalisation policy is to minimise harm, reduce and control criminal involvement and control expansion... However, research has indicated that **the effect has frequently been the reverse.***¹

In 2009, Schloenhardt and the Human Trafficking Working Group estimated that up to 90% of prostitution in Queensland was unregulated after ten years of prostitution regulation in that state.² The "spirit of the Act", as stated by the CMC, "is to draw as many of the illegal operators and workers as possible into the legal industry".³ This aim has "clearly failed", according to Schloenhardt, who says that introducing licensed brothels has had "little, if any impact on illegal forms of prostitution".⁴

Significantly, Schloenhardt acknowledges that licensing has failed to eliminate the *demand* for illegal prostitution.⁵

In other jurisdictions where prostitution has been legalised or decriminalised, illegal prostitution continues to be a problem. The Australian Capital Territory, where prostitution has been regulated since the *Prostitution Act 1992*, has nevertheless had problems with illegal prostitution. There have also been concerns about illegal immigration and trafficking in connection with prostitution. In 2009

¹ Crime and Misconduct Commission (2004), *Regulating Prostitution*, p 30. Emphasis added.

² Schloenhardt, A. et al, (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels: Ten Years of Prostitution Regulation in Queensland*, University of Queensland TC Beirne School of Law, p. 31, <http://www.law.uq.edu.au/documents/humantrafficking/reports-presentations/UQ-HTWG-Ten-Years-of-Prostitution-Regulation-in-Qld-Sep-2009.pdf>

³ Crime and Misconduct Commission (2004), *Regulating Prostitution*, p 65.

⁴ Schloenhardt et al, (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels*, p 31.

⁵ Schloenhardt et al, (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels*, p 31.

a woman from Kambah, ACT was arrested on sex slave and trafficking charges.⁶ In 2010, a Kaleen, ACT woman was fined for operating an illegal brothel.⁷ Later in 2010, a group of Thai women were found by immigration authorities to be illegally employed in two legal brothels in Fyshwick.⁸

In Victoria, which legalised prostitution in 1984, an estimated 50% of prostitution remains illegal. The CMC commented that:

*Since legalisation in Victoria (Australia), the sex industry has expanded, the legal industry has been 'pushed underground', criminal involvement has increased and the industry is now more dangerous.*⁹

The UK Home Office found that the prostitution industry had grown in Victoria after legalisation, "with the illegal sector outstripping the legal sector".¹⁰ The number of illegal Melbourne brothels was estimated to have grown threefold in one year and legalisation had not "overcome the lure of street prostitution", as had been hoped.¹¹

In New Zealand, a Maxim Institute study of prostitution showed that decriminalisation has not led to any decrease in the number of street workers or underage workers and had in fact likely led to an increase.¹² This conclusion is supported by outreach workers, who claim the number of women prostituted on the streets has grown significantly since decriminalisation.¹³ This agrees with the Prostitution Law Review Committee's report on the operation of the *Prostitution Reform Act 2003*, which noted an increase in the number of street workers since legalisation.¹⁴

Sex Trafficking

An increased demand for prostituted women also increases the demand for sex trafficking.

Australia is considered a destination for sex trafficking by the US Department of State, which noted in 2010 that women from Southeast Asia, China, and South Korea may come to Australia voluntarily to work in both legal and illegal brothels, but "under conditions that amounted to debt bondage or

⁶ AAP, (November 18, 2009), 'Woman to front court on sex slave charges', *The Daily Telegraph*, <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/breaking-news/woman-to-front-court-on-sex-slave-charges/story-e6freuz0-1225799141833>

⁷ ABC (October 15, 2010), 'Fine for illegal brothel owner', *ABC*, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/10/15/3039265.htm?site=canberra&source=rss>

⁸ AAP (December 20, 2010), 'Illegal sex workers found in Canberra', *Sydney Morning Herald*, <http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/illegal-sex-workers-found-in-canberra-20101220-192zt.html>

⁹ Crime and Misconduct Commission (2004), *Regulating Prostitution*, p 30.

¹⁰ Home Office (2004), *Paying the Price*, p 85.

¹¹ Home Office (2004), *Paying the Price*, pp. 86.

¹² Maxim Institute (2007), *Submission to the Prostitution Law Review Committee*, p. 6, http://www.maxim.org.nz/files/pdf/submission_plrc.pdf, citing Coppedge, S. (2006) *People Trafficking: An International Crisis Fought at the Local Level*, Fulbright New Zealand; available at http://www.fulbright.org.nz/voices/axford/docs/axford2006_coppedge.pdf

¹³ Maxim Institute (2007), *Submission to the Prostitution Law Review Committee*, pp. 5-7, http://www.maxim.org.nz/files/pdf/submission_plrc.pdf

¹⁴ New Zealand Government, *Report of the Prostitution Law Review Committee on the Operation of the Prostitution Reform Act 2003* (2008, May), p. 118, <http://www.justice.govt.nz/policy/commercial-property-and-regulatory/prostitution/prostitution-law-review-committee/publications/plrc-report/documents/report.pdf>.

sexual servitude.”¹⁵ The Department of State’s 2012 *Trafficking in Persons Report* made the following comment:

*Some women from Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea, China, and, to a lesser extent, India, Vietnam, Eastern Europe, and Africa migrate to Australia voluntarily intending to work legally or illegally in a number of sectors, including the sex trade. Subsequent to their arrival, however, some of these women are coerced into prostitution in both legal and illegal brothels. There were news reports that some Asian organized crime groups recruit Asian women to migrate to Australia, sometimes on student visas, and then subsequently coerce them into the sex trade. The women and girls are sometimes held in captivity, subjected to physical and sexual violence and intimidation, manipulated through illegal drugs, and obliged to pay off unexpected or inflated debts to their traffickers.*¹⁶

Citing a UN Save the Children report, the UK Home Office said in 2004 that:

*Victoria and New South Wales were the two worst states for the abuse of children through prostitution. **The trafficking of East Asian women for the purpose of prostitution was also found to be a growing problem.***¹⁷

More recently, a study by the University of Goettingen in Germany ranked Australia as a high volume destination country for trafficking.¹⁸ The study found a link between sex trafficking and legalised prostitution, as discussed below.

A joint investigation by the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Four Corners* found in 2012 that several legal brothels located in Sydney and Melbourne were linked to an international human trafficking and sex slavery ring. At least two brothels in Sydney were associated with the ring, including one which specialises in Korean prostitutes which was “closely linked to the Comanchero outlaw motorcycle club and senior Asian organised crime figures”.¹⁹

The authors reported that there have been 308 federal investigations of trafficking allegations, with 181 victims identified, including 147 women forced into sex slavery.²⁰ According to the authors, victims are forced into unsafe sex, work up to seven days a week, and have no knowledge of the money they earn for their pimps or how much of their “debt” has been paid off.²¹

¹⁵ US Department of State (2009), *2009 Human Rights Reports: Australia*, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/eap/135985.htm>.

¹⁶ US Department of State (June 2012), *Trafficking in Persons Report*, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/192594.pdf>, p 73.

¹⁷ Home Office (2004), *Paying the Price: a consultation paper on prostitution*, Home Office Communication Directorate, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/16_07_04_paying.pdf, p 85. Emphasis added.

¹⁸ Seo-Young Cho, Axel Dreher, Eric Neumayer (January 2012), *Does Legalized Prostitution Increase Human Trafficking?*, Courant Research Centre, University of Goettingen, Germany, Appendix B, p 30, citing the United Nations Office On Drugs and Crime.

¹⁹ Nick McKenzie et al, (October 10, 2011), ‘Legal brothels linked to international sex trafficking rings’, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, <http://www.smh.com.au/national/legal-brothels-linked-to-international-sex-trafficking-rings-20111009-1fxs.html>.

²⁰ McKenzie et al, (October 10, 2011), ‘Legal brothels linked to international sex trafficking rings’, *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

²¹ McKenzie et al, (October 10, 2011), ‘Legal brothels linked to international sex trafficking rings’, *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

The reports indicate that the trafficking of women from Southeast Asia is of particular concern. In 2012, the Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency arrested 18 Korean pimps who were involved in trafficking women into Australia to work as prostitutes, including to brothels in Sydney.²²

More recently, a Jamaican man was charged with sex trafficking by force, fraud and coercion, forcing women into prostitution on the Gold Coast. Facing trial in the US, much of the evidence against him comes from the man's activities in the Gold Coast, where he prostituted two women.²³

Legal Prostitution and Sex Trafficking

Gunilla Ekberg, the Co-Executive Director of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, has argued that prostitution and human trafficking are intrinsically linked.²⁴ This is evidenced by the decrease in trafficking since Sweden introduced its groundbreaking approach to prostitution, discussed below.

The Swedish laws have led to a "concrete decrease in the number of victims" of human trafficking.²⁵ According to the European Parliament "traffickers have had problems finding enough sex buyers in Sweden, the demand has been much lower than expected."²⁶ Police wiretaps have confirmed that criminal groups view Sweden as a poor market, and the illegal brothels that do exist are small in scope.²⁷ The National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings has estimated that around 400-600 women were trafficked into Sweden, a considerably smaller number than in surrounding countries, and the law has had "direct and positive effects on the trafficking of human beings for sexual purposes to Sweden and that Sweden is no longer an attractive market for traffickers".²⁸

These claims are supported by the German study mentioned above (hereafter "Cho"). The researchers used an economic theory approach to analyse data from about 150 countries, also conducting three case studies. In the context of supply and demand, the study states:

*some clients will be deterred from consuming commercial sex services if prostitution is illegal and they expect that there is a reasonable probability of being prosecuted, as this raises the costs of engaging in such activities. Legalizing prostitution will therefore almost invariably increase demand for prostitution.*²⁹

The study concluded that "countries with legalized prostitution have a statistically significantly larger incidence of human trafficking inflows".³⁰

²² Kim Young-won (June 29, 2012), 'Korean pimps caught trafficking in Australia', *The Korea Herald*, <http://view.koreaherald.com/kh/view.php?ud=20120629000874>.

²³ AAP (June 16, 2014), 'A 'violent pimp' who allegedly forced Gold Coast women to work as sex slaves will face trial in the US', <http://www.goldcoastbulletin.com.au/news/crime-court/a-violent-pimp-who-allegedly-forced-gold-coast-women-to-work-as-sex-slaves-will-face-trial-in-the-us/story-fnje8bkv-1226955483950>.

²⁴ Gunilla Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, pp 2-3.

²⁵ European Parliament (2005), *Study on National Legislation on Prostitution and the Trafficking in Women and Children*, http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/download.action;jsessionid=h932NJLT8bGTNJKlpWq3vpfs2vJD1ZsvZmtkJdhKNPD5Sw4txpVl-285985297?nodeId=94d50494-83a2-4787-8f70-7e55ae564ba2&fileName=Study+on+National+Legislation+and+Prostitution_en.pdf&fileType=pdf, p 133.

²⁶ European Parliament (2005), *Study on National Legislation on Prostitution and the Trafficking in Women and Children*, p 133.

²⁷ Ministry of Justice (2010), *Selected extracts of the Swedish government report SOU 2010:49: The Ban against the Purchase of Sexual Services. An evaluation 1999-2008*, p. 29.

²⁸ Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, p. 5

²⁹ Cho (2012), *Does Legalized Prostitution Increase Human Trafficking?*, p 6. Emphasis added.

³⁰ Cho (2012), *Does Legalized Prostitution Increase Human Trafficking?*, p 1.

In order to allow for the limitations of their cross-sectional study, Cho et al also examined three case studies – Germany, Denmark, and Sweden, each with different prostitution regimes.

Denmark, which allows sole prostitution but prohibits brothels, has about four times the number of prostitutes overall, and four times the number of trafficking victims as Sweden. This is despite the fact that Sweden has a 40% larger population.

Germany, in which prostitution is regulated as though it were a normal occupation, has about 150,000 prostitutes, or 60 times the number in Sweden, and about 33,000 sex trafficking victims, again about 60 times the number in Sweden. Germany's population is about ten times Sweden's.³¹

When looking at the annual estimates of sex trafficking victims in Germany from 1996 to 2004, the number of victims decreased until 2001 when it hit a minimum, and increased after legalisation of prostitution in 2002. The authors state that this trend is “consistent with our result from the quantitative analysis indicating that the legalization of prostitution leads to an increase in inward trafficking”.³²

Other criminal activity

In addition to the issue of illegal prostitution and sex trafficking, prostitution may have links to organised crime. As discussed above, several brothels in Sydney and three in Melbourne have been found to be associated with an international trafficking and sex slavery ring. One of the brothels specialises in Korean prostitutes and was “closely linked to the Comanchero outlaw motorcycle club and senior Asian organised crime figures”.³³

In the ACT, former Chief Police Officer Roman Quaedvlieg said that the police regularly receive information about criminal activity regarding prostitution including drugs, overstaying of visas, sexual servitude and exploitation of minors. Prostitution “still attracts the kind of people around which crime fringes do occur”.³⁴

The 2004 Home Office report included two chapters examining criminal activity related to prostitution in the UK. Chapter 7, “Protecting Communities”,³⁵ examined multiple ways in which prostitution causes nuisance in the local community and attracts petty crime. Kerb crawling, prostitution litter, and anti-social behaviour were found to be community problems associated with local prostitution. Chapter 8, “Links with serious crime”, also examined the links between prostitution and more serious crime, especially drugs and sex trafficking.³⁶ The chapter begins like this:

Prostitution undermines public order and creates a climate in which more serious crime can flourish. Street prostitution is often associated with local drug markets, bringing Class A

³¹ Cho (2012), *Does Legalized Prostitution Increase Human Trafficking?*, p 19.

³² Cho (2012), *Does Legalized Prostitution Increase Human Trafficking?*, p 20.

³³ McKenzie et al, (October 10, 2011), ‘Legal brothels linked to international sex trafficking rings’, *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

³⁴ D Stockman (2010, August), ‘Prostitution-related crime blitz’, *The Canberra Times*

³⁵ Home Office (2004), *Paying the Price*, pp 61-73.

³⁶ Home Office (2004), *Paying the Price*, pp 74-80.

*drugs and gun culture to local communities. It is believed that those who control prostitution also tend to be connected to other forms of serious crime. Dealing effectively with prostitution could have a dramatic effect on reducing more serious crime and help to stifle drug supply.*³⁷

The rest of the chapter then examines the problem in greater detail and notes some approaches in the UK to dealing with the issues of drugs and sex trafficking.

Underage prostitution

It is difficult to gather thorough information about child prostitution due to its illegal nature, but it is a known problem throughout the world. Anti-child exploitation group ECPAT (End Child Prostitution And Trafficking) claims as many as 1.8 million children are exploited in prostitution or pornography worldwide.³⁸ Multiple reports of child prostitution in Australia indicate that it is a serious problem in this country also.³⁹ Last year a Kings Cross brothel owner was found guilty of prostituting a 14-year-old girl.⁴⁰ In 2010 the case of a 12-year-old girl prostituted to over 100 men by her mother and mother's partner, Gary Devine, caused shock around the nation.⁴¹

In Queensland last year, a woman was sentenced to nine years in prison for trafficking her nine-year-old daughter from Thailand to Brisbane, selling her for sexual services from her massage and prostitution business.⁴²

An analysis by Max Waltman, from the Department of Political Science at Stockholm University, found that many prostituted women begin working as prostitutes before they are 18 years old. One large international study reported that 47 per cent of prostituted women started under 18, while another from San Francisco found 78 per cent started under 18.⁴³ Research in New Zealand has found that underage prostitution continues to be a significant problem in that country which has not decreased, and may have increased, since New Zealand legalised prostitution.⁴⁴

Consider the following testimony from a former prostituted woman working in Canberra:⁴⁵

³⁷ Home Office (2004), *Paying the Price*, pp 74.

³⁸ ECPAT, <http://www.ecpat.net/what-we-do>. Accessed July 17, 2014.

³⁹ E.g. see Herald Sun (March 16, 2012), 'Sydney child prostitution ring busted', <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/archive/news/child-prostitution-ring-broken/story-fn7x8me2-1226301686434>; Yasmine Phillips (January 2, 2010), 'Girls as young as 12 working as child prostitutes', *Perth Now*, <http://www.perthnow.com.au/news/western-australia/girls-as-young-as-12-working-as-child-prostitutes/story-e6fmg13u-1225815484530>.

⁴⁰ Sydney Morning Herald (July 12, 2013), 'Sydney brothel owner guilty of prostituting teen', <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/sydney-brothel-owner-guilty-of-prostituting-teen-20130712-2pv0g.html>.

⁴¹ Sally Glaetzer (March 23, 2010), 'Tasmanian man prostituted 12-year-old and shared proceeds with mother', *The Herald Sun*, <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/sydney-brothel-owner-guilty-of-prostituting-teen-20130712-2pv0g.html>.

⁴² Sarah Elks (April 16, 2013), 'Brisbane mother jailed for child trafficking of daughter, nine', *The Australian*, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/brisbane-mother-jailed-for-child-trafficking-of-daughter-nine/story-e6fmg6nf-1226621533056>.

⁴³ Max Waltman (2011), 'Sweden's prohibition of purchase of sex: The law's reasons, impact, and potential', *Women's Studies International Forum* 34 (2011) 449-474, p 451.

⁴⁴ Maxim Institute (2007), *Submission to the Prostitution Law Review Committee*, pp 2-4.

⁴⁵ The Riot Act (2008, November 5), 'An insider's view of the Canberra sex industry', *The Riot Act*, <http://theriotact.com/an-insiders-view-of-the-canberra-sex-industry/9573>

I was in the sex industry for 15 years. During that time it was Northside Studio's that had the bad rep, with Exotic Studio's running a close second . . .

Underage workers back then were a dime a dozen. Managers did everything they could to keep them employed and always covered the I.D part of it. Police raids were always "pencilled in the diary" so Owners knew when to remove the girls from the premises. Many of these young girls came into the industry because they knew someone already working, or had an older partner who paved the way for them. Many already had drug habits and the ones who didn't use drugs, very quickly joined the side which did. They used Speed to stay awake longer and make more money, they used Heroin to take away the emotion of the job, they drank to put on a false mask of happiness and they smoked weed to wind down at the end of the night, only to get up and do it all over again. Most of the owners took on a parental/mentor type role with these young girls, encouraging them to do whatever they had to do to make more money. Often these girls were told how 'lucky' they were to have this opportunity as no other industry could offer a 16/17 yr old \$600 per shift . . . They glamorised the Sex Industry , they built up their egos and they discarded them when they were no longer of any value. By this time these poor girls had already experienced a lifetime of trauma and depression and were not yet even in their 20's . . .

Customers want young girls, it is the most common request all places get. They want new faces, younger, more naive and easier to manipulate. The owners want the regular trade so they give the customers what they want. The only time the sex industry is investigated is times like now, when there has been a death on premises. After the media attention dies down everything will be business as usual again . . .

ACL submits that the problem of underage prostitution is driven in large part by the demand for sexual services.

The Nordic approach

ACL submits that a solution to the criminal activity associated with legal prostitution is found in the Nordic approach to prostitution laws.

In 1999, Sweden passed the *Act Prohibiting the Purchase of Sexual Services*. Sweden recognised prostitution as a "serious form of male violence against women and children" and, in keeping with the country's commitment to gender equality, sought ways to protect women from prostitution by focusing on the core cause, that is, the demand for paid sex.⁴⁶ The women's movement played a pivotal role in the introduction of the laws,⁴⁷ highlighting the fact that prostitution is at its core an issue of respect for women and concern for equality.

Under the Swedish law, prostituted women are not criminally liable; it is the purchaser of sex who is committing the crime. It covers all forms of sexual services purchased in any circumstances.⁴⁸

The new law has been remarkably effective. Sweden's National Board of Health and Welfare has reported significant decreases in the number of women in street prostitution and the number of

⁴⁶ Gunilla Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, p 3

⁴⁷ Kajsa Claude (2010), *Targeting the Sex Buyer: The Swedish Example: Stopping Prostitution and Trafficking Where it All Begins*, pp 36-37.

⁴⁸ Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, p. 4

men buying sex.⁴⁹ Stockholm, with a population of 1.3 million, has about 200 people in street prostitution. By comparison, prostitution hot-spot Amsterdam (population 750,000) has tens of thousands of prostitutes.⁵⁰ Although the law was initially met with criticism by police and judicial authorities, they are now supportive of the legislation.⁵¹

Sweden's laws began spreading through the region, with both Iceland⁵² and Sweden's neighbour Norway⁵³ now implementing the same model. Norway's prohibition on the purchase of sex goes further to include prohibiting Norwegian citizens from purchasing sex abroad as well as at home.⁵⁴

From Scandinavia, interest in the approach has spread through Europe, with the European Parliament voting by a large majority to support the approach in February 2014.⁵⁵

France has been considering a similar approach, with the National Assembly passing a law similar to that in Sweden in December 2013.⁵⁶ The bill was rejected by the French Senate but the debate continues.⁵⁷

South Korea has also been trying to prevent prostitution and punish purchasers since 2004. The *Act on the Punishment of Procuring Prostitution and Associated Acts*⁵⁸ prohibits the purchase of sex and also requires the government to "take legal and institution measures and raise necessary funds regarding education and promotion of public awareness on the prevention and elimination of prostitution, procuring prostitution and associated acts".⁵⁹ The *Act on the Prevention of Prostitution and Protection of Victims Thereof*⁶⁰ requires states to "provide legal and institutional devices and take necessary administrative and financial measures . . . to prevent prostitution and support the protection and self-reliance of the victims of prostitution and those who sell sex".⁶¹

Finally, Canada has been attempting to pass Nordic-style prostitution laws in 2014, with a bill currently before a Committee.⁶²

Exit programs

⁴⁹ Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, p. 5

⁵⁰ Claude (2010), *Targeting the Sex Buyer*, pp. 13-14.

⁵¹ Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, p. 5

⁵² Erla Sigurðardóttir (June 3, 2009), 'Buying sex now punishable in Iceland', *Nordic Gender Institute*, <http://www.nikk.no/English/Subjects/Prostitution/News/?module=Articles;action=Article.publicShow;ID=920>.

⁵³ BBC (January 1, 2009), 'New Norway law bans buying of sex', *BBC*, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7806760.stm>.

⁵⁴ BBC (January 1, 2000), 'New Norway law bans buying of sex'.

⁵⁵ Hannah Osborne (February 26, 2014), 'Nordic Model of Prostitution Approved by European Parliament', *International Business Times*, <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/nordic-model-prostitution-approved-by-european-parliament-1438009>.

⁵⁶ BBC (December 4, 2013), 'France prostitution: MPs back fines for clients', <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25217185>.

⁵⁷ Ben McPartland (July 9, 2014), 'French plan to fine sex-worker clients in doubt', *The Local*, <http://www.thelocal.fr/20140709/prostitution-france-law-clients-prostitutes-sex-workers>.

⁵⁸ *Act on the Punishment of Procuring Prostitution and Associated Acts* (2004) (South Korea), http://www.stop.or.kr/english/hm/08eng_03_01_01.asp

⁵⁹ *Act on the Punishment of Procuring Prostitution and Associated Acts* (2004) (South Korea), Article 3

⁶⁰ *Act on the Prevention of Prostitution and Protection of Victims Thereof* (2004) (South Korea),

⁶¹ *Act on the Prevention of Prostitution and Protection of Victims Thereof* (2004) (South Korea), Article 3

⁶² Mike Blanchfield (July 6, 2014), 'Hearings to begin on Canada's new prostitution bill', *Toronto Star*, http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2014/07/06/hearings_to_begin_on_canadas_new_prostitution_bill.html.

A key component of the Nordic approach to prostitution includes support for women who want to leave the industry. Research suggests that leaving prostitution is an extremely difficult process for prostituted women, despite the fact that a large percentage want to. Research in Queensland suggests that more than 35 per cent of women in legal brothels and single operator prostitution want to leave the industry and about half of women on the street want to leave.⁶³

New Zealand research has estimated that between two thirds and four fifths of prostituted women had tried to leave prostitution, but only 20-25 per cent had been successful in doing so.⁶⁴ Reasons why it is so difficult include alienation from normal support groups, a tendency not to seek assistance, a lack of knowledge of social services, money, sexual abuse, and an inability to plan ahead.⁶⁵

Rather than legalising an industry in which many women feel trapped, the government should offer assistance such as counselling and medical support to women trying to leave the industry.

Conclusion

This submission addresses one aspect of criminal activity in Queensland. It is, nevertheless, an important aspect, one which has a very real effect on crime in this state, and which must be included in any discussion about strategies to reduce and prevent criminal activity.

ACL urges the Committee to consider prostitution in its broader inquiry on criminal activity, and to consider the potential that the Nordic approach to prostitution has to reduce crime in Queensland.

Yours sincerely



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⁶³ CMC (2004), *Regulating Prostitution*, p 21.

⁶⁴ Maxim Institute (2007), *Submission to the Prostitution Law Review Committee*, p 7.

⁶⁵ Maxim Institute (2007), *Submission to the Prostitution Law Review Committee*, p. 7