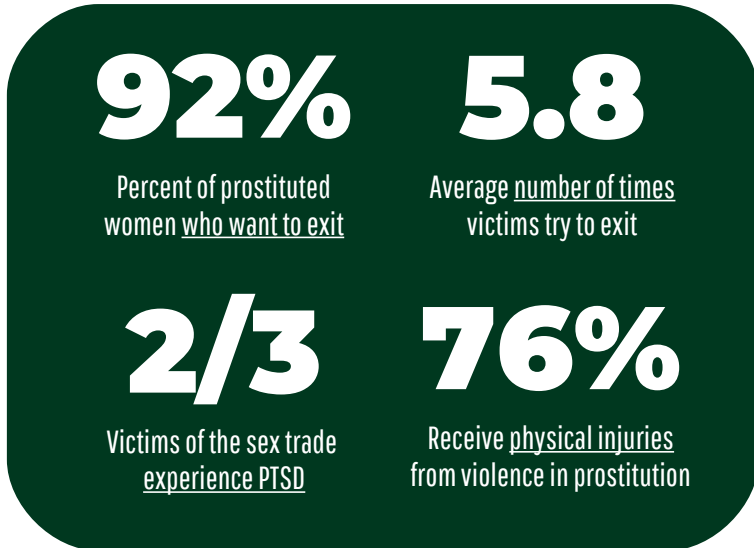


Issue Summary: Prostitution and The Equality Model

Women are not products to be bought and sold. Policies which fully-legalize prostitution normalize sexual violence, fail to protect victims, and fail to hold pimps and punters accountable for their systematic exploitation of female people. The Equality Model (also called “The Nordic Model”) criminalizes the buying of sex while also protecting victims and providing resources for exiting.



The Equality Model Decreases Sex Trafficking

Like a business, the sex trade provides a "supply" of women and children to meet the demands of buyers. Unlike a business, full decriminalization or legalization of prostitution increases demand, but does not increase the "supply" of women willing to prostitute themselves. Thus, this increased demand can only be met by trafficking women and children.

“Countries with legalized prostitution are associated with higher human trafficking inflows than countries where prostitution is prohibited.” - [Harvard Law Report](#)

Sweden and Denmark both saw declines in sex trafficking when they implemented the Equality Model.

What Survivors Want

A [policy platform](#) developed by survivors of the sex trade states: “The [Equality model], is the most effective policy framework for achieving restorative justice when adjudicating prostitution-related offenses.” **The platform includes three pillars:**

1. Criminal Justice Reforms

- Recognize survivors as victims of sexual exploitation rather than as “criminals”
- Vacate past arrests and convictions for victims
- Hold buyers of sex criminally accountable
- Use increased fines on convicted buyers to pay for victim services

2. Fair Employment

- Create government funds to support education and professional development for survivors

3. Standards of Care

- Recognize that “prostitution is torture”
- Strengths-based compassionate services

Listen to Survivors of Prostitution

These are just a few select quotes. Read their full stories and those of other survivors of prostitution [here](#).

“I try to move beyond my past every day, but I struggle. I have vivid nightmares three or four times a week that wake me in a panic.” - [Andrea Heinz](#)

“I entered prostitution for lack of choice around the end of 1992. I found myself homeless, without furniture, looking for a job. I wanted to be employed in a restaurant, as a waitress – I had experience – but I couldn’t find a job.” - [Manon Marie Josée Michaud](#)

“Since decriminalisation was introduced in 2003 [in New Zealand], the only illusion that’s left is the one women now tell themselves – that it’s real legitimate work. We know it’s not but that’s all that’s left to throw at the world.” - [Michelle Mara](#)

“I was not allowed to turn any john away or turn any john down. The johns were gross. I felt like crap... Most of the time I just wanted to end it all. End my life. I was beaten and made to feel like crap.” - [Sara Smiles](#)

“There is really no way to have prostitution legalized without having trafficking.” - [Kylee Gregg](#)

