



NZPC

New Zealand Prostitutes Collective

**How would we
know?**

***Trafficking in New
Zealand.***

NZPC

- Formed in 1987, by sex workers and allies;
- Programmes access sex workers throughout New Zealand;
- Mission:

The New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective advocates for the human rights, health and well-being of all sex workers. The New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective is committed to working for the empowerment of sex workers, so that sex workers may have control over all aspects of their work and lives.



What does the NZ sex industry look like?



- Most people work indoors, in brothels that are managed by operators;
- Significant numbers work for themselves from their own home or are street based sex workers;
- Numbers can vary, but there has been a general trend for people to work for themselves;
- Age: most between 20 and 30;
- Gender: Female, male, transgender;
- New Zealand born and International sex workers;
 - Visitors visa
 - Students visa
 - Working visa

The sex industry is visible



- In 2003, New Zealand decriminalised sex work with the Prostitution Reform Act;
- A decriminalised sex industry enables more people to speak out and combat trafficking.
- NZPC interacts with sex workers, brothel operators, drivers, website owners which gives us continuous insight into sex workers' realities.
 - It is hard to attract clients without visibility
 - Therefore it would be difficult to operate completely in secret or in a hidden manner.

Prostitution Reform Act: Anti-trafficking measures

- Section 19 of the Act states that people may not come to New Zealand with the intention of working as a sex worker, or owning or operating a brothel.
- Visas can be refused or revoked, and the person returned to their country of origin.
- Well intentioned, but can cause problems for international sex workers

Case study: Jane

- Jane is an international student.
- Became a sex worker to earn extra money.
- Accused of being a sex worker by the University and warned she could be deported.
- Drink spiked by her fellow students, and became very ill, requiring hospitalisation.
- Was afraid to report the situation to the police as fellow students knew she was a sex worker.

What do we know?



- “It is also reportedly a destination country [New Zealand] for women from Hong Kong, Thailand, Taiwan, the People’s Republic of China, Eastern Europe, and other Asian countries trafficked into forced prostitution” (*US State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, 2009*).
- “Information received from Immigration Service NZ indicates that no situations involving trafficking in the sex industry have been identified (*Department of Labour, 2007*). In addition, there have been no prosecutions for trafficking under section 98D of the Crimes Act 1961” (*Prostitution Law Review Committee, 2008, p167*).
- It is important to build up accurate information and have evidence based research.

What do we know?



- *Many sex workers know they have rights and have an expectation that these will be upheld by authorities*
- *Sex workers have provided evidence in court and to the disputes tribunal against mal practices of brothel operators and others*
- *Clients and sex workers act as ‘whistle blowers’ and inform if they suspect exploitation of sex workers including international sex workers*
- *Studies have shown that 4% of sex workers have been made to work by someone (Christchurch School of Medicine, Otago University 2007).*

Obvious ways to combat trafficking

- **All** sex workers need rights – sex workers should be able to move freely and work with protections in line with other occupations.
- Continue to create a **culture of understanding** – all sex workers must be empowered to exercise their right to say no to sex and have their complaints upheld.
- Authorities need to recognise when violations against sex workers have occurred – there has to be non-threatening interaction between sex workers and authorities.
- Overturn policies that ban sex work – encourage visibility and interaction with the sex industry to shed light on trafficking and underground activities.

How would you know?

Talk to sex
workers.

