

What Future Do We Want for New York?

Legislation to decriminalize the sex trade in New York State has put the question of how to address prostitution front and center. As the public considers this important issue, it's critical we understand the scope and scale of the changes proposed. Full decriminalization would dramatically alter our communities while putting many more at risk of sex trafficking. This is not the New York we want. Learn why the **Equality Model** works.

Objective for changes to the NYS laws

Equality Model

- End the arrests and incarceration of people in prostitution while continuing to prosecute pimps, brothel and illicit massage parlor owners and managers, sex tourism operators, and sex buyers

Full Decriminalization Model

- Decriminalize the sex trade, including prostitution, patronizing prostitution (sex buying), promoting prostitution (pimping), and sex tourism operations

BOTH AGREE THAT PEOPLE BOUGHT AND SOLD IN THE SEX TRADE MUST NOT BE PROSECUTED AND INCARCERATED

Arrests

- **Only arrests** of those who buy and sell others for sexual acts: pimps, brothel owners and managers, escort services owners, sex buyers, and sex tourism operators

- **No arrests** of pimps, brothel owners and managers, escort services owners, sex buyers, and sex tourism operators

BOTH AGREE THAT VICTIMS OF PROSTITUTION AND SEX TRAFFICKING MUST BE ABLE TO VACATE PROSTITUTION-RELATED CONVICTIONS

Preferred terms

- Prostituted people
- People in prostitution
- Survivors
- (Systems of) prostitution
- Sex trade

- Sex work
- Sex workers



Societal Objectives

Equality Model

- Shift stigma from prostituted people to those who exploit them
- Reduce demand, the economic engine of the global multi-billion dollar sex trade
- Prevent exploiters from preying on women, transwomen, and youth marginalized by poverty, racism, gender inequality, and homophobia
- Recognize that prostituted people are subjected to sexual, physical, and psychological violence and suffer severe trauma
- Change culture from one that accepts the right to purchase people for sex to one that promotes equality
- Reduce sex trafficking
- Avoid turning NYC into a global sex tourism destination

Full Decriminalization Model

- Reconceptualize and redefine prostitution as labor
- Legalize/decriminalize the sex trade
- Normalize prostitution and related activities
- Destigmatize the sex trade
- Promote prostitution as legitimate income-generating activity, “a job like any other”
- Facilitate the ability of individuals and networks profiting from prostitution to do business in New York unimpeded
- Protect sex buyers as sources of livelihood, rename commercial sex establishment owners/managers (brothels, escort services, etc.) as “business entrepreneurs,” and international sex traffickers as “migrant facilitators”



Results

Equality Model

Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Canada, Northern Ireland, France, Republic of Ireland, Israel

- Prostitution and trafficking decreased significantly; sex traffickers avoid these “unprofitable” markets
- No increase in violence against prostituted people
- No evidence that prostitution has been pushed “underground”
- Cultural transformation in attitudes: purchasing people for sex is no longer socially acceptable and is deemed a barrier to gender equality
- Dedicated services and exit strategies

Decrim/Legalization Model

Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand

- Commercial sex establishments multiply
- Demand for prostitution escalates
- Growing numbers of highly marginalized people in prostitution (immigrants, women and girls of color, transwomen and girls)
- The physical/mental health of prostituted people remains precarious
- Higher incidence of human trafficking
- State economy benefits from sex trade
- No dedicated services or exit strategies

SOURCES:

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DecrimNY website

Learn more at www.equalitymodelny.org