



## **New Zealand needs to urgently amend child trafficking law as it receives a tier 2 ranking for a third year**

[The Trafficking in Persons Report 2023](#) was released today. It found once again that the government maintained inadequate anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts and failed to prosecute any traffickers or identify any certified victims of trafficking (251 “potential” victims” were identified.)

Like previous years, New Zealand’s human trafficking laws remained inadequate in terms of identifying victims with the current law requiring deception and coercion to be satisfied for child trafficking cases when this should be irrelevant for the purposes of culpability when the victim is a child. The report noted that child sex trafficking offences were often prosecuted under the Prostitution Reform Act that carried half the sentence of child trafficking in the Crimes Act.

The Human Trafficking Research Coalition (HTRC) is disappointed that for a third year the Government has not done enough to combat the devastating consequences of human trafficking or address laws that affect the trafficking of children. It continues to call for the Government to do more in New Zealand to counter human trafficking by amending the child sex trafficking provisions in the Crimes Act.

The HTRC urge the Government to take the recommendations of the TIP report as a warning sign that New Zealand must do much more to protect and identify victims and potential victims of trafficking. It must amend the Crimes Act 1961 so that “coercion and deception” are irrelevant for child trafficking offenses.

*The Human Trafficking Research Coalition is a coalition of charitable organisations that engage in research and advocacy. Together, they provide 'one voice' on issues to do with human trafficking and worker exploitation in New Zealand.*

### **Media Contact:**

Rebekah Armstrong, Chair of the Human Trafficking Research Coalition

+64272423254 [Rebekah.Armstrong@worldvision.org.nz](mailto:Rebekah.Armstrong@worldvision.org.nz)