

**Submission  
No 349**

## **SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY**

**Name:** Mr Michael Trkulja

**Date Received:** 1 July 2019

My name is Michael Trkulja and I am a DJ and the founder of a techno party in Sydney called Undisclosed. I have seen many people lose employment and opportunities to work in Sydney's nightlife economy as a result of the lockout laws. DJs, licensees, photographers, hospitality workers, promoters, lighting technicians, graphic designers, marketing managers, flyer distributors, venue managers to name a few have all lost their jobs or are have become underemployed due to the long-term effects of the lockout laws. This also extends to workers in the hospitality, retail and other night time industries in Sydney. This has resulted in the loss of billions of dollars every year in Sydney's economy.

The lockout laws were introduced to reduce violence in Sydney after the fatal coward punch attacks in Kings Cross. While violence has decreased in Kings Cross, it has only occurred due to the fact that the streets are no longer filled with people, no one goes to Kings Cross anymore because there is so little going on there at night time. The coward punch attacks that caused the lockout laws also occurred very early in the night before the 1:30 lockout and in both instances occurred outside of clubbing venues. This is why so many people regard the laws just as a knee-jerk reaction from the government to appease the concerns of the community at the time.

The lockout laws are an international embarrassment for Sydney. When I have travelled overseas, many travellers knew about the lockout laws in Sydney and how it negatively affected our city's nightlife. Travellers have stated many times that Sydney's nightlife is a joke compared to Melbourne and other cities around the world where nightlife is one of the main attractions for tourism. In order to increase tourism in our city, the lockout laws need to be axed so that our once thriving nightlife can be restored.

I believe the lockout laws have completely bypassed the main reasons why they came into existence in the first place. Violence has always been linked to excessive drinking. The reasons why violence has occurred is due to our binge drinking culture. This is caused by numerous reasons. Pre-loading of alcohol is a main cause of violence because of how expensive it is to drink on a night out in Sydney. Teenagers can generally not afford to spend in excess of \$100 every night they go out so pre-drinking a dangerous amount of alcohol is one way to reduce the cost of a night out. Binge drinking culture is also caused by peer pressure and not knowing when to stop. This is why education about drinking is paramount in curbing alcoholism, reducing violence and potentially saving lives. The lockout laws do not directly achieve any of those outcomes, they only serve to abolish the conditions in where they may occur. They do not effect the root of the problem.