



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Germany*



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Introduction

Germany is a federal republic with a democratically elected parliament.¹ It has the largest economy in Europe and is one of the richest countries in the world. Although Germany has good child healthcare and social welfare systems,² it continues to be affected by child sexual abuse, child trafficking for prostitution and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).³

Children living on the streets in Germany are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation and often turn to prostitution for income. The Coalition for Street Children estimated there were as many as 11,000 street children in Germany in 2009. Unaccompanied foreign minors (UFMs) in Germany are particularly at risk of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.⁴ Several organisations estimate that the approximate number of UFMs residing in Germany ranges between 5,000 and 10,000,⁵ with over two-thirds being boys living in large cities, including Berlin, Hamburg and Frankfurt.

In 2002, Germany legalised prostitution and brothels in part to reduce sex trafficking, and remove the stigma attached to the sex industry. Since 2002, incidents of **child prostitution**, particularly of boys, have been underreported. According to the Subway project of NGO Hilfe-für-Jungs e.V., boys as young as 14 years old provide sex services in the major German cities.⁶ Such prostitution occurs in railway stations, streets, bars, pornographic cinemas, saunas, brothels/apartments, parks and through the Internet.⁷ Over 80% of the males involved in prostitution are ethnic Roma from Bulgaria and Romania.

Despite the change in the laws regarding prostitution and brothels, incidents of **child sex trafficking** in Germany have unfortunately increased. International observers and advocacy groups have argued that the legal change has done little to make the industry safer as Germany is regarded primarily as a destination and to a lesser extent, transit country for child trafficking for sexual exploitation. Reliable data about the child sex trade, however, remains limited. It was recently reported that human trafficking crimes have increased 70% between 2005 and 2010, with the vast majority of the victims being women and girls trafficked into commercial sex. The majority of these victims were German nationals, followed by victims from Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Nigeria. The perpetrators of human trafficking are predominantly male and German (187 out of 730 suspects in 2010), followed by Bulgarian, Romanian, Turkish and Nigerian citizens.⁸

With the increasing use of the Internet and other information and communications technology (ICT), German children and adolescents are being exposed to a number of potential online threats that may impact their safety and wellbeing. Media reports and police statistics reveal that possession and distribution of **child abuse images** have become common crimes in the last five years. Additionally, Interpol has mentioned Germany as one of the major producers of child pornography.⁹ There are an estimated 50,000 regular consumers of child pornography in Germany.¹⁰ Between 2008 and 2009, the number of cases involving the distribution of child pornography increased by 14.2% to 3,145 cases.¹¹ This figure declined to 687 cases in 2010.

There has been no in-depth research on **sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism** by German nationals. However, according to existing estimates, approximately 20,000 Germans contribute to the global demand for child sex tourism every year.¹² Documented cases, police crime statistics and information scattered in various studies and media reports suggest that the main destinations for German child sex tourists include countries in Africa, Central and South America, South and Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe. Cases of

extraterritorial sexual exploitation of children investigated by the German Police up to 2007 confirm that the main destinations for German travelling sex offenders include the Czech Republic (17.13%), Romania (7.17%) and Poland (1.09%) in Europe; Thailand (23.51%), Philippines (6.77%), Cambodia (3.59%) and Vietnam (5.58%) in Southeast Asia; India (5.58%) and Sri Lanka (5.98%) in south Asia; and Brasil (13.59%) and Dominican Republic (3.98%) in Latin America.¹³

National Plan of Action

Germany updated its national strategy against CSEC, the *Action Plan for the Protection of Children and Adolescents from Sexual Violence and Exploitation*.¹⁴ A “National Conference on the Protection of Children and Adolescents from Sexual Violence” was held in March 2009 to update the NPA. Discussion topics included combating child sex trafficking and exploitation of children and adolescents in tourism. Consultations were held on CSEC-related issues, producing a final report comprised of 16 points, which is to be integrated into the updated plan.¹⁵ Furthermore, federal and state working groups on the evaluation and monitoring of the report have been launched.¹⁶

Although Germany does not have a national plan of action against child trafficking, two national plans of action address a couple of issues related to aspects of human trafficking. One is the *National Plan of Action for a Germany fit for Children 2005–2010 (Nationaler Aktionsplan für ein Kindgerechtes Deutschland 2005–2010)*, which covers the fields of

education, the right to grow up in a violence-free environment, the fostering of a healthy life and healthy environmental conditions, and the participation of children and juveniles. While this plan does not specifically address or even mention child trafficking, it contains a chapter on children as refugees and acknowledges their vulnerability when separated from their families. In this context the German government committed itself to some measures, such as improving the living conditions of refugee children, the introduction of a clearing procedure, the appointment of a legal guardian for 16 to 17-year-olds, as well as appropriate accommodation. In addition, the *National Plan of Action of the Government on the Fight Against Violence Against Women (Aktionsplan II der Bundesregierung zur Bekämpfung von Gewalt gegen Frauen)*, adopted in 2007, identifies women and girls with a migration background as specifically vulnerable to becoming victims of human trafficking and makes a number of recommendations to alleviate the various risks faced by members of this group.¹⁷

Coordination and Cooperation

The *Action Plan for the Protection of Children and Adolescents from Sexual Violence and Exploitation* stresses the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach to protect children from CSEC.¹⁸ However, despite the establishment of a number mechanisms, coordination and cooperation among stakeholders at the local and national level appears to be limited. The

main coordinating body on CSEC issues at an institutional level remains the Federal Working Group for the Protection of Children and Adolescents against Sexual Abuse and Exploitation. Composed of representatives of federal, Länder and local governments and NGOs, the group coordinates the implementation of the corresponding action

plan and works toward the development of additional measures.¹⁹ The German government also supports the programmes and activities carried out by the Information Centre on Child Abuse and Neglect (IzKK) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Prävention und Intervention bei Kindesmisshandlung und -vernachlässigung (German Society for Prevention and Intervention in cases of Child Abuse and Neglect) (DGfPI), which are two major federal platforms that link stakeholders involved in protection against sexual violence and exploitation.²⁰

There are some examples of cooperation between the German government and the private sector on CSEC issues, especially in the field of child protection in the use of new media. With the initiative “A Net for Children,”²¹ launched in 2007 by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media and the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth,

several companies from the Internet and mobile communications industry have joined forces to compile a so-called “whitelist” of child-friendly websites. Additionally, the FragFinn Website was founded in order to establish a secure place on the Internet that allows children from ages 8 to 12 to surf the web without any risk of finding violent or sexual content (see www.fragFINN.de).²²

The German Association for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) is a government-owned entity that has carried out several trafficking initiatives in countries of origin, including training programmes.²³ In January 2011, the GTZ became “the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit” (GIZ), combining expertise from the Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst (DED) GmbH (German development service) and Inwent – Capacity Building International, Germany.²⁴

Prevention

Prevention efforts have improved in Germany, though the focus has been on sexual violence against children in institutions and churches in particular, as numerous cases have been discovered within the last few years and people who were abused as children in public institutions and churches have come forward. As an example of the measures to improve child safety, everyone working with children, including employees and volunteers, is now required by law to obtain an extended police clearance certificate before they start their latest employment and regularly after starting their jobs.

There have been several initiatives to help street children. Off Road Kids Foundation runs a countrywide street social work system to help street children in Germany. With branches in Germany’s largest cities – Berlin, Dortmund, Hamburg and Cologne – Off Road Kids offers a free 24-hour emergency hotline to young people who are in need of help and a hotline for parents whose children are threatening to run away or have already done so. It also runs two children’s homes for young people who cannot find help from their families or in their hometown.²⁵

The Safer Internet Centre Germany²⁶ is responsible for monitoring adherence to the laws for protection of youth on the Internet and ensures that content providers rapidly change or delete problematic content. One of its projects, jugendschutz.net, is a hotline that accepts complaints of illegal and harmful Internet content.²⁷ The hotline is linked to the German Internet monitoring organisation, Commission for Youth Protection in the Media (KJM). Additionally, jugendschutz.net raises awareness by conducting workshops and developing brochures and websites that provide information about online risks, effective protection measures, and safety tips.

The private sector has actively contributed to the fight against child pornography and online sexual exploitation of children, especially through the adoption of several self-regulatory initiatives. The code of conduct adopted in 2007 by the Voluntary Self Control of Multimedia (Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle Multimedia), commits members to prohibit child pornography and the supply of erotic material to minors. It also envisages a help hotline for juveniles, an information website for teachers and parents and parental information

when signing a mobile phone contract. In addition, a code of conduct for the providers of social communities (Web 2.0) was signed in 2009 by four German companies.

Recently awareness raising efforts in Germany targeting the tourism sector have been successful in promoting the implementation of The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism (*The Code*). The German government has continued to co-fund the long-term implementation of *The Code* within companies, national and international

associations and structures of the tourism industry. A number of workshops to promote the implementation of *The Code* in tourism destinations have been held by the German travel association DRV in cooperation with the German Association for Technical Cooperation (formerly GTZ, now GIZ) and ECPAT Germany. In 2008, a destination workshop was carried out in Thailand, while another was conducted in Kenya in 2009.²⁸ The workshops were attended by representatives of the tourism industry, local police, relevant ministries, and children's organisations, and contributed to raising awareness of CSEC in tourism.

Protection

Germany consists of 16 federal states, known as Länder or Bundesländer. The *Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany*, Germany's constitution, divides authority between the Federation and the Länder. In practice, the Länder regulates internal affairs, educational policy, and cultural issues. With concurrent legislative power, however, there are situations in which the Federation enacts legislation that the Länder must implement, including child and youth protection. This system can create problems, as there may be 16 different regulations implementing laws that structure childcare services or address the needs of trafficking victims.²⁹

Germany continues to make significant efforts to improve its legislation against CSEC. Apart from ratifying all the relevant international and regional instruments addressing these issues, in November 2008 a law was passed to impose the framework decision of the Council of the European Union on combating sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, which had been in effect since 2004. Following the enactment of this law, a number of amendments to the *German Criminal Code (Criminal Code)* have been introduced that strengthen legislation on child trafficking and child pornography and raise the age of protection from sexual abuse and exploitation.³⁰

Although German legislation does not

explicitly define **child prostitution**, it punishes activities connected to child prostitution. Recent reforms of the *Criminal Code* have raised the age of protection for sexual abuse by making it punishable to abuse a person under 18 years of age by taking advantage of an exploitative situation.³¹ German law prohibits some activities related to the prostitution of children, as well as a number of general sexual offences. The *Criminal Code* prohibits inducing a person under 18 years of age to engage in sexual acts with or in the presence of a third person for financial reward or allowing sexual acts to be committed on a person under 18 years of age by a third person.³² However, this provision focuses on financial reward and does not cover other forms of consideration, such as in-kind reward, as stipulated in article 2(b) of the *Optional Protocol*.

German legislation addressing trafficking in human beings, including **trafficking in children** for sexual purposes, is generally in line with the *Trafficking Protocol* requirements. Section 232 of the *Criminal Code* defines the offence of trafficking in human beings for sexual purposes as exploiting "another person's predicament or helplessness arising from being in a foreign country in order to induce them to engage in or continue to engage in prostitution, to engage in exploitative sexual activity with or in the presence of the offender or a third person or to suffer sexual acts on his own person by the

offender or a third person". An act can qualify as an offence of trafficking for sexual purposes regardless of the means used by traffickers – such as force, threat, serious harm or deception (Section 232 (4)) – in line with the article 3 requirements of the Trafficking Protocol.

Although German law does not contain a clear definition of **child pornography**, the Criminal Code does cover virtual child pornography.³³ With the recent introduction of the offences of “distribution, acquisition and possession” of *juvenile* pornography, Germany has extended protection from exploitation in pornography to all children under 18. The German *Criminal Code* prohibits the distribution, acquisition and possession of pornography involving children (under 14 years of age) and juveniles (between 14 and 18), respectively. Although these sections technically pertain to “written materials,” the definition of written materials also encompasses audiovisual media, data storage media, illustrations and other depictions. It is also noteworthy that sections of the Criminal Code punish not only materials produced as a result of actual sexual abuse, but also realistic representations of sexual activities, such as virtual child pornography. Possession of child pornography is also punishable, while possession of juvenile pornography is punishable unless the materials were produced by persons under 18 and with consent. German law also makes it illegal for one or more persons to engage in sexual intercourse or other sexual acts with a child with the intent to produce pornographic material to be disseminated or publicly displayed.³⁴ It is also illegal to groom a child by using publications to influence her or him to engage in sexual activities with an adult. This provision also prohibits offering, demonstrating or promising a child to someone else for purposes of sexually abusing the child, or conspiring with another person to sexually abuse a child.

Germany acknowledges **extraterritoriality** as a general principle in its *Criminal Code* and specific provisions have been passed to facilitate the prosecution of child sex tourists.³⁵ German extraterritorial jurisdiction applies to acts committed abroad that constitute the criminal offences of trafficking and the distribution of pornography, regardless of the legality of those acts in the country where they took place. The same also applies to other offences, such as sexual acts with a child under 14 years of age

(Section 174(1)) and abusing a person under 18 years old by taking advantage of an exploitative situation (Section 182).³⁶ However, the reach of the German extraterritorial laws only extends to German citizens who have at least one residence in Germany, exemplifying the nationality principle of jurisdiction, but leaving a large gap in German capacity to prosecute foreign nationals who reside in Germany.

Whilst there are currently no special federal police units to deal specifically with sexual exploitation of children, some Länder have established investigation departments specialised in combating child pornography or child trafficking. However, this is left at the discretion of each Länder and depends on available resources. Standardisation across Länder and more funds and personnel for policing and crime prosecution are urgently needed. Germany has two branches of police, the prevention police and the criminal police. Both deal with child protection, but have different foci. The prevention police cover all state and private programmes and measures aiming at the prevention of criminal action or the diminishment of adverse consequences following criminal action. Many of their campaigns also deal with the prevention of crime against children. For example, they have a campaign against child sex tourism (“Kleine Seelen, große Gefahr,” in cooperation with ECPAT Germany), a campaign for the safe use of the Internet by children (“Kinder sicher im Netz”) and others.³⁷ The criminal police address the investigations and prosecutions of crime.

Child-sensitive procedures during police, prosecution and court proceedings have been adopted.³⁸ Under German law, child witnesses under 16 years of age may have their testimony recorded through audio or video for presentation in the course of legal proceedings in certain circumstances. There is also a provision to avoid multiple interrogations and for testimony to occur outside the presence of the accused. In addition, a lawyer may be assigned to provide support to a child witness, or even to represent a child witness to a violent crime. However, it has been noted that child-friendly procedures contained in the *Criminal Procedure Code* are not well known and not implemented by law enforcement personnel, mainly due to financial constraints and a lack of targeted training.³⁹

The German public authorities have also developed specialised counselling services (*Fachberatungsstellen*) that provide free psychological assistance and counselling to victims of trafficking. In some of the centres providing such services, however, waiting periods to access treatment are often lengthy. In addition, these programmes focus on providing support to women and girl victims of trafficking, with boy victims apparently lacking access and faced with no services available to meet their specific needs.⁴⁰ Though boys are not systematically excluded from treatment, the system is overburdened and lacks resources to immediately care for victims, regardless of

gender.

There are some government-led courses and awareness raising exercises. The German Academy for Judges offers regular courses on human trafficking.⁴¹ However, there is currently no interdisciplinary training for law enforcement on recognising warning signals to identify victims or pinpointing elements of risk for children and adolescents, nor is there a child rights approach when dealing with potential victims. Some NGOs claim that police are better trained than judges, lawyers, suggesting a need for more education in the legal community.⁴²

Child and Youth Participation

Although the German government considers “the participation of young people as a major element of society and of the political arena and as a priority tool to promote democratic convictions,”⁴³ most of the initiatives against CSEC involving the direct participation of children and young people implemented since 2006 have been carried out by NGOs, particularly the youth section of ECPAT Germany. The German government supported some youth-led projects, but those mostly addressed violence against children in general or focused on promoting children’s rights.

The Europe and Central Asia Child and Youth Regional Preparatory Forum for the

World Congress III was held in Düsseldorf, in November 2008, and gathered together 25 children and young people from Austria, Belarus, Germany, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Netherlands, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Sweden and Ukraine. The forum provided an opportunity for children and young people to share their experiences, knowledge and models of successful child and youth-led interventions against child sexual exploitation in the region. The meeting was organised by ECPAT International and ECPAT Germany, with support from Save the Children Germany, the Oak Foundation, UNICEF Germany, and the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.⁴⁴

Priority Actions Required

National plan for action

Germany should work for full implementation of the new *Plan of Action 2011 of the Federal Government of Germany for the Protection of Children and Teenagers from Sexual Violence and Exploitation*, ensuring the direct involvement of children and the private sector.

Coordination and cooperation

The governments of the federal states should ensure standardised government and civil

society cooperation across the 16 federal states, especially with regard to assistance for child victims of trafficking. Germany should also enhance international cooperation through multilateral arrangements for the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution and punishment of acts involving the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography and child sex tourism.

Prevention

The governments should undertake comprehensive research on the different forms

of CSEC, with a particular emphasis on prostitution of boys, online sexual exploitation of children, especially online grooming, child sex trafficking and child sex tourism, with a particular focus on the commercial aspect of sexual violence.

Local regional governments should develop policies with regard to the inclusion of awareness-raising programmes on trafficking and CSEC in teachers, training courses and school curricula for students.

The governments of the federal states should conduct programmes to reduce demand for sex services from children through clear preventive measures and awareness raising to encourage greater public mobilisation and stricter law enforcement.

Protection

Germany should establish specialised police units dealing with CSEC offences across all Länder to ensure that all cases can be properly investigated and child victims or children at risk are adequately identified, assisted and protected.

Germany should revise the *Residence Act (Aufenthaltsgesetz or AufenthG)* to ensure that unaccompanied children from non-EU countries are entitled to all relevant social services for children under 18.

Germany should establish an ombudsman for children who is able to receive complaints on CSEC violations, directly from children;

alternatively, Germany should expand the functions of the Children's Commission to empower it to receive and investigate complaints of violations of children's rights, including CSEC cases.

Recovery and reintegration

The German government must develop specialised support services for boys involved in prostitution and children victimised through the use of new technologies.

The German government should develop reporting procedures and a free, anonymous 24-hour helpline providing assistance and protection services for child trafficking victims.

The German government should establish specific shelters where all child victims of trafficking can systematically access adequate assistance and support.

Child and youth participation

Germany should take steps to ensure effective participation of children in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the existing *Action Plan for the Protection of Children and Adolescents from Sexual Violence and Exploitation*.

Germany should strengthen legal frameworks to institutionalise children's participation and raise awareness and sensitise professionals and parents to the benefits of children's participation.

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