

HUMAN TRAFFICKING - GERMANY

Germany is a source, transit, and destination country for women and girls subjected to sex trafficking. Most trafficking victims in Germany are European, primarily Bulgarians, Romanians, and Germans. Citizens of Nigeria, other parts of Africa, Asia, and the Western Hemisphere are also subjected to sex trafficking in Germany.

In 2015, approximately 1.1 million refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Germany, including approximately 67,000 unaccompanied minors. These individuals remain vulnerable to sex trafficking.

The government of Germany fully meets the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, maintained strong efforts to prosecute and convict traffickers, continued to identify and provide protections to trafficking victims, and funded various public awareness campaigns.

However, weak sentences for trafficking convictions continued to undercut efforts to hold traffickers accountable.

What we do:

- **Good Shepherd Sisters:**

In our Congregation we have a Position Paper on Justice and Peace. One of the positions is on the phenomena of human trafficking particularly on women and girls, developed by our NGO representative at the UN. Since 30 years we are an NGO with a special status ECOSOC at the UN. The Communication person in our NGO office in New York keeps collecting grassroots information from the Good Shepherd Sisters all over the world (in 74 countries) in order to be able to report and influence the discussions at the UN and give shadow reports added to governmental reports - or to correct those.

In Germany we don't have many possibilities to work in this field because of lack and age of sisters, but our networking with other countries and organizations works well.

So for example:

- **SOLWODI**

I am employed by SOLWODI, "Solidarity with Women in Distress". SOLWODI and Good Shepherd collaborates effectively.

SOLWODI is counselling and contact point for women and girls from abroad who have run into difficulties in Germany. Here we focus mainly on forced prostitution, human trafficking, forced marriages and "honour killings".

In Germany we have 18 Counselling Centres and 8 shelters for safe accommodation. We offer psychosocial counselling and support, provision of legal assistance, accompaniment to the authorities, to doctors and lawyers and to court in the case of criminal proceedings.

At the moment and throughout the recent years we deal very often with Nigerian women. Several of them Due to the Juju swear it is difficult to help them unless they really trust us. Several of them are refugees from Italy as their traffickers brought them over to this country. In case they manage to flee they often land in Germany.

I personally was very happy, when a few months ago I accompanied a young women from Romania to the court and at the end her two pimps were convicted for 10 and 8 years. Usually, disappointed we leave the court because of the court decisions to convict them for 2 to 4 years.

SOLWODI has led and cooperated in various national and European projects.

Networking is a very important aspect of our work. It helps us to find the appropriate partners for individual cases and channel efforts for our cause. That's why SOLWODI has been cooperating for years with other counselling centers, aid organizations, State and Church agencies, religious orders, women's networks and groups here in Germany and also abroad.

Our Returnee Program offers support to women wanting to return in their home countries or are facing deportation. The support aims at empowering them to live an independent life once they have returned. Besides counselling, returnees may receive financial support or the opportunity to gain job qualifications or plan and set up a small business back home.

Good Shepherd Sisters in the respective countries often can offer SOLWODI a fiduciary person to manage the money in trust, accompany the woman and give feedback to SOWODI in Germany.

In my above report I didn't refer to labour trafficking as we are not confronted to this often.