

Trafficking in Prostitution: Germany

Rahab Ministries

Fast Facts

- Germany is one of the top 10 destination countries for sex trafficking in the world.¹
- It is estimated that approximately 75% of prostitutes in Germany are foreigners.²
- In the late 1980s, most Thai women entered Germany through false marriages.³
- Between 1992 and 1993, 911 victims of trafficking were reported; 286 of the women had never worked in prostitution and were not aware that they were being trafficked for that purpose.
- In 1995, 919 cases of human trafficking were uncovered by the Federal Office of Criminal Investigation and, in 1996, 1094 cases were uncovered.⁴
- In 1997, the German police reportedly arrested 1,500 trafficked women and nearly all of them were deported.⁵
- In 1998, Bavaria's interior minister indicated in an interview that there were 1,091 known cases of Eastern European women being forced into prostitution in Germany.⁶
- In 2000, the number of women working in prostitution in Berlin was estimated to be 7,000, with most of them originating from Eastern Europe.⁷
- The German Security Service (BND) estimate the annual profits from human trafficking exceed UK£ 3 billion.⁸

The Traffic of Thai Women to Germany

- What causes Thai women to fall into the sex trade? Many Thai women have the responsibility of financially taking care of their families, and if they are uneducated, prostitution is the easiest way for them to make enough money. Many seek help from acquaintances who put them in touch with traffickers. The traffickers in Germany used the standard methods of recruitment; promises of jobs as cooks, domestic workers, nannies, dancers, waitresses, or models. Most of the victims are contacted personally or through advertisements. Many believe that they are traveling to another country for legitimate work, while others know that they are being trafficked for prostitution but their economic circumstances leave

¹ "Switzerland: Migration on Rise, Especially among Women, IOM Says," Reuters (Geneva), 2 November 2000. qtd. in The Protection Project.

² Id.

³ Id.

⁴ "Summary of Statistics on Child Prostitution and Trafficking," compiled by Ending Child Prostitution, Pornography, and Trafficking (ECPAT)-USA, April 1999.

⁵ "A Human Rights Report on Trafficking of Persons," The Protection Project, March, 2002.

⁶ Id.

⁷ Id.

⁸ Id.

- them no other options. Once they arrive in Germany, the story is almost always the same; they are smuggled across the border and their passports are confiscated. Then, they are told they owe a large sum of money for their plane ticket and documents, and that they have to work off their debt. In many cases, girls reported being raped or beaten into submission, and brothel owners often threaten to call the police or harm their families back in Thailand if they try to escape.
- In Germany, Thai prostitutes earn 40-50% of what the average German sex workers earn.
 - The traffic of Thai women has decreased since women from Eastern European countries began to pour in during the early 1990s. Women are also commonly trafficked from Turkey, Greece, South America, and the Caribbean. Many are trafficked through the easiest points of entry in Europe – Denmark or the Czech Republic – and smuggled across the border.

Prostitution and Sex Tourism in Asia

- Each year, 200,000 German men travel abroad as sex tourists, many of whom are seeking sex with girls under the age of 14.⁹
- The Philippines, Thailand, South Korea, Sri Lanka and Hong Kong are some of the primary Asian destinations for organized sex tours from Germany.¹⁰

Organizations which give counseling, information, and shelter to foreign women in Germany:¹¹

- Ban-Ying E.V. ; Koordinationsstelle Burgsdorfstr. 1; 13353 Berlin ; Tel: 030-462-7412 or 462-7512.
- AGISRA; Kasseler Str. 1a; 60486 Frankfurt; Tel 069-77 77 55
- Amnesty for Women; Stadtegruppe Hambure e.V.; louise-Schroder Str. 31; 22767 Hamburg; Tel: 040-38-47-53.
- FIZ; Landhauss Str. 62; 70190 Stuttgart I; Tel: 711-26 18 91 or 28 26 74.
- Sudostasien-informationstelle; Josephinenstrasse 71; 4630 Bochum; Tel: 02 34-50 27 48.
- Solidarity with Women in Distress (SOLWODI); 56154 Boppard Probstei Str. 2; Hirzenach; Tel: 06741-2232.
- THARA: Postfach 102409; 33524 Bielefeld; Tel: 05 21-32 54 01.
- Ecumenical Asianguop; Merianstrasse 39 HH; 60318 Frankfurt; Tel: 69-49 90 044/45.
- HYDRA, Berlin; Tel: 03 3128061.
- TAMPEP, Hamburg; Tel: 04 384 4753.

⁹ Qtd. by CATW. Child welfare experts, Emma Thomasson, “Germany Launches Offensive on Child Sex Crimes,” *Reuters*, July 29, 1997.

¹⁰ CATW – Asia Pacific, *Trafficking in Women and Prostitution in the Asia Pacific*.

¹¹ Sources given by the Foundation for Women, Bangkok, Thailand.