

**German Submission of Information on the implementation of UN-GA Resolution „Trafficking in Women and Girls“ (A/Res/77/194) in Germany for the Report of the General Secretary to the General Assembly in the Period 2022 - 2024****A. Preface**

Combating human trafficking is a major concern for the Federal Government. It pursues a comprehensive, human rights-based approach and continually develops its strategies.

The current coalition agreement of 2021 (Legislature 2021 – 2025) of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Greens and the Free Democratic Party (FDP) states that the efforts to combat human trafficking are to be intensified and highlights the importance of combating human trafficking in a variety of thematic fields, including, for example, international protection of human rights, protection against violence and combating organised crime. The years 2022 until 2024 saw major developments in the implementation of the coalition agreement.

The reporting period (01. January 2022 und 01. May 2024) was marked by the COVID-19-Pandemic as well as by Russia’s illegal full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine from the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2024. The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on the phenomenon of human trafficking posed significant challenges to the federal government, states, and civil society. The situation has further intensified since February 2022 with the Russian invasion of Ukraine: predominantly women and children from Ukraine are forced to leave the country and flee (also) to Germany. As a particularly vulnerable group, they are increasingly exposed to the danger of human trafficking. Also, the impact of technology and digitalization of human trafficking increased, especially as the COVID-19-protection measures shifted life more into the online-realm and this trend persisted after the measures expired in April 2023.

It is important to stress that the responsibilities for measures taken to combat human trafficking in Germany are distributed as set out below. The Federal Republic of Germany is divided into 16 federal states (Länder). The Länder are states with their own state constitutions, parliaments, administrative structures and responsible authorities. The exercise of government power is divided between the Federal Government and the Länder by the provisions of the German constitution – the Basic Law (GG). With regard to human trafficking, the Länder have far-reaching responsibilities. For example, it should be noted that as a general rule (i.e. apart from exceptions) the criminal prosecution authorities in the individual Länder are responsible for the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking. As a general rule, the Länder are also responsible for victim support.

**B. Specific information requested****I. Measures to address trafficking in women and girls, as per resolution A/RES/77/194, including on efforts to prevent and address the root causes that lead to all forms of exploitation of women and girls including through addressing demand.**

In the reporting period it was vital for us to strengthen our efforts in combating and preventing human trafficking, with a strong emphasis on trafficking in women and girls, especially by enhancing

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the data and information we have on the phenomenon (e.g. the independent Reporting Mechanism) as well as by bundling and directing the measures Germany already has in place and plans to put in place (e.g. the National Action Plan). These measures are part of the above-mentioned coalition agreement.

As of November 1, 2022, an independent National Reporting Mechanism on human trafficking began its work at the German Institute for Human Rights (DIMR). The reporting body, in accordance with the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, addresses all forms of human trafficking, whether for sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, exploitation of criminal acts, organ trafficking, begging, or child trafficking. Its task is to collect and analyse data on human trafficking, evaluate existing measures against human trafficking in Germany based on this data, develop recommendations for action, and contribute to the effective implementation of international standards. Each year, it will examine priority topics and publish the results of its work in report form every two years.

In July 2023 the National Reporting Mechanism published a [report](#) (German) on the data situation on THB in Germany. The work of the reporting body will be initially financed for a period of four years from funds provided by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs. The federal government aims to legally anchor the reporting body before the end of the current legislative period in Autumn 2025.

The coalition agreement also provides for the development of a National Action Plan against human trafficking (for sexual exploitation). There is agreement within the Federal Government that the **National Action Plan against human trafficking (NAP MH)** should in principle deal with all forms of human trafficking, i.e. including sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, the exploitation of criminal acts, organ trafficking, begging and child trafficking. The NAP MH is intended to optimise the structured planning and efficient bundling of the Federal Government's measures to prevent and combat human trafficking and to protect its victims. In order for the NAP MH to have the greatest possible impact, it is to be developed by all federal ministries concerned and in close dialogue with the Länder and civil society.

In autumn 2023, the BMFSFJ, acting in coordination for the federal ministries involved in combatting THB, completed an initial written consultation of civil society. Umbrella organisations, specialist organisations and academics were invited to comment and share their ideas. With a total of 20 submissions, the government received well-founded and therefore highly valuable contributions. It is the declared aim of the entire Federal Government that the NAP MH will be adopted within this legislative period.

In addition to the NAP against THB, the BMAS is developing a NAP against Labour Exploitation and Forced Labour. This NAP follows a so-called labour approach and addresses labour exploitation and forced labour as phenomena of the labour market and a product of structural vulnerability. It aims to improve the general conditions on the labour market and focuses on the structural causes and risk factors that contribute to the emergence of exploitative employment relationships and forced labour.

The two NAPs, which each address different areas of action, are intended to complement each other in their measures. The areas of victim protection and criminal prosecution for all forms of exploitation will be bundled in the NAP against human trafficking.

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The special role of data collection and analysis in combating human trafficking was also highlighted during the reporting period with the publication of the 3rd and [4th Report](#) on Data Collection in the field of Human Trafficking and Exploitation in Germany (in October 2022 and 2023 for the years 2021 and 2022) by the German NGO Network against Trafficking in Human Beings (KOK), funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ). These reports include analyses of the KOK data tool, which contains over 700 cases (over 600 in the 3rd Report) of human trafficking and exploitation registered in specialized advisory centres. The reports emphasize the important role of data from civil society organizations in documenting human trafficking in Germany, as the national situation report "Human Trafficking and Exploitation" only reflects law enforcement investigations that have been concluded. This allows for a more comprehensive description of the phenomenon and crime area from various perspectives.

Since 2016 the use of services of victims of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation has been criminalized in section 232a (6) of the Criminal Code. This section has been amended in August 2021 (in force since October 2021) so that already the reckless failure to recognize the victim's situation suffices for criminal liability. Once the amendments to the EU anti-trafficking directive enter into force, Germany will review its criminal provisions on trafficking. In particular, it will criminalize the use of services also for all other forms of exploitation included in the directive, where the user of the services knows that the person providing the service is a victim.

Prostitution is regulated by the 2017 Prostitute Protection Act (ProstSchG), which aims to strengthen the sexual self-determination rights of persons engaged in prostitution, and combat crimes such as trafficking in human beings, violence, exploitation of persons engaged in prostitution and pimping. Germany is currently evaluating the ProstSchG. The evaluation started on 1 July 2022 and will end with a report to the German Bundestag on 1 July 2025 the latest.

In light of EURO 2024 in Germany, intensified preventive measures are being taken to combat forced prostitution. This includes strengthening the German NGO Network against Trafficking in Human Beings (KOK) and specialized counseling centers for prostitutes (Project NetSWork). These measures encompass conducting awareness campaigns, including in social networks. Additionally, enhanced cooperation between all relevant actors, especially the police and counseling centers is planned.

In June 2021, the German Parliament adopted the Act on Corporate Due Diligence in Supply Chains (LkSG) which will enter into force in 2023 to initially cover companies with 3,000 or more employees. It places companies under the obligation to establish a risk management system to identify, prevent or minimise the risks of human rights violations and violations of certain environmental regulations. The Act sets out the necessary preventive and remedial measures, makes complaint procedures mandatory and requires regular reports. The due diligence obligations include the prohibition of child labour and apply to the entire supply chain. The law establishes powerful regulatory oversight and enforcement. This means that an enterprise's responsibility no longer ends at its own factory gate but applies along the entire supply chain. The LkSG contains an exhaustive list of eleven internationally recognised human rights conventions and three internationally recognised environmental agreements. The legal interests protected in those conventions are used to derive behavioural requirements or prohibitions for corporate action in order to prevent a violation of protected legal positions. These include, in particular, the prohibition of child labour, slavery and

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forced labour, the disregard of occupational safety and health obligations, withholding an adequate wage, the disregard of the right to form trade unions or employee representation bodies, the denial of access to food and water as well as the unlawful taking of land and livelihoods. If enterprises fail to comply with their legal obligations, administrative fines may be imposed. These can amount to up to EUR 8 million or up to 2% of annual global turnover. The fines system based on turnover applies only to enterprises with an annual turnover of more than EUR 400 million. Moreover, if an administrative fine is imposed above a certain minimum level, enterprises may be excluded from the award of public contracts. An authority is to be equipped with effective enforcement instruments to monitor an enterprise's supply chain management. The competent authority, the Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (BAFA), has far-reaching supervisory powers. It can, for example, enter business premises, demand information and inspect documents as well as demanding that enterprises take concrete action to fulfil their obligations and enforce this by imposing financial penalties. Additionally, in future, NGOs and trade unions can represent persons affected by a violation of certain rights in their own name before German courts.

At international level, the Federal Government is a partner of the Alliance 8.7, which aims at eradicating forced labour, ending modern slavery and human trafficking, and securing the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour. In addition, sustainable supply chains have been put on the agenda of G7 (in particular for the 2022 German Presidency) and G20.

## **II. Impacts of conflict, crisis, COVID, climate change or other emergency contexts on the trafficking of women and girls and specific measures undertaken to address these risk factors.**

### **Impact of the Russian full-scale attack on Ukraine in February 2022**

In the wake of the Russian war of aggression, large numbers of persons fleeing Ukraine arrived in various European countries, including Germany, which has registered over one million arrivals from Ukraine. As predominantly women and children arrived in Germany, a risk of exploitation and trafficking was and remains imminent.

Federal Ministries, Länder and civil society have been in close contact through the various working groups (Federal-Länder Working Group on THB, Federal-Länder Working Group Against Human Trafficking for Labour Exploitation, National Council against Sexual Violence Committed against Children and Adolescents), have shared relevant information and have developed a broad range of prevention and protection measures for those fleeing Ukraine.

To name only a few examples: The Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (BMI), the Federal Police (BPOL) and the Federal Criminal Office (BKA) published a range of information and warnings to protect refugees from the dangers of human trafficking. Civil society organisations (especially the German NGO Network against Human Trafficking - KOK - and the Service Centre against Labour Exploitation, Forder Labour and Human Trafficking – Service Centre) also swiftly produced information material on the risks of human trafficking and the support services available in Germany which were disseminated online as well as at central points of arrival, including train stations. The services provided by the national helpline “Violence Against Women” were extended by support offers with interpretation in Ukrainian. The BMI set up a help portal for the Federal Government offering information in Ukrainian, Russian, English and German and assistance for all people fleeing from Ukraine: “Germany4Ukraine”. The website contains information on accommodation with links

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to online providers that help refugees find private accommodation. Tens of thousands have successfully found accommodation to date. Information on medical care, mobility, entry, residence and return, labour and social affairs, education and research are also covered. The aim of the website is to be the first online point of contact for a good start in Germany. The website is available as an app which can be downloaded free of charge and is updated with all relevant information on a regular basis. Various telecom operators agreed to automatically send text messages to draw refugees' attention to "Germany4Ukraine". In order to ensure early identification and effective prevention, long-standing cooperation between civil society organisations, the BPOL, the Unit for Financial Control of Undeclared Work (FKS) and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) have been intensified. To address safety concerns related to private housing arrangements for refugees, the BMI entered into a cooperation agreement with #Unterkunft-Ukraine and the non-profit organization Airbnb.org. While the primary purpose of the agreement is to provide accommodation for arrivals from Ukraine, it includes verification of the identity of the host.

From August-December 2022, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) provided funding for a special project by the KOK aimed at ensuring continued prevention and protection for refugees from Ukraine. The KOK produced various best-practice publications and recommendations for policymakers and practitioners and will engage in intensified measures to sensitise volunteers working with refugees. The information can be retrieved [here](#) (German), the extensive KOK-Report analysing und evaluating measures to raise awareness and prevent trafficking in the context of the Ukraine War is also available on [English](#).

The challenges linked to the goal of ensuring prevention and protection from human trafficking for persons fleeing the Ukraine is of major concern for all actors involved.

Since the beginning of the crisis, Germany has been monitoring the human trafficking situation with regard to Ukraine. Since April 2022, 34 suspected cases have been reported to the BKA. In two cases (one for sexual exploitation and one for labour exploitation) the allegations were substantiated through a criminal investigation. In 21 cases the investigation was closed for lack of evidence and another case was dismissed by the prosecutor. In the remaining 10 cases (four for labour exploitation, three for sexual exploitation, two for forced criminality and one for forced prostitution) the investigation was ongoing at the time of adoption of this report. The German authorities continue to closely observe developments in the situation both within Germany and in an international context.

The relatively low number of cases of forced prostitution and labour exploitation that have come to light is likely due, among other things, to the comprehensive awareness-raising and prevention measures at the beginning of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the residence and labour law regulations for refugees from Ukraine in Germany. The authorities responsible for combating human trafficking and exploitation have been sensitized accordingly.

The swift and coordinated response was possible because Germany could rely on an established and trusted cooperation between actors on all levels. The vital role of the civil society has to be highlighted. Furthermore, the vulnerability of the people fleeing was in all likelihood effectively reduced by granting them a secure, legal stay in Germany and integration into the social system and labour market with minimal bureaucratic efforts from the beginning of the crisis. In this regard the activation of the temporary protection directive by the EU and the subsequent implementation by Germany was fundamental.

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The phenomenon continues to be prioritised in national and international cooperation. Germany, particularly through the EU Network of National Rapporteurs and equivalent mechanisms (NREM), has actively engaged with the EU Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (ATC), and the OSCE with its Special Representative on Trafficking in Human Beings, for regular exchanges, including with Ukraine and its neighbouring countries, and will continue to utilize these networks intensively.

Measures taken will have a long-term impact on the fight against trafficking in human beings. Germany is closely involved in this exchange at the European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats (EMPACT). Human trafficking to the detriment of Ukrainian nationals is being treated with high sensitivity in the projects PAYDAY and THB LIBERI (please confer to B.III for more information). The topic is on the agenda of various workshops organised for the police and NGOs. In addition, the BKA together with 20 national police units participated in the Virtual Europol Hackathon to highlight the digital landscape of trafficking in human beings. The EMPACT Action Days Child Trafficking 2022 carried out measures in Germany to monitor the development and potential impact of the Ukrainian refugee crisis on the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings. However, the controls did not reveal any evidence of trafficking.

It remains to be seen, how the figures of trafficking in persons and exploitation will develop and how vulnerabilities will change over time, as the war continues and the Ukrainian-refugees will stay in the country for longer.

The protection of the Ukrainian-refugees and their special context and vulnerabilities will stay a priority for Germany.

### **Impact of the COVID-19-Pandemic**

In 2020 and 2021 prostitution establishments were closed for extended periods of time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, prostitution shifted into private homes (apartment prostitution) and online, decreasing the chances of detection of abusive situations involving Trafficking in Persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced prostitution. The increase of hotel and apartment prostitution and simultaneously the increase of the usage of internet is ongoing. The usage of the internet is no longer limited to advertising victims of THB but also includes the process of recruitment and later coercion and pressure on victims. This observation strengthens our approach that banning prostitution or criminalizing the customer does not prevent trafficking, sexual exploitation and forced prostitution but makes persons engaged in prostitution more vulnerable.

### **III. Impacts of technology and digitalization of the trafficking of women and girls and specific measures undertaken to address these risk factors.**

Technology and digitalization have a major impact on trafficking in human beings. Perpetrators are adjusting their business models to the 'new normal' created by the pandemic, especially through the abuse of modern communication technologies. Both the recruitment and the exploitation itself as well as the pressure of the perpetrators are increasingly taking place digitally. This means that there are cases of human trafficking in which the trafficked persons have not even seen the perpetrators and the exploiters in person. This can of course have a massive impact on the identification of trafficked persons and also on prosecution. This is corroborated by the Study of the German NGO Network against Trafficking in Human Beings (KOK), funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizen, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) „[Trafficking in Human Beings 2.0 - Digitalisation of](#)



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[Trafficking in Human Beings in Germany: Developments and Courses of Action](#)". Children and juveniles are especially vulnerable. Often, perpetrators take advantage of the naivety, lack of life experience, level of education and low level of development of this group of young victims to deceive them by cunning and lure them into exploitative situations. For this reason, potential minor and juvenile victims must be protected from exploitation by taking special suppressive and preventive measures on an inter-agency level. In order to identify potential victims of THB, the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) used the THB LIBERI project ("Combating Human Trafficking and Exploitation of Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults in Germany and Europe") to test and provide licenses for an innovative tool for automatic research on adult services websites. The tool helps investigators significantly in identifying (young) victims of trafficking, and linking suspicious sex offers to an organised crime group (OCG). By doing this, it was possible to provide more than 60 police units in Austria and Germany with access and also support other European countries. Using this tool, it is also possible to counter the dynamic shift of prostitution into the digital sphere.

The Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (BMI) placed a focus on combating human trafficking, particularly in the online dimension and for the protection of children and adolescents during the German G7 Presidency in 2022. Throughout the year, various session formats addressed the topic. The discussion ultimately culminated in the G7 Interior Ministers Meeting in November 2022, during which the G7 partners advocated for an intensification of efforts to combat human trafficking, among other issues. A particular focus was placed on the modus operandi of "livestreaming".

Since 2018, the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) has been implementing the project "Combating Human Trafficking and Exploitation of Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults in Germany and Europe" (THB LIBERI), funded by the European Internal Security Fund (ISF). The aim of this project is to combat and prevent the exploitation of children, adolescents, and young adults by organized criminal groups sustainably, across institutions, and in close national and international cooperation. The current project period ended in 2022 and was continued in 2023 with a 3-year follow-up project. The focus areas of the follow-up project are "Human Trafficking and the Internet," "Training and Education," and "Support for Witness Acquisition." In addition to nationwide support for investigative procedures and operational measures, preventive measures and innovative approaches are also implemented. In addition to a now widely used evaluation tool in Germany, investigation aids and concepts for better combating have been developed. Furthermore, the network character of the project will be continued in the upcoming funding period to further expand the expert network at workshops with all relevant actors (especially from the police, judiciary, and specialist counselling centres) for necessary knowledge exchange.

For an innovative approach to modern training sessions for THB officers, the BKA is currently creating a scenario for Virtual Reality. This virtual scenario is meant to improve the skills of police officers who are new to the field of THB when approaching an apartment used for prostitution. Since the Covid-pandemic, apartment prostitution is on the rise, the training of THB officers aims to bring attention to this fact. The scenario will contain multiple hints on exploitation which can be found by the using trainee. As the development of the scenario is co-financed by the European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), the result will be shared with foreign counterparts.

The VR scenario and the workshops were implemented within EU-financed projects run by the BKA: THB Liberi II and by EMPACT within EMPACT THB core area 6.1 Innovation Hub.

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A digital THB scenario including a fake prostitution website and a fake client forum was developed for the European Police Academy (CEPOL). It teaches participants within the frame of a fictive THB case the usage of OSINT tools and informs about tech-facilitated THB components.

#### **IV. Measures to increase access to justice and to strengthen detection, protection of victim-survivors and prosecution of perpetrators.**

The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth (BMFSFJ) has been funding the German NGO Network against Trafficking in Human Beings (KOK) since 1999. The KOK is an association of 42 non-governmental organisations whose main and branch offices represent a total of around 50 specialist counselling centres for trafficked persons and other organisations associated with this topic (migrant projects, women's shelters, prostitutes' counselling centres). It supports its member organisations in their work, pools the expertise of these stakeholders and contributes it to federal, state and European policy, implements prevention projects and conducts research and collects data.

During the recent funding period (2022-2024) the KOK received about 550,000 € per year.

The BMFSFJ also funded the NGO ECPAT Germany to implement the National Cooperation Concept aiming at combatting child exploitation and trafficking. The concept provides guidelines for collaboration at the Länder and regional level. ECPAT Germany facilitated workshops for various stakeholders, including youth welfare, law enforcement, judiciary, counselling centres, and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, reaching 270 participants in 2023.

To address child sexual exploitation in tourism, the BMFSFJ supported ECPAT Germany in conducting awareness campaigns and training sessions. ECPAT Germany organized 12 training sessions for tourism professionals and students, along with a train-the-trainer workshop in 2023.

The funding for 2023 included 199,988 Euro; for 2024 199,947 Euro are deposited.

The Federal Criminal Office (BKA) is continuing the PAYDAY Project. The operational aim of the subproject PAYDAY, which started in January 2022, is to identify and fight OCG's that are trafficking victims for sexual exploitation, labour exploitation and forced crime into and across the EU, where suspects and/or the victims are Vietnamese.

Its objectives are:

- To develop tools and techniques to identify the victims of Vietnamese THB.
- To strengthen knowledge on the phenomenon and the facilitating criminal systems.
- To strengthen cross border cooperation on the topic, including establishing cooperation with Vietnam.

Training of governments officials played an important role as well.

In 2023, the **Federal Criminal Police Office** (BKA) organized two training courses, one on labour exploitation (March 2023) and the other on sexual exploitation (November 2023). Approximately 80 police officers from the federal states, federal police, and the Unit for Financial Control of Undeclared Work (FKS) participated in these trainings.



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In July 2023, the nationwide expert conference "Human Trafficking/Sexual Exploitation" took place in Wiesbaden. Around 100 participants from across the country attended, mainly consisting of officers working in the field of combating human trafficking and red-light district crime. The goals of the conference were to exchange knowledge on the phenomenon of human trafficking (sexual exploitation), national and international cooperation, project work such as THB Liberi, EMPACT, etc., as well as to develop strategies for combating human trafficking and propose solutions for challenges in investigation management and presenting outstanding cases. Immediately following this conference was the officer conference "Human Trafficking for the Purpose of Exploitation through Employment, Forced Labour, and Exploitation of Labour." Here too, the aim was to exchange expertise with a focus on the phenomenon of labour exploitation.

Additionally, various specialized and cross-actor expert workshops were organized by the BKA. For example, in May 2022, the second multidisciplinary Police-Justice Workshop took place as part of the EU project "THB LIBERI - Combating Human Trafficking and Exploitation to the Detriment of Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults in Germany and Europe," funded by the Internal Security Fund (ISF). The workshop included approximately 40 participants from judicial authorities and police departments. The focus of the professional exchange was on current challenges in cooperation between the judiciary and police to enable improved collaboration.

These conferences, training courses, and workshops were financed by funds from the BKA and the federal states/Länder.

In June 2023, the BKA, in cooperation with the KOK, organized a cooperation workshop on the theme "Combating Human Trafficking, Protecting Victims - Collaboration between Federal and State Police and Specialized Counselling Centres" at the BMFSFJ in Berlin. The workshop brought together approximately 50 representatives from specialized counselling centres for victims of human trafficking and police authorities. Participants had the opportunity to exchange ideas, learn more about each other's responsibilities and working methods, and identify interfaces. This facilitated further agreements regarding continued cooperation at the regional level, among other outcomes.

In the period of reporting the coordinators for victim protection at the main customs offices (represented by two persons per main customs office), which were designated in 2019, were trained twice. This included an online-workshop (due to the corona pandemic) in May 2021 and additional two days-workshops in person in May and July 2022. To amplify and spread the knowledge an exchange of experiences for the coordinators for victim protection took place in 2023. Furthermore, a part of the remaining employees of the Financial control of undeclared work (FKS) was trained in online courses in 2023. To carry out the trainings the General Customs Authority works together closely with the Service Centre against Labour Exploitation, Forced Labour and Trafficking in Human Beings. This institution also started to develop an online training tool in cooperation with the General Customs Authority in year 2023. The online training tool shall be made available to all relevant officials of the FKS.

The responsibility for the further training of **judges and prosecutors** lies with the federal states. Therefore, the federal government does not offer its own training on human trafficking in the field of justice. However, the German Judicial Academy, which is also funded with federal resources, offers training for judges and prosecutors that also address human trafficking, such as victim protection. These courses are regularly well attended.

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On 24 April 2023, the Service Centre against Labour Exploitation, Forced Labour and Trafficking in Human Beings (Service Centre) funded by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) held its fifth annual meeting for prosecutors who are regularly dealing with criminal cases including labour exploitation, forced labour and human trafficking. The goal of the meeting and network is to allow for exchange on structural issues, current cases and to benefit from each other's relevant experience.

Also, the violence against women support helpline, which gives advices on all forms of violence and is open for all victim-survivors of trafficking, has been in existence for more than ten years. Counselling is anonymous, free of charge, barrier-free, round-the-clock and in 18 foreign languages - by phone, email and instant chat. Every caller who is or has been threatened or affected by violence or trafficking receives individual advice from a qualified female specialist. Victims of violence are supported in reporting what they have experienced and in contacting suitable local support services.

Of the 42,798 consultations documented by the help hotline in 2023 (with extended documentation), 136 consultations could be assigned to the area of trafficking. In the first quarter of 2024, 27 consultations with a focus on trafficking were documented. In 2022, 120 of 39,484 counselling sessions were assigned to the area of trafficking.

Additional funds are to be made available for the help hotline's public relations activities in order to better reach those affected by human trafficking.

Furthermore, the Third evaluation round of the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings conducted by the Councils Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) focused on access to justice and effective remedies for trafficking in human beings. In that relation Germany points out to the extensive German [Reply](#) on GRETA's questionnaire.

## **V. Information on multi-sectoral services for victim-survivors of trafficking including any available data on access to such services**

The Services are in general multi-sectoral, meaning that different actors usually work together and that a variety of issues and needs of the victim are regarded. Coordination and cooperation play a major role in combating human trafficking as well as protecting and supporting its victims.

For example, cooperation between specialised counselling centres and the police is usually laid down in so-called cooperation agreements. There is no national referral mechanism in Germany yet, but the cooperation agreements can be seen as a similar mechanism. These cooperation agreements were created on the model of the "Cooperation scheme for cooperation between specialised counselling centres and police for the protection of victims of trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation", which was developed in 1997, also with input from the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) at national level and reviewed in 2008. 13 out of 16 Länder now have such cooperation initiatives, in form of agreements, decrees or contracts. Many of them now include new cooperation partners and/or have seen their content extended since their initial development. The cooperation schemes are aimed at adults. They still do not automatically include all forms of exploitation or do not always include all relevant stakeholders working across all forms of exploitation. Most existing agreements cover at least trafficking in human beings for the purpose of

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sexual exploitation, some include labour exploitation or generally refer to trafficking in human beings without mentioning specific forms.

On 22 July 2022, the Federal Police (BPOL) and the German NGO Network against Human Trafficking (KOK) concluded a cooperation agreement in order to be able to work together more effectively in cases of human trafficking and exploitation at the regional and local level. The agreement describes in which cases and in what way the BPOL and the specialised counselling centres cooperate in cases of suspected human trafficking. The core objectives of the agreement are to improve the approach to trafficked persons and to intensify cooperation between the counselling centres and the BPOL.

The variety of trainings listed under B.IV can be seen as emblematic of the coordination and cooperation and the variety of multi-sectoral services.