German contribution

**Looking back, looking forward – contribution to the report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material**

1. Context, awareness and attitudes underpinning the sale and sexual exploitation of children
* With the ratification of the European Council Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, the Federal Government of Germany agreed to introduce targeted coordination and cooperation measures against human trafficking in children. Together with experts and specialist practitioners, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) and ECPAT Deutschland (German Chapter of the ECPAT International Network Ending Sexual Exploitation of Children) have developed and published (October 2018) the Federal Cooperation Concept “Protection and help in cases of trafficking in and exploitation of children” (*Bundeskooperationskonzept Schutz und Hilfen bei Handel mit und Ausbeutung von Kindern*), a set of recommendations for coordinated, trust-based and child-oriented cooperation between the child welfare services, the police, specialised counselling centres and other stakeholders to identify and protect victims of child trafficking. The BMFSFJ commissioned ECPAT Germany for the period 2019-2021 to support stakeholders on the federal level (*Bundesländer*) with the implementation of the Cooperation Concept. Due to the federal system, the concept needs to be adapted to the respective provisions and structures in the individual state.
* In 2019, the Terminology Guidelines for the protection of children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse were adopted into German language in consultation with state agencies, service providers and civil society organizations led by ECPAT Deutschland. Inspired by the 2016 international Terminology Guidelines, the German adaptation aims to influence attitudes towards child victims of sexual offences, to protect their dignity and enhance the recognition of the child as a rights holder. The BMFSFJ funded the translation and adaptation of the Guidelines into German, as well as the production of new promotion material (micro site, video with experts). The Guidelines and further material are going to be launched by ECPAT Deutschland in late 2019.
1. Risk factors, root causes and demand for the sale and sexual exploitation of children
* The Prevention Network “*Kein Täter werden*” (Meaning: Don’t offend) offers a free and confidential treatment option at all of its sites for people seeking therapeutic help with regard to their sexual preference for children and/or early adolescents. In the context of the therapy, the affected persons receive support so as to prevent sexual offending in the form of both direct contact and indirectly via the consumption or production of child sexual abuse images on the internet. The project began in Berlin in 2005 and now encompasses 12 sites all over Germany, with common quality standards. In 2016, law reform enabled free of-charge participation in the therapy, which is covered by public health insurance. For more information, please visit: [www.dont-offend.org](http://www.dont-offend.org).
* The BMFSFJ has funded the extension of the work for children and adolescents though the project “Primary Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse by Juveniles” from 2014 to 2017, run in Berlin only by the Institute of Sexology and Sexual Medicine at the Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin. More information can be found at: [www.just-dreaming-of-them.org](http://www.just-dreaming-of-them.org).
* As many requests reached the above-mentioned Prevention Network from abroad which could not be followed up, its therapists developed an Online-Self-Management tool for people who feel attracted to children and early adolescents and do not have the chance to get into real contact with therapists. “Troubled Desire” is available in five languages. Within 18 months, 3.690 users from 78 countries started an online session (note: advertising only in Germany and India). For more information, please visit: <https://troubled-desire.com/en>.
* The program is closing a protection gap, as preventive therapy for potential perpetrators is complementing prevention measures targeting children, parents and professionals working with and for them.

4. The overarching legal-normative framework, commitment and institutional capacity

* Within the planned changes to the laws on adoption, the BMFSFJ plans the following amendments to avoid risks of a private adoption (=unaccompanied international adoption), among others regarding the sale of children:
* Private adoptions are prohibited.
* All international adoptions have to be accompanied by a German adoption agency for international adoptions. The adoption agency is supposed to protect the interests of the children, the biological parents and the prospective adoptive parents.
* The law on adoption will contain a number of measures intended to safeguard against abduction, sale and trafficking of children. Those safeguards are based on the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Co-Operation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption (Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption). The German adoption agency has to make sure that the safeguards are maintained throughout the whole adoption process.

5. New and innovative strategies to effectively prevent and protect children from sale and sexual exploitation

* Regarding the protection of children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism, the multi-country child protection campaign “Don’t Look Away!” is a positive example that merits to be sustained. It aims to prevent the sexual exploitation of children in the context of travel and tourism and facilitate the reporting of cases and suspicions at the platform <http://dontlookaway.report/?lang=en>.