

Trafficking in Human Beings and the 2006 World Cup in Germany

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Prior to the World Cup in Germany in 2006, there was considerable international concern that this event would contribute to a sharp increase in trafficking for sexual exploitation.
- Media reports suggested that prostitution would increase and that up to 40,000 women might be trafficked.
- This report investigates whether the number of victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation increased during the World Cup 2006 in Germany.
- The study also examines the measures taken by the authorities and the NGO community in Germany before and during the World Cup.
- The study was conducted between June and September 2006. Research included a systematic review of media and statistical sources, an analysis of previous large-scale events and their impact on trafficking, and in-depth interviews with representatives of key agencies responsible for combating human trafficking in Germany.
- Sixteen in-depth interviews were conducted in total with six experts from the relevant departments of German *Länder* Criminal Police Offices or the City Police Offices of selected World Cup cities, and ten in-depth expert interviews with civil society organizations (street work and assistance to victims of trafficking).
- In addition to the analysis of the situation in Germany, information on trends in connection with the World Cup was gathered in cooperation with IOM missions.

Main Findings

- All data, information and expert statements that are available to date strongly indicate that an increase in human trafficking did not occur either during or after the World Cup.
- It is concluded that the estimate of 40,000 women expected to be trafficked was unfounded and unrealistic. The current number of known victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Germany is around 1,000 persons per year. Even if it is assumed that only one in ten cases of trafficking is discovered, the 40,000 figure is still unrealistically high.
- The German authorities and NGOs had started their planning as far back as the summer/autumn of 2005. However, the international attention received encouraged and fortified these efforts.
- It is likely that the German experience offers lessons to other countries organizing large-scale sporting events. Few previous studies have looked at the impact of high-profile sporting events on human trafficking. This study

also suggests ways to enhance efforts to combat human trafficking at future large-scale sporting events, based on Germany's experience.

- Prevention campaigns and increased law enforcement efforts during the World Cup may have reduced the risk of trafficking.
- It is also possible that the characteristics of the fan-base at the 2006 World Cup had an impact on the demand for sexual services. Many of the fans were women or families with children. Further research is needed to explore any such link.
- Moreover, trafficking in human beings is a process that requires prior logistics and investment on the part of the traffickers – possibly a short and one-time event like the World Cup in Germany was not perceived as sufficiently profitable for the traffickers in this respect.
- Most experts called for better coordination of campaigns and activities between NGOs and recommended a single, comprehensive and professionally organized campaign covering different target groups and launched with a view to sustainability.

1. INTRODUCTION

The general objective of this pilot research project is to investigate whether there is any evidence to suggest that the number of victims of trafficking (VoT) for sexual exploitation increased during the 2006 World Cup in Germany. Research findings are intended to help formulate recommendations to combat trafficking during similar major events, including Olympic Games and World Cups, in the future and to provide an important tool for policymakers and relevant authorities and NGOs.

1.1 Background

Trafficking in persons is a serious human rights violation and one of the worst criminal offences facing society. The 2006 US Department of State Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report¹ estimates that between 600,000 and 800,000 persons are trafficked across international borders each year.² Many victims are women and children trafficked for sexual exploitation. Whilst research on human trafficking for sexual exploitation has broadened available knowledge and facilitated the understanding regarding the scale, routes, recruitment methods and human rights abuses in a range of locations (Kelly, 2001: 3), there are many areas where further research is needed; in particular, there is a lack of credible empirical data examining the possible links between trafficking for sexual exploitation and major events, including sporting events.

Commentators have sought to highlight the importance of tackling human trafficking in relation to major events; however, in an attempt to adequately assess the extent of any such links, it is necessary to collate, analyse and evaluate accurate and verifiable data regarding any possible increase in trafficking during such major events. The 2006 World Cup presents such an opportunity. From 9 June to 9 July 2006, Germany held the 18th FIFA World Cup and hosted 32 participating nations and thousands of football fans from around the world. Initial commentaries surrounding the sporting event suggested that the 2006 World Cup could lead to a potential increase in the number of foreign prostitutes entering Germany, many of whom, it was feared, would have been trafficked to meet the anticipated demand for sexual services during the event.

Germany is a source, transit and destination country for men, women and children trafficked for the purpose of sexual and non-sexual exploitation. Victims are primarily from central and eastern Europe and, to a lesser extent, from Asia, Africa and America.³ The 2006 TIP report highlights that the 2006 World Cup generated widespread concern over a potential increase in trafficking for sexual exploitation to

Germany for the duration of the championship. Given the sheer size of the event, the report cautioned that the potential for increased human trafficking surrounding the games was a realistic concern.

1.2 Methodology

Research Questions:

Did the World Cup lead to an increase in trafficking in human beings (THB)?⁴

- What effect did the increased focus on the phenomenon by police, authorities and civil society have?
- Can any possible trends regarding recruitment, transport and sale of VoTs be distinguished?
- Can any possible trends regarding the profile of VoTs and the potential customers be distinguished?
- What main activities were taken to counter trafficking and what were the possible visible gaps?

Aim:

The aim of this project was to conduct a pilot study aimed at gathering reliable and verifiable data concerning potential increases in trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation to Germany during the 2006 World Cup. The research findings and recommendations are intended to provide information for policymakers, relevant authorities and NGOs planning similar events in the future.

Methodology:

To enable the analysis of any potential increase in human trafficking, the project was implemented over a period of four months and involved the cooperation of a researcher in Germany, IOM Headquarters in Geneva and IOM missions in selected countries of origin.

Preparation phase:

Desktop Research: Similar projects previously undertaken in other countries were analysed. A virtual expert advisory group was created, composed of individuals at IOM HQ, in Germany and at IOM Kiev. This expert group developed the research parameters and devised the necessary questions and strategy to be used in the data collection phase.

Data collection:

The desktop research provided a summary of discussions in Germany and abroad regarding the possible effects of the World Cup event on THB, including predictions

of the expected numbers of foreign prostitutes and THB victims. The research included the monitoring of press coverage (more than 300 relevant German online articles published between May and July 2006), press releases and reports before and during the World Cup, and included the monitoring of operations, activities and statements.

A questionnaire was developed in the first phase of the study in order to streamline and harmonize the collection of information during the expert interviews. The questions asked included the experts' assessment of the situation before the World Cup; extra activities implemented by their respective institution/organization undertaken to counter THB before and during the World Cup; their assessment of the situation regarding THB during the World Cup and possible reasons for the observed situation; their assessment of counter-trafficking activities in Germany during the World Cup at large; support received from politicians, authorities and sports officials; the role of the media; the expected impact of the World Cup on their future work, and their recommendations regarding future major events.

In-depth interviews were conducted with six experts from the relevant departments of German *Länder* Criminal Police Offices or the City Police Offices of selected World Cup cities. The Federal Criminal Police Office was also contacted and responded with a written statement. Ten in-depth expert interviews plus one written response to the questionnaire were obtained from civil society organizations (street workers and assistance to victims of THB), in all representing 23 counselling centres throughout Germany (see map in Annex).

In addition to the analysis of the situation in Germany, information on trends in connection with the World Cup was gathered in cooperation with IOM missions in important countries of origin and transit for THB to Germany, i.e., Ukraine, Belarus, Romania, the Czech Republic, Moldova and Albania.