Modern slavery in Germany

Global Slavery Index 2023
Country Snapshot

Figure 1. Prevalence of modern slavery across Europe and Central Asia

KEY STATS

Population (2021) 83,783,945
GDP per capita, PPP (Current Intl $) $54,845

0.6

PREVALENCE OF MODERN SLAVERY per 1,000 people

47,000

NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING IN MODERN SLAVERY

11/100

VULNERABILITY TO MODERN SLAVERY

62/100

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO MODERN SLAVERY

The scale of modern slavery

According to the Global Slavery Index 2023, an estimated 0.6 in every thousand people were in modern slavery in Germany at any point in 2021. In other words, 47,000 people experienced forced labour or forced marriage in Germany in 2021. Germany ranks 158th globally and 45th within Europe and Central Asia.

Figure 2. Estimated number of people in modern slavery across Europe and Central Asia
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Vulnerability to modern slavery
How vulnerable a country’s people are to modern slavery is dependent on a range of factors which reflect the strength of governance, access to basic needs, the level of inequality, disenfranchised groups, and effects of conflict. On a scale of 0 to 100, with 100 being the highest vulnerability to modern slavery, Germany is rated as 11 and has below average vulnerability for the region. Vulnerability is highest in terms of effects of conflict.

Figure 3.
Vulnerability of Germany to modern slavery by dimension of vulnerability, compared to the regional average

Government response to modern slavery
The government of Germany scored 62 out of 100 in their response to modern slavery. This places the government’s response above the average regional response. Of the five areas of response assessed (milestones), the government has taken most action on effective criminal justice mechanisms and the least action on addressing risk in government and business supply chains.

Figure 4.
Response of the government of Germany to modern slavery by government response milestone, compared with the regional average

Importing risk of modern slavery
Germany imported US $44 billion worth of goods at-risk of modern slavery. This includes:

- US$20.5 billion in electronics
- US$18.4 billion in garments
- US$2.4 billion in solar panels
- US$1.6 billion in textiles
- US$1.1 billion in coffee

Priority Recommendations for the government of Germany:
1. Criminalise commercial sexual exploitation of children in line with international conventions.
2. Ensure support services are available for all victims of modern slavery, regardless of gender, age, nationality, or sexuality.
3. Remove laws or policies that prevent or make it difficult for workers to leave abusive employers without risking loss of their visa, deportation, and/or loss of security deposits.