

Germany To Introduce Second Fund For Doping Victims

The German government has given its consent for the creation of a second fund for paying compensation to athletes from the former East Germany who suffered health damages because of a secretive [state-supported doping program](#).

The [use of performance enhancing drugs](#) until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 assisted East Germany to win hundreds of medals at the Winter and the Summer Olympic Games amid fierce Cold War competition with West Germany. It is widely believed that as many as 8000-9000 athletes were on the secretive state-supported doping program from 1972-1989 and an overwhelming majority had no knowledge.

The embrace of doping by the former East Germany triggered a dramatic improvement in results with the nation doubling its gold medal tally from one Olympics to the next. Despite a boycott of the 1984 Los Angeles Games, East Germany won 384 medals in the Olympic Games from 1972 to 1988 and was second in the medals table in three of the four Games in which it took part.

In the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympics, East Germany triumphed with an impressive 40 gold medals. The performance of German swimming team was described by U.S. swimmer Wendy Boglioli as staggering. Boglioli remarked at that time they were very strong women, they were very fast and added we thought they were machines. The swimmer had remarked here we were, four of America's best athletes ever put together on a team, and every single day the East German women were winning every, every event while referring to the East Germany's swim team alone won 11 of 13 swim events, an unprecedented feat.

It was later revealed that East Germany's elite sports federation that was headed by Manfred Ewald and monitored by the Ministry of State Security (known as Stasi) used a deceptive master plan for attaining international prestige through success in sports. Girls as young as 12 years were recruited from across the country and were regularly administered with [untested steroids](#) and male hormones as part of their training.

Many of the former athletes are now seriously ill and suffer from severe health complications such as circulation and spinal problems, tumors, heart defects, infertility, depression, and bulimia while many of them have died and others are left with no option but to see what health problems their children have inherited.

The German government remarked on Wednesday it had approved the drafting of a law for a one-off payment of 10,500 euros (\$11,500) per eligible doping victim. The government added it expected many times more cases than the 194 beneficiaries of the first scheme in 2002. The German government paid out a similar amount to 194 athletes in 2002 but many athletes did not come forward, with many witnessing the effects of doping on their health only much later.

In a statement, German Interior Minister Thomas De Maiziere said today we take a step closer to our target of a renewal of the fund for GDR (East German) doping victims. Maiziere added given the difficult fate and bad health of many of the GDR doping victims speed is of essence.