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COUNTRY REPORT GERMANY

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SUNIA GEEL – Prevent and combat violence
against children, young people and women and to
protect victims and groups at risk

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**State of the Art Report
Literature Review
Bibliography**

Germany

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Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence in Germany - Introduction



“All over the world, violence in families presents a huge social problem. After children it is mainly women who are the victims, and the violence often remains unpunished. In Germany, one in four women suffer domestic violence at least once in their life, in Ethiopia almost 50 per cent of all women are affected. In Uganda 70 per cent of all men regard wife battering as a legitimate means of resolving conflicts; in Russia, according to official statements, 17,000 women die as a result of domestic violence every year—not to mention the unauthorised figures. Estimates suggest that world-wide more women die in their own home than because of wars and civil wars. While the discussions about security threats currently focus on terrorism as the major danger to justify spending and measures for combating it, women's and children's major enemies who prevent them from leading a safe life can be found within their own homes! Domestic violence is one of the most widespread violations of human rights and the consequence of structural power asymmetries in intimate relationships and families. All over the world it is either tolerated with reference to the culturally or religiously legitimised relationship between generations and sexes or played down as a minor offence, though never sufficiently prosecuted.”¹

Women in Germany are the largest group of victims of domestic violence, followed by children, senior citizens (of both sexes) and men as victims of domestic violence.² As many as 46,000 German women are estimated to spend some time at women's refuges every year because of domestic violence.³

From the point of view of welfare, migrants' and social service associations, domestic violence is disastrous because not only does it impede or even disrupt any progress in development, but it generally enhances violent societal dispositions and thus actively contributes to a culture of violence and the acceptance of unequal relationship patterns. Violence impedes integration and social inclusion. Dramatic experiences of powerlessness like this have grave influences on the self-esteem of the women affected and thereby reduce their capability of being powerful members of a powerful civil society which stands up and fights for its rights. The damage done by violence additionally impairs health, integration, education and the ability to work and thus contributes to poverty in the families affected.⁴

Domestic violence is still one of the major obstacles on the way to human well-being and safety. This has been proved by national and international studies as, for example, those published by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2002 and 2005. In 2007 the Council of Europe launched a supranational campaign that asked explicitly for national priority to be given to the combating of domestic violence against women. The United Nations Committee Against Torture, too, has made gender-specific violence in families one of its concerns due to its continuous importance. Likewise, international church networks have long taken the initiative and are trying to focus public interest on this topic through numerous actions and campaigns as well as information and lobbying. Hence, experts agree that there is an urgent need for action; furthermore, between 2003 and 2006, the number of countries outlawing domestic violence increased from 45 to 89 per cent. It is surprising, however, that in contrast to this fact, human rights violations are neither adequately dealt with in the general mainstream nor in central political discussions, in the media or in budgeting. Until now, the

¹ Brot für die Welt: Overcoming Domestic Violence: A global challenge, Stuttgart 2007, p. 8.

² Source: Deutsche Welle: <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,1334950,00.html>

³ Brot für die Welt (Hrsg.): Überwindung Häuslicher Gewalt – Eine globale Herausforderung, Stuttgart 2007.

⁴ Compare: Brot für die Welt: Overcoming Domestic Violence: A global challenge, Stuttgart 2007, p. 8.

prevalent concepts on how to react to domestic violence and above all how to prevent it have not been sufficiently implemented in Germany.⁵

Domestic violence happens at all levels of society, and takes a number of forms, pointed out Claudia Schrimpf, president of the association "Women Helping Women" and director of the Autonomous Women's Refuge in Cologne, Germany. "The definition of 'violence' can be very broad," she says. "Women who come to us are not necessarily just being beaten, they're being isolated, refused money, kept at home. Intimidation can be psychological as well as physical." She continues: "Whatever religion women are, wherever they come from, we'll take in all women seeking help," said Sylvia Arndt, who is in charge of a women's refuge that takes in mainly immigrant women. "They have to be over 18, and they have to be homeless." "The women have to get in touch with us," explained Schrimpf. "We advertise our phone number, but not our address." "We arrange a meeting place with the women, which will usually be close by. We don't reveal the address until the last minute to minimize the risk of their partners locating us. The woman telephones us from their arranged meeting place and we send one of our staff out to pick her up."⁶

Women who were planning to leave their partners were more likely to suffer abuse, according to German Family Minister Renate Schmidt. German women with Eastern European or Turkish parents or grandparents were among the most affected by violence, according to the study. Around half of the immigrant women said they had experienced sexual or physical violence at the hands of their partners. Germany's Integration Commissioner said the country needed to expand violence prevention services for immigrant women. The Women's Research Center at the University of Bielefeld surveyed 10,000 women between the ages of 16 and 85.⁷

German legislation gives special attention not only to the role and situation of victims but also to the perpetrators. Violent men in Germany could be forcibly evicted from their homes if they are found to have beaten their partners, according to legislation being proposed by the government there. The aim of the German legislation is to allow a breathing space of at least one week for professionals such as psychologists and social workers to study the case. German officials say few details of the proposal have been made public as it is still in discussion stages, but it is thought that it would allow women to apply to a magistrate for an instant injunction against their partner. It is part of a range of pro-women legislation being proposed by the coalition government, including "partnership" legislation to force men to do more housework. But the Association of Parents for Active Fatherhood says it does not address the roots of the problem. It is also worried about setting a precedent that a man can be evicted simply on the word of his partner.

The first-ever global study on gender violence was conducted by the World Health Organization in collaboration with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and Path, a global health organization. Former United Nations commissioner for human rights Mary Robinson hailed it as a seminal document. "We don't actually know, unless we have studies like this, how serious and pervasive violence by intimate partners really is," she said. "For the first time, this study has used consistent means to measure violence across countries, so that we can now reasonably compare."⁸

⁵ Compare: Brot für die Welt: Overcoming Domestic Violence: A global challenge, Stuttgart 2007, p. 10.

⁶ Source: Deutsche Welle: <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,1792343,00.html>

⁷ Beauftragte für Migration und Flüchtlinge der Bundesregierung, Berlin 2008.

⁸ Source: <http://www.haguedv.org/resources/country-specific.html>

1. DV –Legal level in Germany

Political and legal situation in Germany and in Germany's federal states (Bundesländer)

In 2000, the *Federal Law on Discreditation violence in Education (Gesetz zur Ächtung der Gewalt in der Erziehung)* was brought into force. In 2001, the federal government presented a draft text for a *Federal Law on Protection from Violence in Families*, which was approved by both chambers of parliament by the end of 2001 and went into force in 2002. This law enables both men and women to ask for special protection by governmental, public or state-approved private service providers in the case of family and domestic violence.

For the first time, this law defines a clear right for all victims or individuals afraid of becoming a victim of domestic violence for official and guaranteed protection. Legal bodies can define “no go areas” for perpetrators, prohibition of contact of a potential perpetrator to a specific person and even technical surveillance of potential perpetrators via phone, mobile surveillance and geo tracking of a person. All these legal actions are limited to a duration of 1 month of restrictions for a potential perpetrator and have to be evaluated after one month for a potential prolongation.

Police in Germany is legally entitled to take preventive actions to help potential victims to be separated from potential perpetrators. The legal background for these preventive actions are police laws in various German states such as Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg and Saxony. In very specific cases and in situations of pending danger for a potential victim police forces has to right to hold a potential perpetrator in prison. A court has to decide upon appeal of the police for how long such a form of detention may last. This part of German legislation is seen very critical since it in principal allows police forces to put an individual into prison before a potential criminal act.

Additional legal frameworks linked to domestic violence in Germany are:

- the German Law against Forced-Marriage
- the German Law on Sexual Abuse and Misuse of Children
- German legislation on prostitution and forced prostitution

Definition of domestic violence in Germany

The definition of domestic violence in Germany is linked to the WHO's definition of violence. The WHO distinguishes three kinds of violence:

- self-inflicted violence (suicide),
- interpersonal violence (violence in families, between relatives and acquaintances or strangers in the community) and
- collective violence (ethnic conflicts, terrorism and supranational armed conflicts).

The WHO's definition of violence states: “Violence is the intentional use of threatened or factual bodily force or physical power against oneself or another person, against a group or community which leads directly or in all probability to injuries, death, psychological damage, aberration or deprivation.”

Domestic violence is defined in Germany as violence between individual living in one household. Thus domestic violence not only defines violence of couples, between husband and wife, but also violence towards children, violence towards children from their parents, violence between sisters and brothers and violence towards senior citizens in families.

Other terms used in German language for domestic violence are “violence in relationships”, “violence in near-by surroundings”, violence in families and violence of couples.

In addition, definition of domestic violence in Germany is based on Johan Galtung’s definition, a sociologist specialized on peace and conflict studies. According to him it is a matter of violence “when people are influenced in such a way that their prevailing somatic and spiritual self-realisation is not as great as their potential self-realisation”. This is especially true for marginalized groups within society. Galtung distinguishes between three forms of violence:⁹

1. Direct violence:

Direct violence is caused by a certain actor and can be described as an immediate act of violence.

2. Structural violence:

Here there is no-one who inflicts direct harm on someone else. This violence is an integral part of the social system and manifests itself in unequal power structures and, as a consequence, in unequal opportunities in life.

3. Cultural violence:

Galtung understands cultural violence as that feature of a culture by which structural violence is embellished, masked or made invisible. These may be ideologies or beliefs, customs or traditions which are taken for granted by the members of the relevant group and hence are not questioned.

On the special issue of women as victims of domestic violence, German legislation takes into account the definition of “Violence against women” which in 1995 was adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing:

“Violence against women means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to:

- a) physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;

⁹ Compare: Brot für die Welt: Overcoming Domestic Violence: A global challenge, Stuttgart 2007, p. 24.

- b) physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;
- c) physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the state, wherever it occurs.”¹⁰

In addition to these legal definitions, there are definitions of domestic violence coming from a sociological and criminological background. These definitions often discuss the “quality of violence”. They differentiate between real physical violence and performed violence and psychological violence which often does not consist of direct pain but on the simple announcement of a potential violence.¹¹

Forms of Domestic Violence according to definition accepted in Germany

As a rule in Germany, domestic violence is not a one-time incident. On the contrary, it is a complex system of abuse. It is the perpetrators' aim to gain power and control over their victims' mind, actions and body.

Basically, four kinds of violence can be distinguished:

- Physical violence

Physical or bodily violence is the most obvious kind and causes the most visible evidence. It comprises physical violations such as: slapping, jostling, shoving, kicking, biting, choking, battering with fists or objects, arm twisting, holding against one's will, burning, cutting with a knife or other objects, afflicting wounds or locking in.

- Psychological violence

Particularly in intimate relations potential victims are susceptible to physical and emotional violence which can have many forms such as direct attacks in which the perpetrator constantly insults, degrades, berates or threatens his victim or reacts accordingly in conflicts. Other possible forms are indirect assaults when persons closely connected to the victim, like children, relatives or friends, are insulted or property is damaged. Psychological violence is subtle. It systematically undermines the victims' self-confidence, independence and scope of action. Here it is frequently rather difficult to take legal action as there are no hard facts.

¹⁰ Compare: Brot für die Welt: *Overcoming Domestic Violence: A global challenge*, Stuttgart 2007, p. 25.

¹¹ See: Marianne Schwander: *Interventionsprojekte gegen häusliche Gewalt: Neue Erkenntnisse – neue Instrumente*. In: Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Strafrecht, Band 121, Heft 2, Bern: Stämpfli, 2003 und Andrea Büchler: *Gewalt in Ehe und Partnerschaft - Polizei-, straf- und zivilrechtliche Interventionen am Beispiel des Kantons Basel-Stadt, Basilea/Ginevra/München* 1998

- Sexual violence

Sexual violence is the case when someone takes advantage of another person forcing her/him against this person's will to perform sexual acts.

- Economic violence

Economic violence causes or exploits financial dependencies. This includes the refusal of basic necessities such as food or medicine, but also depriving the partner of his/her income or controlling it.

Domestic violence includes violent acts such as rape, sexual assault, hitting a person, forcing a person into prostitution, shouting and screaming at a person, stalking, restricting free movement of a person and many more.

Legal rights of the victims and types/forms of punishment for perpetrators

Cases of domestic violence are dealt under § 238 German Criminal code – Stalking – or § 4 Federal Law on Protection from Violence in Families. Victims often complain that legal cases in front of a public court with the perpetrator being present in the same court room cause high levels of emotional stress. Thus German law allows dealing with victims and perpetrators in separate legal cases in order to protect the victims.

Victims have a right to ask

- for immediate protection taken by the police
- immediate access to shelter and social institutions
- change of identity
- legal separation from perpetrator
- protection of children, family-members
- anonymous actions taken to protect victims at work place and in the public
- surveillance of perpetrator
- legal assistance
- psychological treatment
- emergency medical treatment.

Studies in Germany have shown that without real therapy for perpetrators, domestic violence will not end. Therapy for perpetrators – also in the sense of self-protection for perpetrators – is offered all over Germany by social welfare institutions and counseling centers.

On the other side, despite the fact the victims of domestic violence in Germany have access to numerous services, budget cuts and reallocation of public funds have led to a decrease of services offered for victims. Medical care linked to health issues following domestic violence are no longer fully covered by German National Health systems excluding victims with lower income, marginalized groups and victims without health insurance from any medical and psychological services. The only help they could call for are religious services offered by churches.

The German legal system on prevention of domestic violence and offering help and assistance to both victims and perpetrators in principals tries to offer a multi-step approach:

- Step 1: Becoming aware of violence and recognizing it as such
- Step 2: Recognizing causes and effects
- Step 3: Reflecting on the hidden moral concepts that govern everyday life
- Step 4: Identifying actors which have an influence on moral concepts and the dynamics of violence
- Step 5: Learning about legal rights
- Step 6: Learning about strategies for overcoming violence
 - Political and public level: from human rights instruments to advocacy activities
 - Social level: from media work to increasing the awareness of professional groups as well as religious and traditional leaders
 - Personal level: structures of support for working with victims and offenders
- Step 7: Adapting the strategies to one's own environment and advancing them
- Step 8: Devising action plans
- Step 9: Informing the public¹²

Potential gaps, deficits as well as legal deficiencies

Victims of domestic violence in Germany often complain about a mis-perception of domestic violence in the general public and in media. Despite public outrage and strict laws in cases such as rape and real physical violence leading to being wounded, many Germans see “a bit of guilt for domestic violence on the side of the victim”.¹³ Many Germans argue that domestic violence always undergoes a process of development with “more than one as an actor” and claim “it always takes two to form a couple where violence occurs”.¹⁴

Social services for victims often function as emergency services, first-help actions but rarely as full-service long-term assistance. Often victims fall back into old rituals and become victims again, often by the same perpetrator.

Punishment for perpetrators is often seen as too mild, too low and too short allowing them to get out of prison or therapy programs too early. Another deficit is seen in defining domestic violence of male perpetrators against female victims. A growing number of scientists argue that men have become victims of domestic violence as often as women but simply no-one reports about this.

Special legal provisions for migrants and socially marginalized and vulnerable groups-communities

The 2003 German Immigration Act, the German Law on Integration and Immigration, the Law on prevention of forced marriage and various legal frameworks on minorities offer protection

¹² Compare: Brot für die Welt: Overcoming Domestic Violence: A global challenge, Stuttgart 2007, p. 16.

¹³ Bündnis für Soziale Arbeit, Esslingen, 2010.

¹⁴ Ebda.

and codes of actions for migrants, migrant women, migrant children, illegal immigrants and social minorities to deal with domestic violence in these groups.¹⁵

Perpetrators with migration background are subject to deportation or loss of residence permits. Victims receive privileged services concerning residence permits, identity cards and international legal protection.

Within the laws on immigration and integration, social services receive federal funding for services assisting victims of domestic violence within the context of migration and social marginalization.

It has to be seen that domestic violence within migrant families often is linked to a concept of structures favouring violence against women and children in marginalized families:¹⁶

Factors on a husband-wife-level:

- Food is not served on time or does not meet expectations.
- The woman does not fulfill her duties as mother and housewife as desired.
- She does not comply with his wishes.
- He suspects her of infidelity.

Factors on the political level:

- Violence against women is tolerated or is a taboo topic in specific ethnic groups.
- There is no social group will to acknowledge the problem.
- Regulations rooted in traditions (for instance, traditional birthrights) which deny women access to land and resources are not rectified by appropriate legislation.
- Governmental power does not reach far enough to implement national laws with marginalized groups.
- The education system is underdeveloped regarding migrants: insufficient educational opportunities and illiteracy contribute to maintaining the status quo.
- In times of crisis domestic violence increases.

Factors on the socio-cultural level:

- Patriarchal attitudes and power structures generate a power imbalance to the disadvantage of women. This leads to the fact that they are also underrepresented politically and cannot safeguard their interests.
- Social role expectations within a partnership favour the restriction and subordination of women to the man and his family.
- Violence as a means of resolving conflicts (in the family, in groups, in society) is a frequent and accepted occurrence.
- The media perpetuate patriarchal male and female images by their corresponding representation.
- Religious scriptures are interpreted in such a way that violence represents a legitimate means.

¹⁵ Gesetz zur Steuerung und Beschränkung von Zuwanderung, Berlin 2003.

¹⁶ Brot für die Welt: Overcoming Domestic Violence: A global challenge, Stuttgart 2007, p. 60ff.

- Growing religious fundamentalism increases the power imbalance between men and women, for example, by curtailing women's rights and excluding women from education.

Factors on the individual-familial level:

- Families reproduce the acquired patterns by a corresponding gender-specific upbringing of their children.
- Parents set the first influential examples for their children, who pick up their parents' attitude and approach to violence.
- Extreme family constraints, such as the so called "family honor", are handed down to the children.
- Religious concepts, myths, personal experience and ignorance hinder personal development and change in family circumstances.
- Due to emotional and economic dependence women are afraid of leaving violent family structures or seeking help.

2. DV - Political level in Germany

Social Welfare state/Formal Institutions

Germany has well established mechanisms and the existing structures and services that deal with domestic violence. Action plans and policies focus on a multi-level approach:

- Policies on national (federal) level
- Policies on state level
- Services offered on local level (communities)
- Interaction with police and law enforcement
- Interaction with medical services
- Interaction with immigration services
- Interaction with NGOs, churches, women's organisations, refugee organisations, migrants' organisations etc.

The following table provides a short overview of the most important levels of intervention together with successful strategies.

Level of intervention	Target group
Governmental-legal level	<p>Political leaders</p> <p>Prosecuting authorities</p>
Societal level	<p>The media</p> <p>Traditional leaders</p> <p>Religious leaders</p> <p>Men and women</p> <p>Health sector</p> <p>Teachers and educational experts</p>
Individual level	<p>Victims</p> <p>Perpetrators</p> <p>Witnesses of violence</p> <p>Fathers and mothers</p>

Established mechanisms in Germany are:

Governmental level

- Putting pressure on the state by systematic lobbying to fulfill its responsibility of implementing international human rights conventions and of passing and implementing corresponding laws.
- Demanding the support of projects to combat and prevent violence against women.
- Training judges, public prosecutors and the police to implement laws.
- Monitoring the way of coping with domestic violence, improving the support and protection of victims.

Societal level

- Exerting a positive influence on the public discourse which encourages gender stereotypes and thus the origins of domestic violence by training journalists.
- Proclaiming that violence in the private sphere is a human rights violation.
- Encouraging people to reflect on traditional values.
- Developing a cultural identity which does not violate human rights.
- Changing traditions which encourage violence against women.
- Looking for advocates who condemn violence and changing discriminating values.
- Turning religious leaders into allies who support the fight against domestic violence.
- Analysing and informing about religious scriptures from the aspect of women's rights and outlawing violence.
- Making use of religious networks as a structure for changing the attitude of men and women.
- Encouraging the population to critically reflect on gender stereotypes and to demonstrate alternative models of masculinity and femininity.
- Teaching medical personnel to recognise domestic violence as a health risk and to take it seriously.
- Encouraging medical personnel to set up contact between victims of violence and supportive institutions as well as social and legal counselling.
- Training teachers to encourage children and adolescents to critically reflect gender stereotypes.
- Encouraging teachers to teach and demonstrate constructive conflict-resolving behaviour by actively living it.
- Increasing lobbying to eliminate stereotypical educational measures and teaching materials.

Individual level

- Supporting those affected in their individual abilities and reducing unilateral dependencies.
- Informing victims about their rights and encouraging and supporting them in claiming them. Guaranteeing support and protection.
- Helping offenders to take the blame and to answer for their acts.
- Assisting in recognising the causes of violence and helping to prevent it.
- Teaching the advantages of a non-violent partnership.
- Learning to resolve conflicts non-violently.

- Encouraging relatives, neighbours etc. to denounce human rights violations in the private sphere.
- Teaching parents to teach and demonstrate equality and non-violent conflict resolutions by living it.

Germany has a longstanding tradition to cover domestic violence in media campaigns in order to increase public awareness and to help victims to overcome shame. On a federal level, working groups consisting of social workers, criminal officers, psychologists, doctors, lawyers, scientists, former victims and cured perpetrators, NGO representatives and others try to monitor domestic violence developments. Group recommendation for action to be taken in order to prevent domestic violence and to help victims and perpetrators are boiled down to state and local level.

Level of cooperation and interaction (if any) with the non-governmental networks that deal with DV as well with the public

Key actors on a non-governmental level are NGOs such as

- Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World)
- Terre des Femmes
- Amnesty International Germany
- Refugio e.V.
- Humans Rights Watch Germany
- Weißer Ring (White Ring, self-help group of victims of criminal acts)

and many more. On local and regional level experts have estimates of up to 200 to 220 self-organised groups in cities and smaller towns which offer services for families suffering from domestic violence.

According to Brot für die Welt cooperation and interaction between governmental, legal and non-governmental actors in the field has been working well. All groups have public outreach programs in order to help victims to search for help and to get in contact with local groups and social workers.

Costs of domestic violence in Germany

Material Values

There are no compiled data available for economic costs of domestic violence. The Federal Department for Statistics does not fully compile or combine all data which might be linked to procedures following up acts of domestic violence.

There are however some numbers available:

- Follow-up costs in Germany for domestic violence caused by men towards women counted up to 29 billion German Mark in 1999.¹⁷

¹⁷ Inquiry by Federal Government on follow-up costs of domestic violence, German Government, Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 14/849, 14. Parliamentary period, 27.04.1999

- Costs to protect and treat victims were up to 66 million German Mark in 1999 to operate 46 “protection projects” in Germany for women¹⁸

A study by Terre de Femmes Germany estimates the costs of domestic violence in Germany as up to 14,8 billion Euro in 1997. These costs consist of expenses for medical treatment, social care as well as loss of female workforce due to victims of domestic violence being unable to work due to rehabilitation services.¹⁹

The German Association of Lawyers estimates costs linked to legal services for both victims and perpetrators of domestic violence to as much as 8.5 million Euro annually, based on 2008 numbers.²⁰

Immaterial Values

No valid numbers are available for financial follow-up costs for immaterial values. In a study by the Ministry for Women, Families and Youth in the German state of Nordrhein-Westfalen in 2007, 180 women who were victims of domestic violence were interviewed:²¹

- 90% reported that their quality of life was significantly reduced by domestic violence and remained reduced even after professional help and end of domestic violence.
- 67% reported that it took an average of 4 to 6 years to fully recover from an experience of domestic violence.
- 44,5 % reported that their trust into other persons, friends, family members remained low even after 5 years of domestic violence experience.
- 80% reported that social care, legal procedures and protective services helped them to regain self-respect and self-safety again.

Economic scientists estimate the full social and economic costs of domestic violence in Germany to equal 135 million Euro annually as loss of cross-national-product.²²

Ways in which DV is documented

In Germany all acts of domestic violence reported to the police, doctors, social service providers, family counsellors or other official institutions have to be reported and documented.

Central documentations are kept at

- Federal Ministry for Health
- State Police Administrations
- Terre des Femmes Germany
- German Social and Public Courts (legal courts registries)

¹⁸ Ebda.

¹⁹ Terre de Femmes, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung: Business gegen häusliche Gewalt – Zusammenfassung einer Tagung vom 23. November 2007, Berlin 2008.

²⁰ Deutsche Anwaltskammer, Inquiry 24.4.2011.

²¹ Ministerium für Frauen, Familie und Jugend des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen: Bericht zur Folge von Gewalt gegen Frauen und Kinder, Düsseldorf 2004.

²² Arbeitskreis Steuerschätzung: Bericht zur Entwicklung der nationalen Steuereinnahmen 2009, Berlin 2009.

- NGOs such as Brot für die Welt, Caritas etc. offering services for victims of domestic violence.

Police records are the most comprehensive ones including interviews, photographs, court of law materials, tapes with interviews, transcripts and materials on the perpetrator, including psychological and medical data.

Potential gaps, deficits as well as deficiencies

All actors in the field of social services for victims of domestic violence are positive with the documentation and resources available in Germany. The complaint however that often the various documentations, databases and archives are not combined and do not exchange their data. This makes it difficult to get a full picture of all acts of domestic violence in Germany.

The reason to keep these different forms of documents separate is based on data-protection law. This applies especially to data kept by police forces. These data are for internal use and court-use only. Data linked to persons and individuals may not be published or distributed without the full consent of the respective individual.

Another field identified as gap or deficit is the special legal situation with domestic violence linked to “violence in the name of honour” within Muslim families.²³

A girl or a woman might have brought "disgrace" upon her family, her family will use every method to restore the family honour. In some cases they perceive only one solution: killing in the name of honour ('honour killing') of the responsible person.

Men are often victims and actors in the case of an honour killing, as the family frequently chooses minor male family member to accomplish the crime. It also happens, that a male family member feels obliged to "punish" the woman/the girl in compliance with an unexpressed agreement within the family. They cannot escape the pressure of the family. Women often participate in the preliminary stages, but the act of killing is mostly executed by men.

As of yet, there are no official police statistics on 'honour killings' in Germany, since this is not yet being recorded as a motive for murder. In May 2006, Germany's Federal Criminal Police Office (the BKA) published the results of a special Bund-Länder-Abgleichs national and state-level comparison of cases of 'honour killings' recorded by police. According to this, there were 55 such murders and attempted murders with a total of 70 victims in Germany between January 1st 1996 and July 18th 2005.

Non Governmental Institutions/Volunteers

Mechanisms and the existing structures and services

Germany has a dense network of both state and non-governmental institutions dealing with domestic violence. The most dominant and active NGOs are institutions such as

²³ Terre de Femmes, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung: Business gegen häusliche Gewalt – Zusammenfassung einer Tagung vom 23. November 2007, Berlin 2008.

- Terre des Femmes Germany
- Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World)
- Caritas
- Diakonisches Werk Deutschland
- Deutsches Rotes Kreuz (German Red Cross)
- Malteser Hilfsdienste (German Maltese Network)
- Johanniter Hilfe
- Refugio e.V.
- Verband der Frauenhäuser in Deutschland (Women shelter association)
- Weißer Ring (Victim protection association)

All these institutions have local branches which are interlinked with each other. These local branches collaborate with state institutions such as health services, police, courts, school and educational system, labor unions, municipal administration, immigration offices and law enforcement offices.

In 75% of all cases, social services for victims of domestic violence in these NGO networks are offered by fully trained professional social workers and individual counselors and service providers. Due to the high risk level when working with victims of domestic violence, volunteer activities of less qualified workers are restricted to public awareness campaigns and education.

The total number of qualified social workers in these institutions working with families experiencing domestic violence in Germany is estimated to be as high as 5.200 professionals. Out of these

- 15% concentrate on public awareness and public networking to prevent or to detect domestic violence
- 35% work directly with families exposed to domestic violence (mediators, therapists)
- 30% work directly with victims of domestic violence in form of individual psychological and medical therapies
- 15% work directly with perpetrators and their rehabilitation and therapy, also in law-enforcement centers
- 5% concentrate on training, evaluation, improvement of quality of services, internal networking and professional networking of institutions.²⁴

²⁴ Source: Deutscher Caritasverband, Stuttgart 2011.

3. Domestic Violence - Socio-cultural level

Categories of domestic violence

Based on compilation of statistical data by the Federal Office for Statistics in 2008, domestic violence in Germany can be divided in categories such as:²⁵

- Violence of husband against wife:	44.000 reported cases
- Violence of fathers against children:	2.200 reported cases
- Sexual child abuse by parents:	3.100 reported cases
- Forced sexual intercourse within married couples:	68.900 reported cases
- Forced sexual intercourse / rape (unmarried):	112.500 documented cases in police reports
- Abuse of men by women:	3.000 reported cases
- Abuse / violence towards gay men by non-gay men:	4.100 reported cases
- Abuse / violence towards gay men by women:	780 reported cases
- Abuse of senior citizens by family members:	11.850 reported cases
- Abuse of senior citizens in migrants' families:	7.400 reported cases

Factors of domestic violence

There are no valid numbers of factors or reasons for occurrence of domestic violence within families. Several academic studies tried to analyse existing data. In general, drug abuse, economic poverty, religious-cultural factors and psychological disorders seem to be the most dominant factors for domestic violence in Germany.²⁶

- Economical problems such as poverty, lack of money in general, unemployment, debts, lack of ability to support children, their education etc. seem to be one reasons why caring men could be driven into acts of domestic violence to overcome their feeling of being a “bad carer”. Up to 40 % of all cases of domestic violence can be linked to these factors.
- Social status is not automatically linked to social violence. Although acts of domestic violence occur more often in families with a lower social status, domestic violence can also be found in high-income and well educated families. Social pressure, high expectations from third parties, pressure for success and socially defined patterns of behaviour seem to be a factor to increase the chance for acts of domestic violence in high-level families. Interesting enough, the higher the social level of a family, the more often women are the perpetrators and men are the victims.
- Educational achievements show a link to domestic violence. In general, domestic violence appears from often in families with lower educational achievements. The family member with the lowest educational level often becomes the victims. 90% of these cases are forms of physical violence. In families with high or

²⁵ Statistisches Bundesamt, Data inquiry May 3, 2011, Wiesbaden.

²⁶ Ursula Müller, Monika Schröttele: Lebenssituation, Sicherheit und Gesundheit von Frauen in Deutschland. Eine repräsentative Untersuchung zu Gewalt gegen Frauen in Deutschland. Zusammenfassung zentraler Studienergebnisse, Bonn 2004.

higher educational attainment, domestic violence happens less in form of physical violence but in 70% of all cases in form of psychological violence and “psycho-terror”.

- There is no link of evidence for political factors being a reason for domestic violence in Germany. Some cases are reported where differences in political ideology between husband and wife lead to domestic violence.
- Cultural factors are of special importance for domestic violence in migrant families. Different speeds of cultural adjustment, integration and social inclusion of family members in a host country are linked to acts of domestic violence in up to 80 percent of all cases.

Characteristics/profiles of the victims

There is no fully comprehensive data available on personal profiles of victims since these data are kept confidential by police forces and law enforcement institutions.

On profiles of victims, the following data is available²⁷:

Categories of victims of DV	General public in %	Victims with migrations background in %
Single women	14	8
Married women	27	44
Children age 1-5	7	8
Children age 6-12	5	4
Teenagers	11	14
Young adults age 18-25	2	3
Men	12	6
Senior citizens (plus 65)	14	8
Gay men	3	1
Handicapped individuals (men and women)	5	4

²⁷ Statistisches Bundesamt, Data inquiry May 3, 2011, Wiesbaden.

Characteristics/profiles of the perpetrators

There is no fully comprehensive data available on personal profiles of perpetrators since these data are kept confidential by police forces and law enforcement institutions.

On profiles of perpetrators, the following data is available²⁸:

Categories of perpetrators of DV	General public in %	Perpetrators with migrations background in %
Single men	8	11
Married men	58	72
Single women	5	1
Married women	21	8
Single parents	6	3
Other	2	5

Health Effects of domestic violence

According to the German National Health Services and German National Health Insurance (AOK), the most significant health effects of domestic violence are²⁹:

Health effects following domestic violence	In percent of total number of cases screened (multiple answers were allowed)
Bruises	90 %
Broken bones	31 %
Cuts	39 %
Surgery needed with hospital stay and in-patient treatment following DV	22 %
Addiction from alcohol	Women: 34 %; Men: 44 %
Addiction from medication	Women: 82 %; Men: 28 %
Psychological disorders	Women: 78 %; Men: 34 %
Depression	Women: 81 %; Men: 46 %
Attempt of suicide	Women: 9 %; Men: 11 %
Nutrition disorders	Women: 92 %; Men: 17 %
Neglect of children etc.	Women: 34 %; Men: 48 %
Death (directly following DV)	Women: 2 %; Men: 1 %

There is no data available on general public and marginalized groups.

Dissemination of information regarding DV

The German government, NGOs, police, cities and municipalities and some commercial companies run public awareness campaigns against domestic violence. The German Trade

²⁸ Statistisches Bundesamt, Data inquiry May 3, 2011, Wiesbaden.

²⁹ Source: Verband Allgemeiner Ortskrankenkassen, Inquiry April 5, 2011.

Unions had a campaign informing victims are addresses and institutions for help. The Federal Ministry for Family, Social affairs and Youth had a nation-wide campaign in 2007 informing victims as well perpetrators about their right for help, therapy and social intervention. German public media had campaigns informing the general public about indicators for violence within families and about ways to inform social services, the police or teachers about potential activities in families.

In general, most popular form of information in Germany regarding domestic violence are:

- Campaigns with ads, posters and flyers by federal government
- TV spots by social service providers on public TV
- Flyers and multi-lingual materials given to parents at schools
- Newspaper and radio reports
- Public ads and commercials with information for help for victims
- Networks for victims on the Internet and in social media
- Training courses for teachers, public administrators, doctors etc. to identify signs which might lead to cases of domestic violence towards children, women and elderly in families.

4. Domestic Violence - Individual level

Social workers and service providers - Help the Helpers

Types of professionals involved/work in the field of domestic violence and particular role that each one of these categories has

Most cases of work in the field of domestic violence in Germany are handled by social workers. In addition, there are psycho-therapists, medical professionals, lawyers and other categories of social work and family-outreach service.

According to an estimate by Brot für die Welt, 89% of all social workers and other professionals working with and for victims and perpetrators involved in domestic violence have a fully-trained, qualified and state-acknowledged professional background (diploma social workers). The remaining 11% are low-level volunteers who serve as assistants.

The most important types of professions the field of domestic violence in Germany are:

Social workers – Social workers with diploma from university of university of applied sciences (BA or MA); specialization on crisis intervention, family counselling, domestic violence, violence, gender issues.

Psychologist and psycho therapist – Working for both governmental and non-governmental institutions, also for police forces and courts, active in therapy and protection of victims.

Mediators and specialists for conflict resolution – Trained social workers with special skills, often specialisation on family counselling, neighbourhood services and crisis intervention

Police force – members of police and law enforcement with special 1-year-training in addition to police-training in fields of crisis intervention, violence, preventive services, youth and family work, monitoring of illegal migration, prostitution and human trafficking

Medical professionals – doctors with special training in family therapy and doctors in field of surgery specialising on injuries induced through violent acts

Lawyers and federal attorneys – Legal professionals specialising in family and youth law, migration and immigration, gender laws, female jurisdiction, preventive law and rights both of victims and perpetrators

Neighbourhood counsellors – either trained social workers, sometime volunteers with extra training, working in neighbourhoods with social problems, violence etc. in order to talk to families, offers programmes for women etc.; often these personnel has special training in detections of family and domestic violence

Clerical services, priests – often churches in Germany offer services for families in need, but also for victims and perpetrators. Priests active in this field often have special training in family counselling with elements of psycho therapy.

Quality of the provided services

Social workers, lawyers, clerical services and neighbourhood counsellors often work in preventive activities, protection of potential victims, information and education of the public on domestic violence, awareness rising and re-integration of former perpetrators.

Police and legal professionals also offer legal and physiological protection, sometimes even services going as far as providing a new identity for a former victim.

By law psychotherapy in Germany may only be offered by training and state-certificated psycho-therapists.

In most German cities there are networks, often organised by cities and municipalities, which combine tasks of police, social workers, family centers, neighbourhood counsellors, hospitals, lawyers and courts in order to provide a clear structure and pathway which all professionals involved need to follow in case of domestic violence. For victims, this offers a clear from of help, protection, cure and preventive measures. For perpetrators, similar structures apply. Often, prisons offer therapy as well in order to use the time in prison for cure and treatments.

Particular places where field work is done

The first level of work is done in neighbourhoods by social workers, neighbourhood counsellors and church services in order to reach out to families, potential victims or potential perpetrators. Work is done directly in families, in neighbourhood and community centers, in churches, social centers and in town halls, sometimes also at schools.

In case of applied domestic violence, services for victims are offered at hospitals and health centers, in female shelters and protected housing, in municipal housing projects and in medical centers offering long-term therapy.

Courts only step in once police and legal services start legal procedures against perpetrators or in case governmental services ask for legal actions such as new identity, protective measures for a person, protection of children or seniors or restrictions of freedom imposed on potential perpetrators due to analysis prepared by medical professionals.

Screening techniques for social workers are forms of direct work with families, surveillance of individuals in danger, inclusion of social environment such as school, work place, place where leisure time is spent, sporting clubs etc. Family doctors and national health services during health inspection at schools etc. are also obliged to inform social workers, police etc. about indications of possible domestic violence (such as bruises, injuries etc.).

Forms of professional training

For the professions listed above, training takes place at universities, universities of applied science, academies, municipal training centers, institutions of adult learning, church academies and in hospitals.

Trainers either are professors, other social workers or experts in programmes following “train-the-trainer” or “peer education programmes” in the field on continuing education.

Continuing education for social workers is offered by social academies in Germany, by institutions for public administration training, by volunteer learning centers and by NGOs working in the field of domestic violence.

Several cities and in some German states even ministries offer courses concentrating on migrants, socially marginalized groups and minorities and their involvement in domestic violence. Cultural conflict resolution, religious issues, gender roles, services offered by migrants’ organisations themselves (often in collaboration with municipalities) provide a wide field of services to help social workers and other professionals to increase their knowledge in the field of dealing with domestic violence in their daily working life.

In most training programmes and seminars, former victims of domestic violence and sometimes even former perpetrators report about their experience, about the way, domestic violence started to develop, how it became worse, about shame and reactions by the social environment etc.

Possible gaps, barriers and deficits

Possible gaps and deficits in Germany still are:

- Now indication of quality of services offered (no ranking, no real monitoring or nationwide evaluation helping “consumers”/victims to ensure to get the best service possible).
- Language barriers and cultural biases in work with minorities, immigrants and marginalized groups.
- Lack of access to services, protective shelters etc. in rural areas; lack of public transportation to reach services.
- Lack of inclusion of social environment, i.e. with migrants families the complete extended families in order to “cure” domestic violence not only in a single case but within a community or ethnic cluster in a neighbourhood.

- Lack of coverage in the media of the work of social workers in the field of domestic violence.

Victims

Specific marginalized groups in Germany

In Germany immigrants from Muslim countries, especially Turkey and increasingly Arab countries, are regarded as minorities and socially marginalized groups by the general public. Even with ethnic groups, i.e. Turkish immigrants, there is a clear definition of social level, of successful steps of integration and economic progress, which lead to segregation with ethnic groups. Often domestic violence is explained with low educational level, with traditional lifestyle or fundamental religious values.

The largest numbers of Muslim immigrants in Germany recruits from Turkey with 3,7 million, from north African Arab states with 1,1 million, Asian Muslim countries with 400.000 and converted Muslim (native Muslims). 30 % of this group is 28 years and younger, 15 % are 65 and older. The highest number of Muslim inhabitants in Germany can be found in cities, especially Berlin, Frankfurt, Cologne, Stuttgart and Munich. Economic status of these inhabitants differs widely between poor (12%), low-level income (24%), mid-level income (45%), high-level income (19%)³⁰. Domestic violence is mostly reported in families of poor and low-level income status with an increasing number of cases in high-level income families. This trend compares well to the situation in Germany in general and in non-immigrants native clusters.

A new trend in Germany is to regard men as marginalized groups. After a long discussion of female rights, equal rights from women etc. schools and vocational training centers started to talk about a “boy problem” and about “young men being victims” of social pressure, lack of support, high competitiveness with girls (who receive support from the government) and problems during male puberty. Thus, the number of male victims of domestic violence has been increasing during the last years.

A third group in the field of domestic violence are gay men and lesbian women living in larger families. Some of them suffer from sexual abuse, physical power and punishment by the family for their orientation, religious and cultural prejudice etc.

The last important group are senior citizens living in larger families and senior citizens in day-care centers. During the last five years an increase of domestic violence towards the elderly has been reported in both migrant as well as domestic families.

Level of awareness

Education and information among potential and real victims of domestic violence in Germany still needs to be improved. Many people know about services “out there” but they do not know where to go, whom to call, whom to talk to and how to access services which could support or assist them.

³⁰ Statistisches Bundesamt Wiesbaden, Presseserver, Datenstand März 2011

Media campaigns in German inform the mainstream public in a way too general form. Some representatives of minority groups ignore the fact of domestic violence due to cultural shame. In addition, many victims are afraid of the costs a therapy or cure could impose on them. Many are unaware of their rights and privileges, of the simple fact that these health services in most cases are provided for free at part of national health in Germany.

Another deficit is the fact that often domestic violence is linked by most people to rape, sexual violence and physical violence. Other forms such as psychological violence, violence through constant insults, verbal violence etc are not regarded as part of domestic violence and are thus not reported or listed.

Major needs in every level of intervention

Major needs in Germany are a clear analysis of domestic violence linked to cultural-religious traditions in conservative families (both Christian and Muslim) where the role of women and children are described as inferior to men, fathers and husbands. Often domestic violence is seen as part of the way men has to treat his wife, women or children and thus not identified as violence.

Major needs of intervention briefly can be described as:

- Cultural-religious intervention on gender roles in specific communities
- Political intervention on increasing protection for victims
- Political intervention on awareness of needs of men as potential victims
- Socio-political intervention on rights of perpetrators and access to therapy and rehab

Literature Review

A huge number of publications, articles, scientific texts, academic thesis and papers, narrative and autobiographic literature and conference reports were found during our literature research in Germany. Entry of “domestic violence“ (“häusliche Gewalt”) in library search system came up with 1.100 listings. Quality of these listings was mixed. Upon further analysis, literature was cut down into the following categories which appeared to be of special relevance and importance:

- Legal publications of domestic violence – Analysis of laws and regulations based on common law regarding protection of victims, right of interference of government into families, legal differentiation between cultural habits and public law in Germany, legal aspects of preventive measures taken by social services and police; rights of perpetrators and comparative analysis of legal situation in EU.
- Social service publications – Including case studies, description of services and reach-out activities, discussion of therapies, treatments, social actions, family intervention, crisis management, evaluation of services and quality standards.
- Medical and psychological publications – Academic papers, thesis, articles by medical service providers, doctors, hospital groups and health care centers on experience with victims of domestic violence; cures and therapies; networking with police and governmental institutions, legal interventions.
- Biographical essays and narrative literature – Stories of victims, concentration on publication of female writers, some with Muslim background, best-seller novels such as “Not without my daughter” etc.
- Publications by government and public institutions – Reports by Federal Ministry for Health, Bread for the World, Terre des Femmes with in-depth analysis of domestic violence and development (i.e. in African countries), domestic violence and migration, etc.
- Publications (mixed authors) in form of flyers, booklet, brochures for awareness rising of general public.
- Online-site and web-based services and publications by social centers, self-help-groups, victims’ organizations, women groups, migrants’ organizations etc.

In percentage, the different categories based upon our analysis split up into:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| - Legal publications | 15% |
| - Social service publications | 30% |
| - Medical and psychological publications | 20% |
| - Biographical essays and narrative literature | 15% |
| - Governmental publications | 5% |
| - Flyer, booklets, brochures | 10% |
| - Website etc. | 5% |

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Weblinks

- Gutachten von Michael Bock über Gewaltverteilung zwischen Geschlechtern
- Leitfaden zum Erkennen von Gewalt gegen Kinder für Ärzte in NRW
- Leitfaden zum Erkennen von Gewalt gegen Kinder in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
- Family Violence Statistics Statistik des US-Justizministeriums zur häuslichen Gewalt aus dem Jahre 2005, sehr detailliert und umfangreich (PDF-Datei; 1,00 MB)
- Häusliche Gewalt: Wie sich Betroffene schützen

Broschüre "Mehr Schutz bei häuslicher Gewalt" (Stand: Nov. 2010) des Bundesministeriums für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (Anm.: dort auch kostenlos in Druck-Format zu bestellen)

Appendix

As case study from Germany: The murder of a Turkish woman and the applauding of the crime by some students have left Berlin shaken and officials pushing for ethics class. But how deep does the concept of honor run among some immigrant communities?³¹

On a cold afternoon this week, Hatin Sürücü gazed gravely from a large poster behind a bus stop lined with flowers, cards and candles.

To the people who came to this bleak part of Berlin's Tempelhof district for Tuesday's solemn vigil -- called not by the city's Muslim community but a gay and lesbian organization -- the image of the young woman in a headscarf, a baby in her arms, was familiar from newspapers and television. A few notes at the memorial read, "Hope you get a better deal in your next life," and "Live a life on your own terms."

"It's a scandal," said Ali K, 33. "All Muslims in Berlin should take to the streets to protest." Yasemin, 22, said, "It's horrific. All Hatin was doing was leading her life the way she wanted."

But it was a choice she paid for with her life. On Feb. 7, 23-year-old Hatin Sürücü was gunned down at the aforementioned bus stop. She died on the spot. Shortly afterwards, three of her brothers -- who reportedly had long been threatening her -- were arrested. Investigators suspect it was a so-called "honor killing," given the fact that Sürücü's ultra-conservative Turkish-Kurdish family strongly disapproved of her modern and "un-Islamic" life.

Sürücü grew up in Berlin and was married off at 16 to a cousin in Istanbul. After a few years, she returned to the German capital with her young son, moved into a home for single mothers, completed school and began to train as an electrician. She stopped wearing a headscarf and was said to be outgoing and vivacious.

"She lived like a German"

Turkish women in a mosque in Berlin's Kreuzberg district Though not the first of its kind, the brazen shooting has sent shockwaves through Berlin, home to a large foreign community and which for years has fretted over steady ghetto-building in districts dominated by Turkish and Arab immigrants. While the incident has reopened debate on the integration of immigrants and the compatibility of Islamic values with Western ones, it's the reaction of a small group of Turkish students to the murder that has rattled the German capital.

Days after Hatin Sürücü was killed, some male students of Turkish origin at a high school near the scene of the crime reportedly downplayed the act. During a class discussion on the murder, one said, "She (Hatin Sürücü) only had herself to blame," while another remarked "She deserved what she got --the whore lived like a German." The school's director promptly dashed off a letter to parents and students, castigating the students and warning that the school didn't tolerate incitement against freedom.

"Her lifestyle didn't fit"

The comments have sparked outrage and left many asking if it was just a one-off or whether such thinking is in fact not entirely uncommon among sections of the Muslim community in the city.

³¹ Source: Deutsche Welle <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,1334950,00.html>

According to some, it isn't. "There isn't a single school with a high foreign population where teachers haven't faced this kind of thing, where individual students sometimes regard murder as a just sentence," said Heinz Wagner, head of school and education policy at the VBE teachers trade union and a school director himself. Referring to the controversial remarks on Sürücü's murder, he said, "The very fact that they decided to provoke with something like that tells you that they're getting their ideas from somewhere."

At Berlin's Turkish-dominated neighborhood near Kottbusser Tor in the Kreuzberg district, 17-year-old Erkan, a high school student of Turkish origin, was divided about the issue. "I'm not saying you should murder, but Hatin's lifestyle just didn't fit the way traditional Muslims live," he said.

No regret, but pride

Experts insist that the problem is in no way a purely "Islamic phenomenon" and that the remarks of a few shouldn't be allowed to taint an entire community. But, statistics in Berlin show that murders ostensibly meant to uphold the honor of the family are high among Muslims.

At the juvenile prison in the Berlin suburb Plötzensee, six of the current 529 inmates are serving time of six years and more for manslaughter in so-called "honor crimes." All come from the Muslim world. Aged between 18 and 22, one of them, an Afghan national, was 16 when he helped relatives kill a widowed aunt who had refused to marry her brother-in-law.

Prison director Marius Fiedler said most of the murders are often carefully plotted in the family with the support of all, including women. "Usually the patriarch selects the youngest son to carry out the crime because he knows that judges in Germany don't usually give the maximum sentence of 10 years to a minor for manslaughter," he said.

Fiedler admitted that getting the inmates, who undergo psychological therapy, to reform or change their attitudes is difficult. "Many come from rural areas in Turkey or Lebanon and just don't know the concept of individualism," he said. "They don't feel any regret for what they did though some even kill their favorite sister. Instead, they're honored and feel like martyrs for having been chosen to carry out the crime."



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