



WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE EUROPE

WAVE Network and European Info Centre against Violence
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January 2016

GERMANY

Basic Information

Population: 80,767,463

Female population: 41,210,384

Member of Council of Europe: yes

Member of European Union: yes

CEDAW ratified: yes (1985)

CEDAW Optional protocol ratified: yes (2002)

Istanbul Convention – signed: yes (2011); ratified: no

Violence prevalence data: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-and-maps/survey-data-explorer-violence-against-women-survey>

Gender Equality Index: 55.3, for further information see: <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/gender-equality-index/2012>

UN Women Global Database on Violence against Women: <http://www.evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/europe/germany>

CEDAW Concluding Comments 2009:

Violence against women

41. The Committee commends the State party for the range of efforts, including recent legislative initiatives, to eliminate violence against women since the submission of its previous periodic report. It remains concerned, however, at the high prevalence of violence against women and girls, as demonstrated by the studies on women's experience with violence in Germany, including migrant women, showing that some 40 per cent of women had experienced physical or sexual violence or both since the age of 16 and that women from Turkish and Russian migrant backgrounds experienced physical and sexual violence with a level of frequency — and gravity for Turkish migrant women — clearly above the average for the female population of Germany. The Committee is also concerned at the inadequate impact of the Protection against Violence Act of 2002 on persistent and extremely violent perpetrators and on migrant women married for less than two years. The Committee is also concerned that acts of domestic violence may not be taken into account in child custody or visitation cases.

42. In accordance with its general recommendation No. 19, the Committee urges the State party to ensure that comprehensive measures are in place to address all forms of violence against women. The Committee calls upon the State party to ensure the effective implementation of the 2007 action plan on violence, to study and analyze all types of violence against women, particularly those that result in murders of women, and to continue implementing policies to prevent such violence, provide protection, support and services to the victims, and punish and rehabilitate offenders. The State party is also urged to implement legislation requiring that convictions for acts of domestic violence be taken into account in child custody or visitation decisions.

43. The Committee is concerned at the lack of sustained funding of shelters for women and non-residential counselling centres and at the lack of free access to shelters regardless of income for all women and children in all Länder. It regrets that some Länder are unable to offer secured housing in shelters to all women victims of violence, or equipped shelters for women with special needs, such as women with disabilities.

44. The Committee urges the State party to take the necessary measures to ensure greater cooperation between the Federal Government, the Länder and the municipalities to monitor the provision of social services with a view to ensuring the availability of a sufficient number of shelters equipped to accommodate women with special needs, such as women with disabilities, throughout the territory of the State party and making sure that such shelters are adequately financed and open for all, regardless of the victim's financial resources.

45. The Committee welcomes the increased efforts of Germany in compiling sex disaggregated statistics and in shedding light on the number and ages of asylum seeking and refugee women and girls but regrets the lack of statistical information on cases of female genital mutilation on women and girls living in Germany, on violence against women in institutions and on homicide of women in the context of domestic violence.

46. The Committee calls upon the State party to establish a method of collecting comprehensive statistical data disaggregated by sex, age, type of violence and the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim. The Committee urges the State party to provide statistical information in its next periodic report on the number of cases of female genital mutilation on women and girls living in Germany.

Introduction

The following information has been compiled from the research carried out in 2015 for the WAVE Report (http://files.wave-network.org/researchreports/WAVE_Report_2015.pdf) with national experts working in the field of violence against women. The research methodology involved an extensive questionnaire and a follow-up skype interview. The profile includes information on women's shelters, centres, helplines, national women's networks, policy and funding, prevention, awareness-raising, campaigning, and training. However, it was not possible to gather information about domestic violence shelters

Women's Helplines

National women's helplines

The national women's helpline in Germany is called Hilfetelefon „Gewalt gegen Frauen“ (08000 116 016). It exists since 01.03. 2013. The helpline is run by the State, to be more precise by the Federal Office for Family and Social Affairs, under the Federal Ministry for Family, Senior, Women's and Youth Affairs – BMFSFJ. The women's helpline operates 24/7 and is free of charge. Furthermore, it also provides multi-lingual support in many languages.

The helpline received a number of 23,912 calls in 2014. Out of these 16,183 came from female callers. The person responsible for data collection on the women's helplines is Ms. Antje Mäder, from the

Federal Office for Family and Social Affairs (Bundesamt für Familie und Zivilgesellschaftliche Aufgaben). It is not known how much funding was allocated to the national women's helpline in 2014.

Other helplines for victims

Germany also has a victims' general helpline, *Opfer-Telefon* (116 006), which is available 24/7 free of charge and is run by an NGO. There is also a children's helpline, *Kinder- und Jugendtelefon Nummer gegen Kummer* (116111), which is also run by an NGO and is available 24/7 free of charge. Other national helplines for victims include the *Telefonseelsorge* which is run by a faith-based organization and is available 24/7 free of charge. This helpline addresses a wide target group, and is for both men and women. Additionally there is another helpline for vulnerable pregnant women, *Schwangere in Not*, which is run by the State, and is available 24/7 free of charge.

Women' Shelters

There are currently 369 women's shelters in Germany, including protection flats for women (Frauenshutzwohnungen). The latter are small flats where women live, some are independent, some are administered by a shelter. No distinction can be made between women's shelters and those with a specific focus, such as shelters for minority ethnic women or shelters for women victims of human trafficking. Approximately five women's shelters have been closed in the last 5 years due to various reasons.

The 369 women's shelters have approximately 6800 beds to offer. 131 of these shelters are run by women's NGOs with a gender-specific, feminist approach. Approximately 5 are run by the state and around 85 by faith-based organizations. 40 Women's shelters are run by the Worker's Welfare Union (AWO). Lastly, approximately 100 shelters are run by other women's NGOs.

There is no set of accredited national standards for these shelters, only a set of recommendations. There are recommendations of the Frauenhauskoordinierung and also of the Autonomous Women's Shelters.

Women's shelters exist in most regions, and most of these provide 24/7 access. Immediate and direct access in emergency situations is possible in some of these. A long stay in any of these shelters is one which exceeds a period of three months, and very often shelters are asked by social services to justify their reasons for extending women's accommodations in such cases. Nevertheless, the usual length of stay in women's shelters is between 3 to 6 months, and sometimes even longer than this.

Some women's shelters provide services free of charge, yet under certain circumstances women have to pay. Women who are employed or possess certain assets fall under this category, as well as women who are not entitled to social benefits. Vulnerable women, especially refugee women, are negatively affected by this issue. Most women's shelters also have security precautions and most of them do offer non-residential support, however not all shelters have sufficient capacities to provide for this. Most women's shelters have an age limit for boys (14 years) and there is no age limit for girls. When it comes to access to women's shelters for specific groups, less than half of the existing shelters ensure access for women with disabilities and some shelters provide access to asylum seeking women, undocumented migrant women and lesbian or transgender women. All women's shelters take in migrant women, minority ethnic women, elderly women or women with or without children.

A total of € 32.625.070,00 was allocated by the government to women's shelters in 2014. This number represents only the funding from the federal state governments. It does not include funding from the national state and the municipalities.

It was not possible to state how many domestic violence shelters are operating in Germany.

Women's Centres

Germany has 420 women's centres, 183 rape crisis centres, 67 centres for women who have experienced sexual abuse in their childhood, 130 intervention centres with a pro-active approach and 40 centres for women victims of trafficking. All these different types of centres are run by women's NGOs and have different sources for funding, which include the State and donations. Women's centres, rape crisis centres and intervention centres with a pro-active approach exist in most provinces.

All women's centres offer information and advice, counselling, empowering support, risk assessment and safety planning; most of them offer advocacy, practical support, legal advice, court accompaniment, support regarding social rights (income, health care, independent residence permit, multi-agency support for survivors, and support for survivors to organize themselves; some women's centres offer specialist support for children, multi-lingual support, specialist support for black/minority ethnic/migrant/ asylum seeking women, outreach, floating/mobile support, support concerning social rights (work, housing, child care), cooperation with services working with perpetrators, they support the participation of survivors in policy development and evaluation and they provide family/systemic support. No women's centres ensure legal representation.

National Women's Network

Germany has 5 women's networks (these are national women's networks that solely work on the issue of gender based violence): BFF – Frauen gegen Gewalt e.V., ZIF – Zentrale Informationsstelle Autonomer Frauenhäuser, Frauenhauskoordinierung e.V., GESINE e.V. (Intervention gegen häusliche Gewalt) and KOK e.V. (Bundesweites Koordinierungskreis gegen Menschenhandel).

Members of BFF include autonomous rape crisis centres, women's counselling centres and intervention centres. The network holds seminars, organizes conferences and disseminates expertise, research and information materials. It has a total of 160 member organizations, and its national office is located in Berlin. BFF is also a legal entity and receives funding from the national government.

ZIF has 100 member organizations which are autonomous women's shelters; they do networking, engage in lobbying, and organize conferences. ZIF is not a legal entity and its national office is located in Bonn. It has one paid staff member and it does not receive funding from the national government.

Frauenhauskoordinierung e.V. has 18 member organisations. These include women's shelters, women's centres and intervention centres. The members engage in networking, they organize conferences, disseminate relevant materials and cooperate on various issues. The network is a legal entity and its office is located in Berlin. It has 4 paid staff members and it does receive funding from the national government.

KOK has 37 member organizations which address the phenomenon of human trafficking and also support victims of human trafficking.

GESINE is active in the area of domestic violence. Its members include health centres, equal opportunities offices, psychologists and physiotherapists. The network strives to provide for women victims of domestic violence in the health care sector.

Policy and Funding

The current national action plan on violence against women is called *Second Action Plan of the Federal Government to Combat Violence against Women* (2007-open end).

The following forms of violence are covered by this action plan: female genital mutilation, killings in the name of 'honour' and forced and early marriage.

It is important to note that the action plan itself does not represent a national strategy to tackle violence against women, but encompasses a list of different projects and already existing services.

Policies and measures about specialist support services are integrated in the national action plan. The coordinating body in charge of implementing policies and measures to prevent violence against women is the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ).

There is no national body entrusted with the evaluation and monitoring of the national action plan. The action has also not set any outcomes the government is required to achieve, because as previously mentioned, the so called action plan does not contain any strategy. It is merely a collection of various items related to violence against women, yet no vision or perspective aimed at tackling this phenomenon is distinguishable.

No appropriate financial and human resources are being allocated by the government for the adequate implementation of integrated policies. The amount of funds allocated for activities to combat violence against women on the national level is not known. There are no specific funds allocated for activities to combat violence against women on the national level. The law only allows for funding of women's NGOs in one federal state legislation (Schleswig-Holstein). No such provisions exist in the national legislation. Furthermore, governmental funding of women's support services is not mandated by law.

The most common types of funding for women's support services is project funding, annual core funding and individual case financing (Einzelfallfinanzierung). Funding provided to women's NGOs working in the field of violence against women continues to be scarce, the government is not listening to their recommendations as far as financing is concerned.

Prevention, Awareness-raising, Campaigning

All women's networks, women's centres and women's helplines are doing prevention work. It was not possible to indicate how much state funding has been allocated to such activities. There are no women's NGOs in Germany that are exclusively engaged in this type of activities.

Prevention – Good practice example 1

Organisation carrying out the activity: SToP Steilshoop (Hamburg) das bundesweite Projekt für "Stadtteile ohne Partnergewalt" (<http://stop-partnergewalt.org/wordpress/english/2940-2/>)

Timeframe of activity: since 2010

Goals and target groups: Prevention of Intimate Partner Violence. For low income neighbourhoods in Hamburg, Germany.

Description of activity: "StoP" is a new neighbourhood based approach to prevent and reduce domestic violence. It is about "community mainstreaming" of the issue using the method of community organizing. Social networks/neighbours are crucial in preventing DV and supporting victims but this potential has been neglected so far.

Main results: Studies prove that the rate of lethal violence against female partners is higher in neighbourhoods where the norm of non-intervention is strong. Police and Social work cannot do the job alone. It needs a strong civil society. And that means ground/ grassroots work: face to face communication, not sitting in offices but reaching out, doing door knocking, being present in shopping centres, playgrounds and in the street, bringing neighbours together, empowering people to speak out and take action, supporting victims and paying attention.

Prevention – Good practice example 2

Organisation carrying out the activity: cooperation of 3 organisations: rape crisis centre Worms, equal opportunity commission, child protection centre Worms (ASB)

Timeframe of activity: the campaign started in 2014 und is still running

Idea: Male and female soccer teams stand up against sexual violence and show a red card to sexual harassment

Goals and target groups: One important goal is to address boys and men to stand up against sexual harassment and sexual violence. Everybody has to respect the limits of other people! But still many activities to prevent violence and sexual harassment are addressing women and girls, because they are much more often victim of violence. The campaign "Grenzen setzen" wants to change this perspective and especially addresses men and boys to stop harassment and violence. One aim is to show mal 'role-models' against violence.

Description of activity: <http://grenzenachten.de/> (Respect someone's limits!)

Main results: During the campaign many pictures are taken with a red card against sexism and sexual violence against women and girls, for example from the local soccer male and female soccer teams in Worms. The female soccer team got new football shirts with "Grenzen setzen!" written on it, and lots of people participated in the campaign.

Awareness raising, good cooperation between specialised service centres, sports and many more.

Training

All national women's networks and women's centres in Germany are doing trainings. Some women's helplines are also engaged in such activities. State funding is rarely allocated for such activities. The most common target groups for trainings are police officers, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, health professionals, and teachers.

Training – Good practice example

Organisation carrying out the training: Bff in cooperation with Rape Crisis Centre Hamburg

Goals and target groups: Awareness rising of sexual harassment at work (University of Kassel), target group: Employees of the university of Kassel

Training framework ((a) in vocational/basic training, b) advanced training/continuing education, c) in-house training in the institution): Basic training

Timeframe: One-day in-house training

Description of activity: Awareness rising, Instruments against Sexual harassment at work

Main results: Theoretical input and information on how to prevent sexual harassment at the workplace, and how to deal with any such allegations and complaints.