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Methodologies and good practices on assessing the costs of violence against women

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Assessing the costs of violence against women in Germany

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Abstract:

Germany has a cost study (2017), but it does not comprehensively show all costs. Domestic violence in Germany seems to increase drastically since 2020.

1. Statement on methods and procedures for assessing the costs of violence against women in Germany

1.1 Assessment of the situation in Germany

Domestic violence has been investigated in Germany via various studies, e.g. Müller Schröttle and by the Federal Ministry (2013)¹ and (2014).² Further data for Germany is available via the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) – Violence against Women (2014).³

The situation for women and children in Germany under the pandemic conditions is alarming. According to this, domestic violence under lockdown conditions is increasing drastically. According to the results of a research of the “Welt am Sonntag” there were at least 6% more incidents.⁴

According to the findings of Charite Berlin, violence increased by 8%, with violent assaults becoming more severe, according to the Violence Protection Outpatient Clinic in the capital city.⁵ At the same time, a nationwide search of women's shelters shows a vacancy of hundreds to thousands of places for women and children in the federal states of Germany.⁶ In addition to data from the health care system and women's shelters, the University of Munich conducted a study of 3.800 women between the ages of 16-65 on the incidence of domestic violence during the lockdown.⁷ For example, 3% of the women surveyed reported that they had been

¹ Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (Hrsg.) (2013).

² Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (Hrsg.) (2014).

³ Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) (2014).

⁴ Lutz, M. (2021).

⁵ TAZ- Berlin (2021).

⁶ Lenz, M./Ricci, A./Siber P., u.a. (2021).

⁷ Steinert, J./Ebert, C. (2021).

subjected to domestic violence in the past month (30 days), during lockdown. Furthermore, 3.5% of the women were raped and in 6.5% of the responses, children were exposed to violence.⁸ If we extrapolate these studies' results to the women of these age groups in the Federal Republic of Germany⁹ this would result in 717.640 cases of domestic violence in one month only. Furthermore, 861.180 women nationwide would be victims of rape in the same period. Germany still lacks an overall strategy for implementing the Istanbul Conventions.

1.2 The Cost Study on Domestic Violence in Germany

In Germany, cost estimates were made before.¹⁰ The first cost study for Germany was prepared in 2017.¹¹ This cost calculation is based on the sum of directly tangible and indirectly tangible costs and amounts to **3.8 billion € per year**. Per inhabitant in Germany, **46.5 €** are therefore spent annually on the consequences of domestic violence¹².

Calculated for all persons of working age (18 < 65 years), this results in a value of **74 euros per person and year**. In addition to the **direct tangible costs of 1,043.8 million €** per year and the **indirect tangible costs of 2,756.5 million euros** per year, there are also **intangible costs of 17.975,8 million € per lifetime**.¹³

The following costs of violence were calculated in the three categories shown¹⁴:

- Direct tangible Costs: 1.043,8 Mio €
- Indirect tangible Costs: 2.756,5 Mio €
- Intangible Costs: 17.975,8 Mio €

Calculation methodology:

The monetary costs presented are based on a period of one year (365 days). The intangible costs, which represent lifetime losses, are an exception. The table (Appendix 2) shows the details of the cost areas.¹⁵ The system is based on the Swiss cost study "Costs of Violence in Couple Relationships".¹⁶

⁸ Steinert, J./Ebert, C. (2021).

⁹ Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (10.08.20).

¹⁰ Brzank, P. (2009).

¹¹ Sacco (2017). It was an independent study not supported by financial contributions.

¹² Sacco (2017, S. 124)

¹³ Sacco (2017, S. 14).

¹⁴ Sacco (2017, S. 14, S. 121)

¹⁵ EDI - Eidgenössisches Büro für die Gleichstellung von Frau und Mann EBG 2013, S. 6.

¹⁶ EDI - Eidgenössisches Büro für die Gleichstellung von Frau und Mann EBG 2013, S. 21.

1.3 On the political debate in Germany on how violence against women should be measured

A cost study is already available in Germany. Not all costs could be measured due to lack of data. However, since women's rights to prevention, care and rehabilitation in cases of domestic violence have not yet been fully realised in Germany (cf. Frauenhauskoordinierung (2020), Deutscher Juristinnenbund (2020)), their implementation would first have to be realised in order to be able to show an approximation to the actual costs. A political debate on the measurement of costs to conduct another, more comprehensive, cost study is currently not visible in the public or professional public discourse.

2. Methods for assessing the direct costs of violence against women in Germany's cost study

The following is an overview of the calculation methods used in the cost study already carried out for Germany:

Direct tangible costs: The calculations of tangible costs are based on the accounting method. The accounting method is carried out by multiplying the quantity by the price or value.

Indirect tangible costs: The calculations are made using the human capital method or the accounting method. The human capital method is used to calculate lost productivity or lost revenue. The human capital method is performed by multiplying the amount of lost productivity by the price or value. Intangible costs can be seen in appendix 3.

Intangible costs: The calculation is made using the DALY method.¹⁷ DALY calculations are used to generate values for the loss of years in full health. The time that the quality of life is reduced or no longer available (premature death) due to the consequences of violence (illness, disability) is translated into estimated monetary values.

2.1 Considering the methods described in the discussion paper – a brief assessment of feasibility in Germany

The feasibility in Germany can be assessed as feasible if the problems mentioned above are overcome and if the necessary resources and framework conditions are available. The implementation of the Istanbul Convention would be important in

¹⁷ DALY stands for the abbreviation "disability-adjusted life years" or disease-adjusted life years (lost). It is a concept for measuring various diseases and their significance for society.

order to begin to assess the actual costs. Germany has not yet developed an overall strategy for this.¹⁸

2.2 Alternative approaches to conducting cost studies

Any approach that leads to the participation of the countries in the EU states and is recognised and implementable by them would be welcome. Of course, a simple, comprehensible structure and the associated low resource requirements can increase the realisation.

2.3 Available data sets in Germany and the data gaps

In the fields of health research/health protection, few studies exist that provide data on costs in the health sector, e.g. Brzank (2009). Victim data in the (bright sense) for calculating costs for the police/justice sector can be obtained via the police crime statistics. Systematic data on the costs of domestic violence in Germany are not yet available.

Data gaps exist in the areas of:

- Costs to companies and society due to presenteeism of victims at work;
- Transfer costs (e.g., unemployment benefit II) due to victims' loss of jobs;
- Costs for the implementation of expulsions by the police;
- Costs and follow-up costs due to injuries to police officers during operations;
- Further education and special training of the police task forces;
- Costs of access and custody proceedings in cases of domestic violence;
- Compensation of victims;
- Femicide (detailed information).

The information on data gaps is not comprehensive. The implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Germany is required¹⁹ and thus further care services or data are still outstanding.

3. The challenges of assessing the costs of violence against women in Germany

A number of challenges exist, including:

- Lack of a uniform definition of domestic violence;

¹⁸ Bündnis Istanbul- Konvention (2/2021)

¹⁹ Deutscher Juristinnenbund (2019), Istanbul Konvention (Umsetzungdefizite und Handlungsbedarfe)

- No or insufficient funding to conduct a comprehensive and systematic cost study;
- Insufficient or unavailable data in the cost areas;
- Little comparability of data within the federal states (federalism) in Germany;
- Goals and strategies to combat domestic violence are different in the federal states (measurability and comparability of data);
- A Nationwide study in Germany during lockdown to measure violence against women and children would be important;
- Political programming (urgency of implementing the Istanbul Convention via an overall strategy).

3.1 Data generation and execution

In order to expand a professional base of experts with expertise in combating domestic violence throughout Germany, the relevant teaching should be offered at all universities and colleges of social work, psychology, sociology, etc.

3.2 Implementation of the data generation

Data collection could be supported by a specially developed software program. This would make it easier and less costly for the countries to record and calculate costs. Due to the existing differences between the countries, flexibility should be taken into account.

4. Conclusions and recommendations for possible activities at national and European level to assess the costs of violence against women

The cost studies on domestic violence can be linked to various objectives. One of these objectives would be the controlled data generation for transparency and disclosure of economic losses and damages in the own country. Provided that there is a good data base and a common approach to costing and its calculation, comparability within the EU countries would be an option. For this, a consensus or agreement of all countries on the mathematical calculation of the costs and the cost areas of domestic violence would have to be reached.

The current cost study could be used to present the actual situation and to record interim results in the respective country. In order to achieve this objective, it would be recommendable to anchor the survey procedure of the costs caused by domestic violence as a regular statistic and cost survey within the framework of an overall

strategy, e.g. by law on the EU level or to establish it Europe-wide by an EU decision.

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Appendix 1

Tab. 1: Cost areas and categories for violence in couple relationships (EDI 2013)

Tangible		Intangible
direct	indirect	
<p>Definition: Actual expenditures on goods and services used as a direct result of violence.</p>	<p>Definition: Not actual expenditures made, but opportunity costs with an economic value resulting from the lost benefits due to the loss of potential as a result of violence.</p>	<p>Definition: Consequences of violence that cannot be matched by a direct monetary value</p>
<p>Cost areas (among others): Police, justice, support services for victims and offenders, health care.</p>	<p>Cost areas (among others): Lost income, profits and economic benefits due to reduced efficiency and lost working time as a result of illness, disability and death, as well as tax and social security losses.</p>	<p>Cost ranges Loss of quality of life due to pain, suffering, anxiety. Loss of loved ones and dependents</p>

Appendix 2

Share of women Germany (2018) = 50,7% von 83 Mio.			
Violence Data /Percentages of violence (Steinert/Ebert 2021)			
Share of women	42.081.000 (100%)	%	Total share of women aged 18 - 65 = 23.921.646 women
60 – 65 years	1.753.375	12,6	1) of which 3% women affected by domestic violence within one month in lockdown = 717.650 cases of domestic Violence against women 2) of which 3, 6% raped women within one month in lockdown = 861.180 women raped
50 – 59 years	6.690.879	15,9	
40 – 49 years	5.175.963	12,3	
30 – 39 years	5.218.044	12,4	
20 – 29 years	4.713.072	11,2	
18 years	370.313	8,8	

Appendix 3

Methods for assessing the costs of violence against women in the cost study of Germany (2017)

The following is an overview of the calculation methods used in the previously conducted cost study for Germany:

Direct tangible costs: the calculations of tangible costs are based on the accounting method. The accounting method is carried out by multiplying the quantity by the price or value.

Indirect tangible costs: the calculations are based on the human capital method or the accounting method. The human capital method is used to calculate productivity losses or lost revenues. The human capital method uses the amount of lost productivity multiplied by the price or value.

Intangible costs: are calculated using the DALY method. Values are generated via the DALY calculations for years lost in full health. The time that the quality of life is reduced or no longer available (premature death) due to the consequences of violence (illness, disability) is translated into estimated monetary values.