



Violence protection in Germany



A guide for male refugees and new arrivals

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Projektleitung: Ramazan Salman (EMZ e.V.), Prof. Dr. Dr. Jan İlhan Kizilhan (DHBW)

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Welcome message

Dear readers,

every person has the right to a self-determined life that is free from fear and violence. This is what the Germany-wide 'MiMi Violence Prevention With Migrants for Migrants' project – which publishes this guide – advocates for.



It supports and trains men with a migration background as mediators so that they may inform others about our laws and community norms, thus also contributing actively to violence prevention. The work of the mediators is important because those who have come to Germany as refugees or migrants are faced with quite some challenges: it is not easy to find one's way in a new country and to understand the rules and customs of the host society. Much of it may seem unfamiliar at first, some of it even incomprehensible. This is where mediators intervene, providing education about rights and introducing support services. Mediators know from their own experience how challenging arriving in a new environment, in unfamiliar surroundings can be. Especially when traumatic experiences are added into the mix. Their work makes an irreplaceable contribution to arriving and living well in Germany.

This guide takes up important issues about avoiding violence. The following pages present the legal foundations and specific laws regarding violence protection and pathways away from violence. This guide is intended for male refugees and new arrivals, but equally for everyone else who is contributing to violence prevention and committed to working for peaceful, violence-free community living in our country.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annette Widmann-Mauz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Annette Widmann-Mauz,
Minister of State in the Federal Chancellery and Federal Government Commissioner
for Migration, Refugees and Integration



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Introduction

Who is this guide for?

Violence exists in every country around the globe – but it occurs in different forms and situations, and to varying degrees. Options and procedures for obtaining protection from violence also differ from country to country. This guide aims to assist you with finding your way more easily in Germany regarding the issue of violence. It intends to provide information about options for protection and support, as well as about how to recognise and reduce violent behaviour in oneself and others. It is for everyone interested in this topic, everyone who knows people affected by violence – as victims or as perpetrators – and everyone who would like to work towards more respectful interpersonal relationships. A particular emphasis will be on respectful interactions in domestic partnerships and within the family.

This guide is directed especially towards male refugees and new arrivals.

Men and women are affected by violence in different ways and to different degrees, and also use violence differently. Dealing with experiences of violence and their effects also varies, which makes it important to provide separate information for men and for women. A separate guide exists for female refugees and new arrivals.

This guide also takes into account the particular situation of refugees and new arrivals who grew up in countries or societies where the forms and degrees of violence – but also the understanding of violence in relationships and the family, and how to deal with it – are very different from the situation in Germany.

What does this guide cover?

Before we can talk about protection from violence, it is important to clarify what violence means exactly. This is dealt with in Chapter 1. Violence can exist in very different forms and at different levels. Classifying it can help with understanding everything that violence encompasses. As a consequence, violence can have different effects on different people. For the protection from violence and for support with experiences of violence, it is helpful to know about these possible effects. Sometimes, health complaints that occur after a violent incident are not recognised at all as being connected to the violence. In addition, its effects make it all the more important to prevent violence.

Chapter 2 aims to explain when the use of force may be justified, e.g. when it is used to protect people. Under what circumstances the use of force is deemed legitimate and when it is deemed illegal differs from country to country. This depends on the values of the society concerned, but also on how it is constituted and on its laws. There can also be differences from person to person regarding what is experienced as violence and what is accepted as normal behaviour. To protect from violence, it is important for people to be aware of their own beliefs and the beliefs that exist in the society they live in. This also includes the applicable rights and laws.

In order to understand why interpersonal violence exists, it is important to look at the societal context and how power is shared in the society. This is discussed in Chapter 3. When we look at an individual person, emotional stress and mental illness can also be causes of violent behaviour. Depending on the causes and the context, different approaches are required to reduce violence.

Chapter 4 describes who those affected can turn to when they have become victims of violence. Services for people who perpetrate violence and would like to stop are also listed.

1. What is violence?

Violence is a threat to people's health, and sometimes also to their life. This is why the World Health Organization (WHO) is taking it on. In its 2013 'World Report on Violence and Health', it defines violence as:

'The intentional use of *physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or *deprivation*.'**

Violence therefore encompasses

- Harmful behaviours engaged in by a person towards themselves (e.g. self-harm or suicide)
- Violence perpetrated by one or several others (e.g. abuse in the family, attacks by strangers, or attacks at school or in the workplace)
- Violence used by larger groups such as states, *militias* or terrorist organisations, with the aim of achieving political, economic or social objectives (e.g. armed conflict, genocide, human rights abuses or terrorism)

According to the World Health Organization, violent acts include not only physical harm, but also verbal threats and intimidation. The commonality of all violent actions is that their effects are or may be damaging the physical or emotional health of one or more persons, and may even result in death.

At the same time, violence is today also generally understood as the 'restriction of a person's self-actualisation'. This means that a person is being restricted in his or her ability to make decisions about his or her life. This may occur through the actions of individuals, but also through certain regulations in organisations or institutions, or through the unequal distribution of power in a *society*. For the long-term protection from violence, *social* conditions must therefore also be taken into account.

In the following, this guide will initially discuss interpersonal violence, i.e. when violence is perpetrated by one or several other individuals.

* Glossary terms are printed in italics in the text.

WHAT KINDS OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE EXIST?

Interpersonal violence may take a range of forms:

- **Physical violence**
such as: hitting, kicking, attacks using all kinds of objects, pulling hair, slapping, pushing, throttling, shaking, burning or using acid
- **Emotional violence**
such as: insults, constant correcting, verbal abuse, humiliation, ridicule (also in public), blackmail, threats (e.g. to harm the person or the children, or to take away the children)
- **Sexual violence**
e.g.: coercing a person to perform sexual acts against her or his will, rape, forced prostitution or coercion to record images or video footage of sexual acts.

In addition, the following forms of violence exist particularly in the private sphere:

- **Social violence**
such as: constant control, prohibiting social contact, forbidding participation in a language course, not allowing a person to leave the house, imposing *norms* and values against the person's will
- **Financial violence**
such as: creating financial dependence, forbidding that a person goes to work or pursues an education, sole control over the available money.

WHERE DOES INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE TAKE PLACE?

Interpersonal violence can occur in a range of places and in various contexts:

- **In public**
e.g. on the bus or tram, at the disco
- **In institutions**
e.g. in the shared accommodation facility, in clubs and associations, at work or at school
- **In private**
e.g. perpetrated by family members, relatives or friends.
- If violence occurs between adult relationship partners or former relationship partners, it is also called '**domestic violence**'. This form of violence mostly affects women.

In Germany, about every 4th woman becomes a victim of violence perpetrated by her partner or ex-partner during her lifetime.

Protection options differ depending on the location. If a relationship or dependency exists with the person perpetrating the violence, e.g. to a teacher, a superior at work or within the family, it is more difficult to protect oneself from violence than with an unknown individual.

In addition, the consequences of violence are more severe for the person affected. The effects are especially severe in cases of family violence because it occurs in the private sphere, which is supposedly there to offer protection. Here, violence is perpetrated by the people whom we are closest to, and who are actually supposed to provide support and protection.

In the majority of cases of domestic violence, men are the perpetrators and women are the ones who are affected. It always affects the children as well.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE ON THOSE AFFECTED?

The effects of violence can be very different from person to person. On the one hand, the kind of violence a person is subjected to can differ. On the other hand, every individual also reacts differently to it. It also depends how much support an affected person receives from family members, friends and others.

If a person is able to talk with someone – for example with a partner or a friend – about the violence they suffered, and are met with understanding, this often supports the healing process.

Domestic violence is no private matter – it's a criminal offence.



For those affected, violence often has consequences in very different parts of life. Some effects are visible, while others remain invisible. Some effects occur immediately after the violent incident, others only follow months or even years later. It can therefore sometimes be difficult to identify the violent experience as the cause.

Effects on health

Common physical harm includes:

- Bone fractures, damage to internal organs, internal bleeding, brain damage (caused by blows to the head or falls after being pushed), badly healed wounds and scarring (e.g. from cuts, heat or acid burns), inflammation, impaired vision or hearing loss
- In case of rape, i.e. forced intercourse, also: anal injuries and bleeding, permanent pain during sexual intercourse, bladder and kidney infections, sexually transmitted infections, sexual *dysfunction* (for women this includes miscarriage, unwanted pregnancy as well as vaginal injuries and bleeding).

Some of these physical injuries and diseases can heal. Medical attention is very important.

The damage to health caused by violence not only affects the body, but also the soul or '*psyche*'.

Common effects on emotional ('psychological') health are:

- Sleep disorders, anxiety (panic attacks or mortal fear in objectively safe situations, fear of leaving the house or the room), headache, nausea, great mistrust of strangers, *depression*, intense grief and despair, shame and guilt, flashbacks (reliving the violent experience in the mind), aggression and rage, dependency on drugs or medication (e.g. pain relief), suicidal thoughts or attempted suicide.

In addition, especially in cases of sexual violence:

- Disgust with one's own body, disgust with sexuality, strongly sexualised behaviour, loss of sexual pleasure or even sexual dysfunction.

Especially the emotional effects are not always recognised as being connected to the violent experience, but seen as one's own 'inadequacy' or 'weakness'. This can reinforce a sense of worthlessness and make recovery more difficult. Sometimes, family and friends don't understand this connection either and criticise how the person behaves or put pressure on them. This may also make recovery more difficult.

Just as physical injuries require medical treatment and care in order to heal properly, many emotional hurts also require treatment and care. *Psychotherapists* and *psychiatrists* are specially trained for the professional treatment of emotional hurts. They are bound by *professional confidentiality*. What is discussed with them must not be passed on to anyone else (see Chapter 4. Pathways away from violence).

Effects on the family and social effects

As social beings, humans depend on social contact. This includes families, friends, acquaintances and work colleagues. However, interpersonal violence is often perpetrated in particular by people who are part of the social environment. Rarely are the perpetrators complete strangers. Especially then, violence comes with severe social consequences for those affected.

Exclusion from the family or social environment

If, for example, violence in a relationship ceases on account of separation or divorce, rejection by the family may also be the result. Not always do relatives support victims of violence, especially if they are female. In some cases, the perpetrators are being protected – especially if they are male.

This is based on beliefs about which party in a relationship has certain rights. Victims of violence often experience additional loneliness, feelings of guilt and financial stress because of this. If one parent is rejected by the other parent or the family, the children always suffer as well. It means that part of their own identity is being rejected.

How you can help

Maybe you know people – in your family or circle of friends – who are acting strangely or whose behaviour has changed. Maybe you know people who are aggressive or easily annoyed, or who suddenly avoid contact and withdraw. It is possible that an experience of violence is the cause. In such cases it can help not to regard the behaviour as intentional, but as an expression of emotional hurt. It can help to gently seek or maintain contact with the person, but without pressuring them.

Family influence

Social pressure develops from expectations placed on a person by the family or the social environment. What these expectations are is also connected to the person's gender. Certain beliefs often exist about how a man or a woman (and also a boy or a girl) should behave, about what is seen as right and wrong. Beliefs about how men should behave are often connected to ideas of 'strength', 'the protector' or 'the head of the family'.

In some cases, this leads to boys or men being forced by the family to use violence, e.g. around ideas about protecting the family 'honour'.

If men become victims of violence, it can happen that they can no longer fulfil these expectations because they need assistance and support themselves. This can lead to conflict or rejection by the family or the social environment, and also to those affected rejecting themselves. At the same time, becoming a victim of violence also contradicts the belief of the 'strong man'. Especially in cases of sexual violence, victims often feel a great deal of shame and guilt, and therefore can't share their experience with the people they are close to.

Victims of violence, be they male or female, are never to blame or responsible for the violence perpetrated on them.

If violence has been suffered over a longer period, this can lead to further and further withdrawal from the social environment. Trust in one's own safety is lost. Own beliefs begin to change. The world is experienced as threatening. It becomes difficult to go to work.

Strong family and social consequences can lead to the affected person being subject to severe health effects and keeping quiet about the violent experiences suffered, or even putting up with continuing violence.

Support from counselling services

Counselling centres for victims of violence also offer professional support in these cases. Effects can be discussed and considered, and support options can be found. It is always the affected person who decides which services they will access and whether they want to *report* the incident to the police as *a crime*. In counselling, nobody is rejected because of their experiences or decisions; affected persons are always treated with respect and understanding. Professional confidentiality also applies – counsellors are not allowed to pass on what was discussed to any other person.

Especially in cases of domestic and sexual violence, many types of support services are available for women in particular, as women are the affected party in most cases of domestic and sexual violence. Depending on the region, specialised services also exist for men who are affected.

Services are also available for men who use violence and who want to learn to relate respectfully to other people, or to deal with conflicts without resorting to violence (see Chapter 4. Pathways away from violence).

EFFECTS ON CHILDREN

When children become victims of violence, the effects are in many ways similar to those experienced by adults. Children also come away with physical injuries and emotional hurts. However, they may respond very differently. Some children become very quiet and withdrawn, others quickly respond with aggression or are easily annoyed. Children may also try not to show how they feel in order not to stress their parents.

A loving and supportive relationship to the parents is what will help children talk about an experience of violence at all.

Violence between parents ('domestic violence') also has severe effects on children – even if the children themselves are not hit, abused or raped, but only see, hear or indirectly become aware of conflict between the parents. The emotional effects are as severe as if the child was the direct victim:

- Feeling worthless
- Disappointment in the weakness of one parent, own helplessness is reinforced also in other life situations
- School performance drops
- Siding with the perpetrator, with strength being wrongly perceived as security
- Taking on male and female role models: children who have experienced domestic violence often become perpetrators or victims in later relationships.

- The burden of the secret-keeper: parents often forbid children to talk to outsiders about violence between the parents because the perpetrator may otherwise face a court conviction. This is a lot of pressure for children to bear, they feel guilty and are unable to accept help.
- Severe *trauma*: complete denial and suppression of the experience can lead to social withdrawal, and, in the worst case, to suicide.

Children as victims of parental violence

The effects on children are most dramatic when they suffer violence directly at the hand of their parents or close relatives. These children's trust in other people is often severely eroded because precisely the people who should be caring for and protecting them are now acting violently towards them. Their own home no longer offers them protection but turns into a place of suffering from which the children find it difficult to escape.

This also causes children great emotional conflict. Many don't allow themselves to reject the violent parent because of what they have done, but look to blame or begin to hate themselves. Many children also silently endure the violence because they don't want their family to break up. Or the parent puts them under pressure not to tell anyone.

If children suffer violence over a longer period, this can lead to a sustained disruption to the development of their personality. This means that their personality will also be affected in adulthood, even if the violence will long since have ceased. Mental illnesses such as '*borderline personality disorder*' or '*avoidance personality disorder*' may result.

If parental violence is suspected in the case of a child, it requires a careful response in order not to increase the pressure or violence inflicted by the parents. A conversation at a counselling centre or on a helpline against violence (see Chapter 4. Pathways away from violence) can help with discussing support options that can best protect the child.

2. When is something thought of as violence?

Sometimes, violent behaviour is tolerated – i.e. not punished – or perceived as ‘normal’ by the family or the society, despite its severe detrimental effects. Sometimes, traditions or laws even demand the violent behaviour and regard it as legitimate. Under which conditions violence is seen as legitimate or necessary differs from country to country and from society to society, depending on the prevailing values and norms.

Moreover, whether violence is accepted generally also depends on the type of society. Germany’s ‘modern society’ only allows force to be used on behalf of the state, and only when there is no other option to prevent violence (see the Chapter on ‘The German state monopoly on the legitimate use of force’ below). In such cases, the terms ‘executive powers’ or ‘police interventions’ are used instead of ‘violence’. They are intended to avoid danger and prevent crime. In Germany, the police must follow the prescribed laws on police interventions (policing law).

In all other circumstances, violence is a criminal offence. The goal is to reduce violence more and more over the long term.

VALUES AND NORMS AS JUSTIFICATIONS FOR VIOLENCE

In some regions or countries, violent behaviour is tolerated by the family or society despite its severe impact on the victims. Violence is considered ‘normal’ behaviour in this respect and remains unpunished. Sometimes, traditions or state laws even demand the violent behaviour and regard it as legitimate.

Examples:

- In some countries, men have the legal right to control the economic decisions of their wives. Women are allowed to take up employment and earn their own money only under very particular circumstances (> financial violence).
- In some regions, traditional customs demand that girls have entire body parts cut off, namely the *clitoris* and labia. Female genital mutilation is violence (> physical violence).
- In some countries, arbitrary arrests occur. Detainees are sometimes humiliated, tortured or raped by members of the police force or secret services, and have no possibility of bringing such injustices before a court of law (> emotional, physical and sexual violence).

- In some countries, marriage gives the husband a right to sexual intercourse with his wife whenever he wishes. The woman has no opportunity to participate in the decision, whether she would like to have sexual intercourse at the time or not. If sexual intercourse occurs against the will of the woman, then it is considered rape, which in Germany is a criminal offence (> sexual violence). Of course this also applies if the couple is not married.

Under what conditions violence is considered legitimate and when it is considered unlawful therefore differs from society to society, and sometimes also from family to family. It has to do with the respective values and traditions, e.g. with beliefs

about how a man or a woman should behave, or with the status of children in relation to the adults. Beliefs that there might be differences in the worthiness of different people according to their ethnic or religious affiliations also promote violence.

These social judgements change over time – as does lifestyle – and with it the society's values and traditions. This is also connected to the development of the relevant rights and laws in a particular country.

Children have a right to violence-free parenting.



CHANGES IN ATTITUDES TOWARDS VIOLENCE

Fifty years ago in Germany, teachers had the right to hit children with a cane as part of their education. This has been prohibited by law since 1973. Since the year 2000, children also have – according to § 1631 of the *German Civil Code* (*Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch, BGB*) – the right to a violence-free upbringing in the family. For their parents', and especially for their grandparents' generation, corporal punishment inside the family was still common.

Values about parenting have changed during the same period. For the grandparents' generation, obedience and compliance were very important. Violence was regarded as a legitimate punishment for transgressions, so that children would learn to follow the rules. Physical injuries and emotional hurts were not paid much attention or were accepted as a necessary evil.

Today, children are supposed to grow up protected and able to develop freely. Compliance with existing norms is no longer the priority – in favour of the development of the individual's personality. This also supports the democratic ideal. Today, each child has a legislated 'Right to support in its development and an upbringing conducive to a responsible and socially competent personality' according to Art. 1.1 of Book VIII of the *Social Code* (§1 Artikel 1 *Sozialgesetzbuch, SGB VIII*).

Despite changes in societal values and new laws, it still happens that parents punish their children using physical or emotional violence. This occurs e.g. in the form of slapping the face or body, or verbal abuse. Why is this so? Conflicts emerge from time to time when bringing up children, or situations where children need to be set limits. These kinds of situations can be stressful for parents. If parents have been hit as children in similar situations, it can happen that they – in stressful situations – behave the same way with their own children without intending to.

Perhaps they also don't have any role models for dealing with such situations without resorting to violence. Maybe they want to stick to the old values because they think 'it didn't do me any harm either'. In the area of parenting, a range of courses and support services exist for those who want to learn about respectful parenting without violent punishments (see Chapter 4. Pathways away from violence).

The social changes needed to reduce violence are often linked to personal learning processes. Sometimes they also require a willingness to reflect and a change to one's own values.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF VALUES AND NORMS IN MIGRATION?

As human beings we learn, in our childhood, not only the language of the people around us, but also how different people should behave, e.g. men and women, younger and older people, in private or in public. This also includes who is permitted to use violence against whom. We learn about this mostly in our family. This learning process happens automatically, without any effort being required on our part and without us noticing it. The specialist term for this process is 'socialisation'.

Just as we can speak our first language without having studied its grammar, we are also able to behave 'properly' in our homeland without having studied the rules of community life.

When we find ourselves in another country, we don't only have to learn a new language, but also the rules of living together. This may include how to greet another person, how punctual to be for an appointment, or what it means when a female stranger initiates a conversation. If I don't know the rules of living together, it can happen that I am misunderstood or that I meet with rejection without knowing why.

It can happen that I end up being rude despite intending to be very polite. It's even possible that I break the law with my behaviour, without knowing and without intending to do so. The initial period of living in a foreign country is therefore often a very stressful time. However, it also offers an opportunity to reflect on one's own, automatically acquired behaviour, and to find out about new behaviours and to try them out.

A lot can be learned by observing and imitating others. To support the process of getting to know the rules of community life in Germany, a range of services such as language courses, integration courses and online information, as well as social services in accommodation facilities are also available. They offer the opportunity to ask questions when things are unclear or if you feel insecure. When one's own behaviours are not understood by others, a conversation can often help, e.g. with people who come from the same country but have already been living in Germany for longer, or with German friends and colleagues.

Knowing the rules of community life is an important step towards getting along well in a new country. At the same time it is very likely that there will be rules or ways of behaving that seem unfamiliar at first. Then it is important to reflect or ask a question about what the behaviour might mean. Then, the behaviour will often become understandable and can be accepted.

Who is permitted to use violence against who is also connected to social values and rights. This means that even if certain ways of behaving are perhaps perceived as legitimate, they break German law and may even attract punishment as a criminal offence. It is therefore important to know German laws and rights in order not to break them unintentionally. To be aware of one's own rights also makes it easier to protect oneself and others.

Example:

If a person doesn't look the other person in the eye during a conversation, this may initially be perceived as a lack of respect, although it may be intended as a courtesy.

When social rules just feel 'wrong', it could also be because the value and belief system of the new country is different from the one a person has acquired growing up. These may be beliefs about the rights of e.g. men, women, children and parents, or members of certain religions or ethnic groups.



Often we don't even know that we have certain acquired values and belief systems because we have mostly learned them without noticing. Sometimes we don't even know exactly what our values and beliefs are because, to us, they appear normal and self-evident. But when we live in another country, it is important to know our own values as well as those of the new country. Often these differences help to reflect on one's own and on other people's value and belief systems, or to share and discuss them.

LEGAL PRINCIPLES AND LAWS IN GERMANY

Germany's basic laws are articulated in Articles 1 – 19 of the *Basic Law (Grundgesetz)*. Important rights are, for example,

- The right to life and physical integrity (Article 2.2),
- The equality of men and women (Article 3.2),
- Protection from discrimination on the basis of sex, parentage, race, language, homeland and origin, faith, religious or political opinion or disability (Article 3.3) and
- The right to freedom of faith, conscience and the freedom to profess to religious or philosophical creed (Article 4.1).

The complete Basic Law is available online at www.bundestag.de/grundgesetz (in German). Translations of the Basic Law into Arabic, Mandarin, English, Farsi, French, Italian, Polish, Russian, Serbian, Spanish and Turkish are available e.g. at www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Broschueren/das-grundgesetz.html. The Basic Law is also one of the topics included in integration courses.

The *Criminal Code (Strafgesetzbuch, StGB)* determines which acts are prohibited and the punishments a court can impose.

The Criminal Code also includes acts committed in the private sphere, i.e. inside families or partnerships, and including those related to sexuality, for example.

Section 177 states '**Sexual assault; sexual coercion; rape**

(1) A person who, against the apparent will of another person, performs sexual acts on that person or causes them to be performed by that person or makes that person perform or endure sexual acts on or by a third person shall be punished by imprisonment of six months to five years.'

This legal provision also applies to married couples. It means that, in principle, both people must consent for any sexual intercourse to be lawful, including inside a marriage. Men and women have equal rights in this regard. There is no entitlement to sexuality that gives a person the right to sex or sexual acts independent of the other person's consent. Also, partners must not be put under any pressure. This is intended to protect self-determination with respect to one's body, and therefore also physical and mental health.

Sexual harassment also became a criminal offence in Germany in 2016. It includes e.g. unwanted kisses or touching private body parts such as the breasts or the bottom if they occur against the will of the affected person and 'with sexual intent' (see also Section 184i of the Criminal Code StGB).

Sexual harassment may occur e.g. in the street, but also in the workplace. The affected person is often taken by surprise. The perpetrator wants to demonstrate that he has power and control over the person.

Victims often experience such situations as very humiliating and insulting.

Additional legal provisions exist in relation to sexual intercourse between adults (18 years and older) and children or adolescents (under 18 years old). In such cases, sex may be a criminal offence even with the consent of the child or adolescent.

- Sexual acts on/with children under 14 years of age, for example, are always a criminal offence (Section 176 of the Criminal Code StGB).
- Sexual acts are also always a criminal offence if performed by persons in a duty of care relationship (e.g. relatives, teachers) on/with adolescents up to 16 years of age.
- Sexual acts on/with adolescents up to 18 years of age are also a criminal offence if the duty of care relationship is being abused for the purposes of sexual acts.

In such cases the term '**sexual abuse**' applies.

There are special laws for children and adolescents because they can be particularly easily influenced by adults or pressured because of dependency. Moreover, it is assumed that children and adolescents are still learning about their own needs and limits with regard to sexuality.

On the topic of marriage, the Criminal Code (StGB) specifies that forced marriage is prohibited in Germany.

Section 237 (1) on forced marriage states **'A person who illegally coerces another through violence or by threatening significant harm to enter into marriage will be punished by imprisonment between six months and five years. Such acts are illegal if the use of violence or the threat of significant harm in pursuit of this aim would be considered reprehensible.'**

The subsequent subsections of Section 237 specify that it is also a criminal offence to take a person outside of Germany for the purposes of forced marriage, and that even the attempt to commit such an act represents a criminal offence.

The entire Criminal Code is available online at www.gesetze-im-internet.de/stgb/index.html (in German), and at www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_stgb/index.html (in English).

Myths about female rape

Prejudices still exist on this topic today. Some men – and also some women – partially blame women who have experienced rape and report it. It is often stated that the woman acted inappropriately or could have defended herself. It is important to understand that women are often frozen with terror when they are being raped. Defending herself may make the situation even more dangerous for her. At law, a simple 'NO' is sufficient.

A woman is never to blame when a man has raped her! Her behaviour before or during the rape – e.g. what kinds of clothing she is wearing or whether she is out on her own at night – has no role to play when it comes to apportioning blame. The guilty party is always the perpetrator!

It is also wrong to assume that the perpetrator is always a stranger: most rapes are committed by people from within the woman's close personal environment.

It is equally wrong to assume that a woman who accuses a man of having raped her wants to take revenge or harm him. According to the police, wrongful accusations are extremely rare. They represent approximately 3 % of all cases. Much more frequently, rapes go unreported in the first place, representing ca. 90 % of all cases. This is because women are often frightened that they won't be believed or are ashamed to talk about the offence.

Source: Repräsentative Studie des Bundesministeriums für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (representative study by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth). www.bmfsfj.de/blob/84328/0c83aab6e685eeddc01712109bcb02b0/langfassung-studie-frauenteil-eins-data.pdf

Another important law specifying citizens' rights and obligations in general is the German Civil Code (Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch, BGB). It includes provisions regarding sale contracts, debt, property rentals and inheritance. Part four of the BGB also specifies rights and obligations inside families, i.e. the legal relationships between parents and children as well as between other relatives.

It states, for example, the prerequisites for entering into marriage, and under what circumstances an existing marriage can be dissolved.

Since 2017, a legal provision has been in force determining that marriage can only be entered into if both prospective spouses are at least 18 years old. The following provisions apply to existing marriages where at least one of the spouses was under the age of 18 at the time of entering into the marriage:

If at least one spouse was under 16 years old at the time of marriage, the marriage is automatically considered invalid. Transitional provisions exist for couples that have been married for a long time.

If, at the time of entering into the marriage, at least one spouse was between 16 and 18 years old, the marriage is usually dissolved by a judge. A dissolution of marriage may be avoided if it would result in particular hardship for the spouses, or if the spouse who was a minor at the time of marriage has reached adulthood in the meantime and has confirmed the marriage.

Section 1314.2 of the Civil Code (BGB) specifies that a forced marriage can be dissolved. This requires that the appropriate application is made within one year (Section 1317.1.1 of the Civil Code).

The complete German Civil Code is available online at www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bgb/ (in German), and at www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_bgb/index.html (in English).

The language of law codes is not always easy to understand. For questions or clarifications, it can be helpful to ask a suitable contact person, e.g. from social services in a shared accommodation facility or at a counselling centre (see Chapter 4. Pathways away from violence).

THE GERMAN STATE MONOPOLY ON THE LEGITIMATE USE OF FORCE

One characteristic of a 'modern' society – in contrast to 'traditional' societies – is the 'state monopoly on the legitimate use of force'.

The 'state monopoly on the use of force' is there to ensure that force is only used on behalf of the state, and only for the purpose of preventing violence, or to prosecute violence perpetrated outside of this monopoly. It summarises the principles that engender trust in the society itself and among its members:

- A basic assumption that people will live together violence-free,
- The state monopoly on the use of force as an institution that ensures this freedom from violence as much as possible (and where this doesn't work, to restore order symbolically – through the use of punishments) and
- The shared idea that this kind of society will function, i.e. that it is on a path to a future where less and less violence is possible or necessary.

Therefore, in Germany, interventions using force can only be carried out on behalf of the state and with the aim of preventing further violence. These interventions – such as the use of handcuffs, irritants and sedatives, batons and firearms – are tightly regulated. Persons must be threatened with them first and they must only be used to avert a present danger to life or limb. In addition, the interventions must be proportionate and appropriate.

This also means that, in a court of law, violence can't be justified on the basis of faith, or of 'religious' or 'traditional' practices.

In cases of violence used by parents against their child, the *Office for Youth Affairs (Jugendamt)* must protect the child on behalf of the state. If professionals from the Office for Youth Affairs (as the responsible authority) deem the healthy development of the child to be at risk inside the family, they can require its parents to accept help with parenting.

In severe cases, officers are obliged to arrange accommodation for the child in a foster family or care facility. In such cases, parents are also supported to acquire non-violent parenting skills so that the child may be able return to the family at some later point in time.

3. Why does violence exist?

Violence can affect any person – refugees as well as locals, women as well as men and children. At the same time, every person is capable of acting violently against others under certain conditions and circumstances. In order to understand why violence exists, it is important to look at the societal context.

Reasons for violent acts can also be related to the individual, e.g. very stressful situations and certain mental illnesses can promote the use of violence.

THE SOCIETAL CONTEXT – VIOLENCE AND POWER

Violence, no matter in what form, is connected with exercising power. Power differences become visible in how people relate to each other. For example, if a person has more money, knowledge or education, more social contacts or physical prowess, or a higher status and therefore more rights in a society, the person can use this to exercise more influence over others and so limit their self-actualisation.


Thus, the person can promote his or her own interests and further consolidate his or her position of power. This is always linked to violence, as it results in further limiting the self-actualisation of other people.

Structural violence

How power is distributed in a society always follows certain rules, and is also reflected in its structures. If power is distributed unequally, meaning that certain groups are disadvantaged – e.g. by not being permitted to work and therefore earn money, or by not being permitted to attend school and therefore not receiving an education – we speak of structural violence. Structural violence in itself represents an injustice. But it also promotes violence on the level of organisations and families.

Example:

If, in a society, men are always permitted to work, but women only under very particular circumstances, then access to money and therefore power is distributed unequally. If men alone earn an income, or when it is the men who receive social benefits from the state, they often have power over the family's finances. Owning money is often of great significance. Dependencies may result. The man can determine what will be bought with the money. He can then put pressure on the woman to do certain things or prevent her from buying things that are important for her needs.



Structural violence also means a lack of balance in the distribution of power on the societal level. Some members of society, e.g. women and girls, have fewer rights or opportunities to defend themselves when their rights are violated. No society distributes power equally, but there are big differences in the level of inequality. The larger these differences are, the greater is the resulting interpersonal violence.

Power is not inherently negative – it can also mean taking responsibility for another person. A person with power over another should use it very responsibly. Parents have power over their children. The children are dependent on them. Parents should use this power to support their children through their parenting, with the goal that the children will become independent adults who are able to shape their lives without external interference. For this to happen, it is important that parents respond to their children's needs, that they see them as individuals and consider their views when making decisions that affect them. Parents should not use this power to enforce their own ideas without compromise, or to satisfy their own needs at the children's expense. Being responsible also includes using the available money to sustain a livelihood, including appropriate consideration of the children's interests.

Institutional violence

In organisations and institutions, certain rules exist that determine the rights of individuals. A power imbalance exists here as well, and it is determined by these rules, e.g. between teachers and students, between superiors and workers, or between the management of an accommodation facility and the residents.

Such rules can prevent people from doing things that are important to them, such as preparing their own meals. People are then limited in their self-actualisation. This is why the term institutional violence is used in this context. However, the personnel in accommodation facilities must not use their power incorrectly or for their own interests.

WHAT ARE THE BELIEFS THAT LEGITIMATE VIOLENCE?

Individuals can abuse the power dynamics in a society, an organisation or the family – e.g. between the sexes or between different ethnic groups – to present their own violent acts as legitimate, even if it does not serve the community but only their own personal interests. They justify their actions by saying that their position of power gives them the fundamental right to use violence.

This position of power is then often cemented as correct and unchangeable, using a suitable interpretation of religious texts, or some ideology or other. Violent ideologies contain ideas of superior humans who are permitted or even obliged to rule, decide, exercise power and use violence, and inferior human beings who must be ‘protected’, ‘reeducated’, controlled, ‘converted’, fought against or even exterminated.

The differentiation into superior and inferior is made – depending on the ideology – e.g. on the basis of gender (i.e. between men and women), on the basis of religious affiliation, or on the basis of skin colour or ethnic origin. These kinds of determinations are basically arbitrary, as everyone is unique and unites many different characteristics in one person. Dividing the members of a society into groups that are superior and others that are inferior according to a single characteristic only serves to justify and exercise power or use violence.

Equalising power relationships

Victims of this kind of ideological violence often have few options left to do something about it because those in power grant rights and make laws in their own interest. If they grow up in an environment with such an ideology, victims also partly take on the ideological belief that the violence they have been subjected to is legitimate and therefore don't defend themselves. This way the system of violence is sustained and reinforced.

In order to change this kind of system and create one of mutual respect and humanitarianism, it is therefore all the more important that people in positions of power advocate for a balance of power on the societal level, but also and especially on the interpersonal level within the family. Such a system of respect and humanitarianism does not lead to a loss of the opportunity to advocate for one's interests, but it offers a precious opportunity for everyone's needs to be met to the extent possible through conversation and negotiation, and that this will strengthen the family or society as a whole.


Any violence directed against any part of the society, an organisation or a family, except when the use of force aims to reduce violence, always damages the entire society, organisation or family massively in the long run. Studies show that, at the societal level, there is an association between the extent of violence and economic poverty. For those affected, violence on the family level often has the effects described in Chapter 1. For family relationships, violence means that they are characterised by power and oppression. Respect, affection and support can only emerge if these relationships are mutual.

CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE

Violence can manifest as rigid rules of behaviour and prohibitions that are justified by cultural values or a religious faith. In patriarchal societies, i.e. societies where men are valued higher than women, especially the women are subject to strict rules. Women are, for example, severely restricted in the clothes they wear, the places they can go or the social contacts they can maintain. Such rules also prevent them e.g. from being able to defend themselves against violence inside their marriage.

Sexual harassment can occur in many everyday situations.





All are equal before the law. Women and children have the same rights as men, and can decide for themselves. Religion and the law are separate.

If such rules and prohibitions are not kept, the traditions, cultural values or the religious faith may demand punishment. This can mean, for example, exclusion from the community, a prohibition on leaving the house, hacking off of limbs or even killing the person. The punishment is often carried out by the family. One example are so-called 'honour killings', which according to the UN claim the lives of more than 5,000 women every year.

Such punishments don't serve to prevent further violence, but their brutality is intended to ensure that the rules are followed. In patriarchal societies, the rules applying to women are not only much stricter – punishment in case of transgression of a rule generally also hits women much harder.

At the same time, these rules create a social obligation to carry out the punishment and use violence. If a person refuses to carry out the punishment, it is possible that the person will face punishment himself or herself, or at least social repercussions such as contempt or social exclusion.

In Germany, there are options to get protection when someone is at risk because of such social pressures. You can obtain information about protection options and emergency assistance at counselling centres and the police (> Chapter 4. Pathways away from violence).

A CULTURE OF VIOLENCE

In countries or regions where people have to endure war or civil war for years or decades, violence can become a 'normal part of everyday life' for them.

Children then grow up in a 'culture of violence', they take on violence as a normal behaviour to be used to deal with conflict and to assert their interests. Non-violent approaches to conflict resolution, e.g. through negotiation or mediation, must then be learnt again from scratch.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CAUSES OF VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

With a view to the individual, great emotional stress or mental illness can be reasons for aggression or violent behaviour.

Psychological stress can be based in past experiences, e.g. violent incidents or situations that are perceived as life threatening, such as war, persecution or escape. These can lead to sleep disorders, head or stomach aches, or to increased irritability and aggression. Sometimes they also lead to a higher consumption of alcohol or other drugs.

If current stress factors are added, e.g. long waiting times or uncertainty in the asylum process, an application for asylum being rejected, the threat of deportation, rejection of family reunification, fear for family members in the country of origin, conflict in the accommodation facility, or experiences of racism or rejection in public, this can lead to enormous stress levels that can result in a loss of control and unintentional violent behaviour. This form of violence is statistically very rare, but may occur in individual cases.

In such difficult situations it often helps to be able to talk to a trusted person. Social services in shared accommodation facilities or counselling centres (see referral information at the end of this guide) offer conversations that can alleviate stress.

Mental illness

Certain types of mental illness can also lead to a person tending towards using violence in interpersonal relationships.

Mental illness is the term used for certain manifestations of character traits or personal characteristics, e.g. certain ways of thinking, feeling, perceiving and understanding the environment or of dealing with other people. These character traits lead to problems for the affected person or for other people. What we are dealing with here is an illness, which means that the affected person can't wilfully control or change his or her thoughts, feelings or reactions.

Many different types of mental illness exist. Their names and characteristic symptoms are specified in the so-called ICD-10 ('International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems').

Among the different types of mental illness are two forms of so-called 'personality disorders' that may have an increased tendency towards violence associated with them. One of them is '**emotionally unstable personality disorder**'. People suffering from this kind of personality disorder are very sensitive to challenging situations in interpersonal relationships, such as conflict, rejection or disappointment, or others expressing their expectations.

They are quick to feel attacked or frustrated, and are inwardly tense. They therefore often react to these situations with accusations, uncontrolled rage and aggression towards others, or they feel bad about themselves and retreat. They experience their own feelings as uncontrollable, inconsistent and unstable overall, which makes creating lasting relationships and social contact with other people difficult. This individual, internal tension can become so strong that those affected end up harming themselves in order to feel relief. The illness can also lead to those affected contemplating suicide or even carrying it out.

The second form of personality disorder that is important in connection with violence is called '**antisocial personality disorder**'. Characteristic for this illness is that those affected have a tendency towards aggressive behaviour and violence. Their priority is their own advantage and they don't care about the effects of their actions on others, or they don't feel any empathy for others. They exploit other people to their own advantage. Those affected often end up in the criminal justice system because following laws or social conventions doesn't matter to them. As part of their personality, those affected are often easily irritated and impulsive.

Everyone can contribute to community life without violence.



Another mental disorder that may predispose for the use of violence is 'paedophilia'. 'Paedophilia' is classified as a **'disorder of sexual preference'**. Affected persons feel sexually attracted to (pre-pubescent) children. This means that they feel a great need for carrying out sexual acts with children. However, in order to protect children, such acts are fundamentally prohibited by law in Germany (see also: Legal principles and laws in Germany). For those affected, it means that they cannot satisfy their sexual longings. In some cases, affected persons cannot control or suppress these longings and sexual violence towards children may occur.

Mental illness can be treated with *psychotherapy* (see Chapter 4. Pathways away from violence) and other interventions. To date, there aren't any curative options available for paedophilia. However, undergoing psychotherapy is especially important in order to prevent child abuse and to find ways of living with this disorder.

EFFECTS ON PERPETRATORS – DO PEOPLE WHO USE VIOLENCE BECOME ILL?

A mental illness may in some cases not only be the cause of violence, it can also be its result.

Soldiers or members of terrorist organisations who have consciously used violence may experience an internal emotional conflict when they become aware of the injustice of their actions. Very painful feelings of guilt and shame may develop, which can also lead to a mental illness, e.g. to trauma or depression.

If violence is perpetrated by family members – often fathers or brothers – to compensate for an infringement of cultural or religious rules, their belief in the legitimacy of the act 'protects' from feelings of guilt and from mental illness. But a realisation of the injustice of one's actions can lead to severe psychological effects in these cases, too.

4. Pathways away from violence

WHAT CAN I DO AGAINST VIOLENCE?

Show respect

Every person has the right to a life that is free from violence. In order to reduce violence in relationships and the family, it is important first of all to critically reflect on one's own behaviour.

With regard to intimate relationships, the following questions may help: As a man, am I restricting my female partner? Are there areas where I allow her fewer rights than I claim for myself? Are there situations where I verbally abuse, hit or otherwise act violently towards my partner? Do I have sex with my partner even if she may not want it? If yes, why do I do this? What do I need, or what can I do to interact with her respectfully and free from violence?

With regard to behaviour towards one's own children, questions such as the following may be important:

Do I respect my children's right to non-violent parenting? How do I deal with conflict situations – do I determine the solution and put it into practice, or am I prepared to consider my children's wishes and needs? Are there situations where I hit, verbally abuse or punish my children? If yes, why do I do this? What do I need, or what can I do to interact respectfully with my children?

Professional services can be helpful in order to be able to change one's own behaviour (see below).

Demanding respect

As described in Chapters 2 and 3, violence is also connected to the values and accepted behaviours that a community or society lives by, as well as to the prevailing power structures. They pave the way for the use of violence against women and children. This means that any attempt at reducing violence must address them as well.

What can I do as an individual person or individual man? Conducting one's own intimate relationship as equals and without violence makes a great contribution. This sets a great example for one's own children and for the social environment as well. Potential fears and reluctance about what may happen if a man gives up his role as 'head of the family' can be dissolved if the man demonstrates and advocates for his conscious decision to do so. Moreover, an important and effective contribution is to advocate for non-violent and respectful interactions with women and children in the social environment, e.g. in the family, among friends, at work or at the shared accommodation facility.

Examples:

If someone makes devaluing or disrespectful comments about women in a conversation, don't remain silent. You should state clearly that you place great importance on a respectful way of speaking and interacting, and therefore don't agree with such statements.

If you observe a situation where a man or a woman is being devalued or treated without respect, it is important not to walk away without saying something. The man should be made aware of his disrespectful behaviour in the situation and be asked to interact respectfully with others.

WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

Emergency assistance

In acute cases of violence, call the police free of charge by dialling 110. The police is obliged to attend immediately in order to protect the affected person. If a crime has been committed, the police must make a report.

In cases of domestic violence, the police can ban the violent person from entering the shared home for up to 14 days. The police can also temporarily detain the violent person in order to enforce the ban on entering that home.

In Germany, the police is subject to the state monopoly on the use of force. Police officers are only permitted to use force, e.g. to forcibly detain a person, if this is required for the protection of others or the person himself or herself, and backed up by legislation. Police officers must not act in an arbitrary manner. Any form of humiliation or torture during an interview or in detention is fundamentally prohibited.

In some cases of violence, e.g. if the perpetrator has a close relationship to the victim, or in cases of dependency, the victim (initially) may not want to turn to the police or report a crime, or is unsure about doing so. The decision whether or when to report a crime is that of the victim alone – or that of the perpetrator, if he reports himself to the police in order to prevent future prosecution and to perhaps obtain a reduced sentence.

COUNSELLING OPTIONS

A range of counselling options exist independent of reporting a crime or involving the police.

Counselling means that you will talk with a trained specialist, e.g. a social worker or psychologist, about your situation and work together to look for ways to improve it. A counselling session is not about judging the person seeking assistance or the behaviour, and it is not an interrogation. Rather, the person seeking assistance is accepted and respected just the way they are. It is also the person seeking assistance who decides what to talk or not talk about during the session. Decisions about how to deal with the situation after counselling are the responsibility of the person seeking assistance.

Counsellors are subject to professional confidentiality, which means that they are not allowed to pass on what was discussed. An exception to professional confidentiality exists when the counsellor deems the welfare of a child to be at risk or an immediate threat to exist with regard to the life of the person seeking assistance or that of another person. If you are unsure about this, ask at the beginning of the counselling session about the exact cases that professional confidentiality does not apply to.

Most counselling services are free of charge. Many also offer interpretation services.

Depending on the region or place of residence, different specialised counselling services are available to victims of violence, and to people who act violently, including counselling centres or telephone counselling options (see referral information at the end of this guide). These counselling services can also be used by people who have been threatened with violence or who are under pressure to act violently, e.g. in order to restore the family honour. Friends and relatives can also access counselling about how they can assist a person who is subject to violence or who acts violently.

Some counselling services offer support specifically for women or for men. There are more counselling services for women, as they are more frequently and more severely affected by violence than men.

When there is conflict in a relationship, counselling services are also available where couples or the whole family can attend together (see referral information at the end of this guide).

If you live in a shared accommodation facility, its social services can help with finding a suitable interpreter or with making a counselling appointment.

PSYCHOTHERAPY

Psychotherapy can help with mental illness or emotional hurts, or with symptoms such as stress, sleeplessness, aggression, despair or pain that doesn't have a physical cause.

Psychotherapy means treatment in the form of conversations with a psychotherapist or psychiatrist. Sometimes it includes doing exercises, or giving exercises to practice at home. Psychotherapy can last for up to two years.

Psychotherapeutic sessions also include questions for the person seeking assistance. However, it is not an interrogation, but an attempt to understand the situation well and to arrive at a diagnosis. Only then can effective treatment steps be developed. Even if someone isn't sure whether a mental illness is present, an initial conversation can be used for clarification.

Psychotherapists and psychiatrists as well as interpreters are subject to professional confidentiality.

In some shared accommodation facilities, psychotherapy sessions are offered at the facility itself. Depending on the region, psychotherapeutic services specifically for refugees (see referral information) can be accessed, but it may take several weeks or months until appointments for therapy become available. Social services at shared accommodation facilities or counselling centres can help with finding psychotherapeutic services and with clarifying how its costs will be covered.

A guide to the application for psychotherapy for refugees is available online at: www.baff-zentren.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/BAfF_Arbeitsilfe_Therapiebeantragung.pdf

COURSES ON NON-VIOLENT PARENTING

In many places, courses are available on how children can be brought up without the use of violence. They offer information about the development and the needs of children, about reasonable responses in critical situations and about options for dealing with conflict. At the same time they provide opportunities to exchange experiences with other parents.

Such courses are sometimes also offered specifically for parents with a migration background (see referral information).

Glossary

Avoidance personality disorder

A mental illness characterised by an excessive sensitivity to being rebuffed or rejected by others, as well as by the internal conflict that a strong desire for interpersonal closeness cannot be satisfied because of this strong fear of rejection

Basic Law (Grundgesetz, GG)

The constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany comprising the substantive decisions on its system of government and societal values. Ranks above all other German legislation. The complete Basic Law is available online at www.bundestag.de/grundgesetz (in German). Translations of the Basic Law into Arabic, Mandarin, English, Farsi, French, Italian, Polish, Russian, Serbian, Spanish and Turkish are available e.g. at www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Broschueren/das-grundgesetz.html

Borderline personality disorder (= emotionally unstable personality disorder)

A mental illness impacting the personality. Affected persons may experience mood swings and often behave impulsively. They have difficulty establishing stable interpersonal relationships and often feel empty inside.

Clitoris

Part of the female genitals, an important organ for feeling sexual pleasure

Counselling centres

Service organisations that provide assistance and support with a range of issues and difficulties. Counselling can be provided in face-to-face conversations, but also over the telephone, by email or using an online chat application.

Criminal Code (Strafgesetzbuch, StGB)

Comprises the criminal offences applicable in Germany and their legal consequences. The complete Criminal Code is available online at www.gesetze-im-internet.de/stgb/index.html (in German), and at www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_stgb/index.html (in English)

Depression

A mental illness indicated by persistent sadness, lack of interest, feelings of guilt and low self-esteem, sleep disorders, tiredness and lack of appetite. Affected persons have difficulty going to work, to learn or to manage their everyday lives.

Deprivation

A lack of things or stimuli needed to satisfy important needs

Dysfunction	Functional disorder
German Civil Code (Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch, BGB)	Codifies the general civil law in Germany, i.e. legal issues between private individuals. The content includes family law, with legal provisions regarding marriage, divorce and parental custody. The complete civil law code is available online at www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bgb/ (in German), and at www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_bgb/index.html (in English).
Militia	Armed forces with only limited training, or only established when the need arises
Norm	An expectation of how people should behave in certain situations that is prevalent in a group or society
Office for Youth Affairs (Jugendamt)	Part of local government administration. Core tasks are advice and legal support for parents and legal guardians, assistance with parenting, and ensuring the protection of children and adolescents within the applicable legal framework
Physical	Regarding the body
Professional confidentiality	The legal obligation on certain professional groups not to pass information on to third persons
Psyche	Comprises the emotions, thinking and behaviour of a person
Psychiatrist	A medical specialist (medical doctor with an additional qualification) for the medical diagnosis of, treatment of and research into mental disorders; offers psychotherapy and is authorised to prescribe medication.
Psychotherapist	Medical doctor, psychologist or social worker with specialised training who offers psychotherapy
Psychotherapy	Treatment of mental illness on the basis of psychological theory and approaches, frequently in the form of conversations

Reporting a crime	Telling the police or the office of the director of public prosecutions about a possible criminal offence, with the aim of the offence being punished and compensation being afforded. A crime can be reported by anyone who has become aware of a potential criminal offence. Reporting a crime is free of charge. When a crime is reported, the authorities are obliged to investigate and to discover the circumstances of the potential crime to the greatest possible extent.
Social	Regarding the interpersonal relationships of a person within a community or his/her surroundings
Social Code (Sozialgesetzbuch, SGB)	Comprises the social laws applicable in Germany, regulates state assistance and support so that a life of human dignity may be preserved when a person is not able to ensure this themselves, e.g. in the areas of child and adolescent support, promoting employment or social security benefits.
Society	The entirety of a group of people who live together under a particular set of political, economic and social conditions
Trauma	A deep emotional hurt caused by an event that is experienced as extremely threatening, and which a person is unable to overcome and therefore develops a long-term mental illness.

Notes

Selected referral information

Beratung für Männer gegen Gewalt

Tieckstraße 41
10115 Berlin
Ph.: 030 785 982 5
www.volkssolidaritaet.de/berliner-volkssolidaritaet/beratunghilfe/beratungfuermaennergegengewalt/

Anti-violence counselling for men

Contact point and counselling for perpetrators of violence. Call to arrange individual counselling with a psychologist. Development of non-violent responses as well as preventive group work.

Berliner Zentrum für Gewaltprävention (BZfG) e.V.

Hohenzollernring 106
13585 Berlin

Berlin Centre for Violence Prevention Inc. (BZfG) e.V.

Centre for learning alternative behavioural strategies instead of using violence. Group work services, exercises, group reflection as well as working on specific conflict situations.

Männernetzwerk Dresden e.V.

Schwepnitzter Straße 10
01097 Dresden
Ph.: 0351 810 434 3
www.escapedresden.de

Men's network Dresden Inc.

Independent NGO for youth work and men's issues. Youth work services, counselling and training in domestic violence cases, perpetrator-focused anti-violence work.

Fachstelle für Gewaltprävention

Herdentorsteinweg 37
28195 Bremen
Ph.: 0421 794 256 7
www.fgpbremen.de

Specialist centre for violence prevention

A victim protection service for those accused of and perpetrators of physical and sexual violence. Counselling also available online.

Hamburger Gewaltschutz-Zentrum

Altonaer Straße 65
20357 Hamburg
Ph.: 040 280 039 50
www.hamburgergewaltschutzzentrum.de

Hamburg violence protection centre

Counselling centre for self-referrals as well as referrals from the criminal justice system or other agencies.

Jedermann e.V.

Lutherstraße 15 – 17
68169 Mannheim
Ph.: 0621 410 73 72
www.jedermann.de

Everyman Inc.

Specialist service for violence prevention and intervention. Counselling and treatment for men referred by the court and for others, anti-violence training and crisis intervention in cases of violence.

Männerbüro Hannover e.V.
IlseTerMeerWeg 7
30449 Hannover
Ph.: 0511 123 589 10
www.maennerbürohanover.de

Men's bureau Hanover Inc.
Charitable association focussing on the lives and social environment of boys, male adolescents and men, and advocating on their behalf. Counselling services for victims and perpetrators.

Münchner Informationszentrum für Männer (MIM)
Feldmochinger Straße 6
80992 München
Ph.: 089 543 955 6
www.maennerzentrum.de

Men's information centre Munich
Counselling centre and self-help initiative for men. Services for men's self-help and self-awareness groups with the aim of developing a positive male self-image.

Projekt STOP-Training
Neue Kasseler Straße 3
35037 Marburg
Ph.: 06421 307 807 4
www.jukomarburg.de

Project STOP Training
Independent NGO providing social services in the field of youth and conflict management.

Sozialberatung Stuttgart e.V.
– Fachstelle Gewaltprävention
Charlottenstraße 42
70182 Stuttgart
Ph.: 0711 945 585 310

Stuttgart social counselling Inc.
– specialist centre for violence prevention
Contact point for information, counselling and training interventions on the topics of domestic violence, street violence and youth violence.

Verein Kinder- und Jugendhilfe e.V.
TAET HG
Mainzer Landstraße 625
65933 Frankfurt
Ph.: 069 384 729
www.vkjhfrankfurt.de

Association for Children's and Youth Services Inc.
Organisation for outpatient youth assistance interventions for youth and adolescents who have become involved with the criminal justice system.

Protection and safety from violence

A guide for male refugees and new arrivals

This guide contains information about the topic of violence protection in Germany and is directed towards male refugees and new arrivals in Germany. We would like to use it to introduce you to this large topic. We offer you information about your rights, available services and the laws pertaining to violence protection.

- Causes, types and effects of violence
- Who can protect from violence – and how?
- Changing attitudes towards violence
- Pathways away from violence
- Referral information on support services for affected persons and their relatives

This guide was developed as part of the Germany-wide “MiMi Violence Prevention with Migrant Women for Migrant Women” project. It is also available in Arabic, Dari, Farsi, French, German, Kurdish (Kurmanci), Pashto, Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian and Turkish. You can order copies online at ‘www.mimi-gegen-gewalt.de’ and ‘www.mimi-bestell-portal.de’.



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