



# COVID-19 and Domestic Violence in Germany

18. efas-Fachtagung

Cara Ebert, RWI – Leibniz Institute for Economic Research  
Sayli Javadekar, University of Geneva/Bath  
Janina Steinert, TU Munich

December 4, 2020

① General Overview

② Methods

③ Results

④ Conclusion

**WHO's definition of intimate partner violence (IPV):**

- ▶ **Physical harm** – beating, hitting, slapping, burning, choking, etc.
- ▶ **Sexual harm** – forced sex or any sexual act
- ▶ **Psychological harm**
  - > Emotional abuse – intimidating, degrading, mobbing, yelling, etc.
  - > Controlling behavior – restricting a person's freedoms

In Germany...

- ▶ **35% of women** have experienced either **physical and/or sexual violence** by a non-partner or intimate partner at some point in their lives (FRA, 2014)
- ▶ 141,792 cases of intimate-partner violence were reported with the police in 2019 (BKA, 2020)
  - > 81% of cases women were victims
  - > 301 women were killed by their intimate partner in 2019

# 1 COVID-19 and domestic violence

The pandemic may affect domestic violence through various channels:

- ▶ Fewer opportunities to eschew perpetrators due to
  - > Social distancing during lockdown
  - > Home quarantine
  - > Home office
- ▶ Financial pressures and concerns
- ▶ Mental distress affected by
  - > Home office
  - > Economic and financial instability
  - > Social distancing
  - > Health risks
  - > Care burden

## 2 Outline

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## 2 Triangulation: Three data sources on violence

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### 1 **Representative online survey among 3800 women in April 2020**

- > Experience of domestic violence in past 4 weeks = time of lockdown
- > Violence between partners, against women, and against children
- > COVID-19 specific risk factors (e.g. financial distress, quarantine, etc.)

→ Snapshot at time of first lockdown

### 2 **Requests for help** at hotlines, shelters and counsels

- > Scraped universe of help service providers - 1200 points of contact
- > Set-up data repository for data to be uploaded by help service provider
- > Data collection ongoing, today TelefonSeelsorge<sup>®</sup> data only

→ Trend in help requests over time

### 3 **Survey among frontline workers and experts in Nov. 2020**

- > Expert views on help seeking and providing behavior
- > Data collection ongoing

→ Insights from experts help to better understand our data

## 3 Outline

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① General Overview

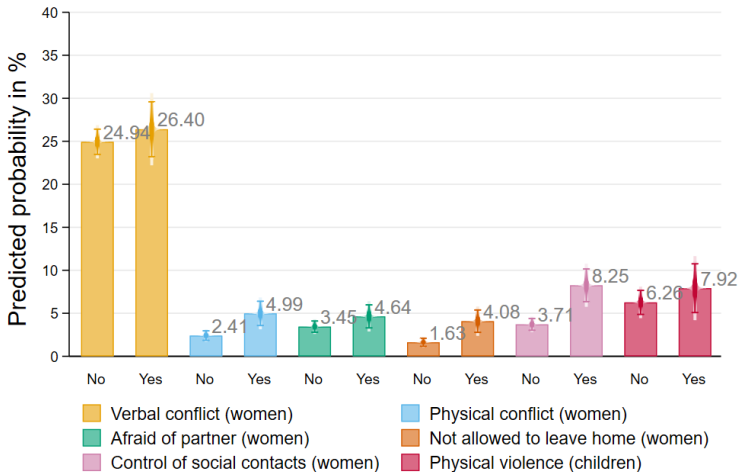
② Methods

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### 3 Predicted prevalence of domestic violence by home quarantine

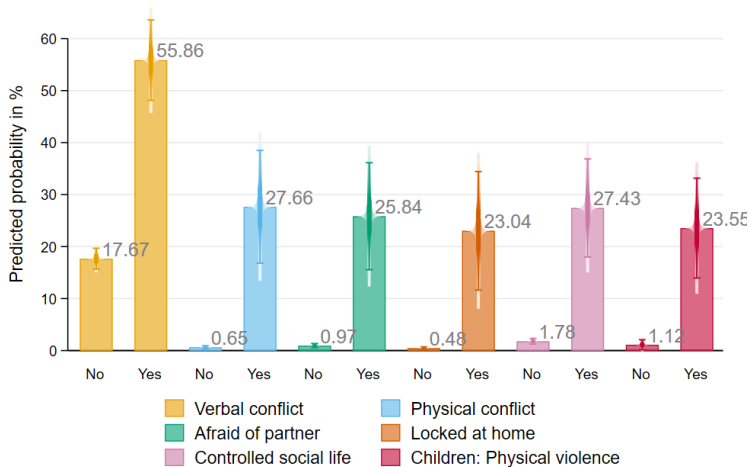
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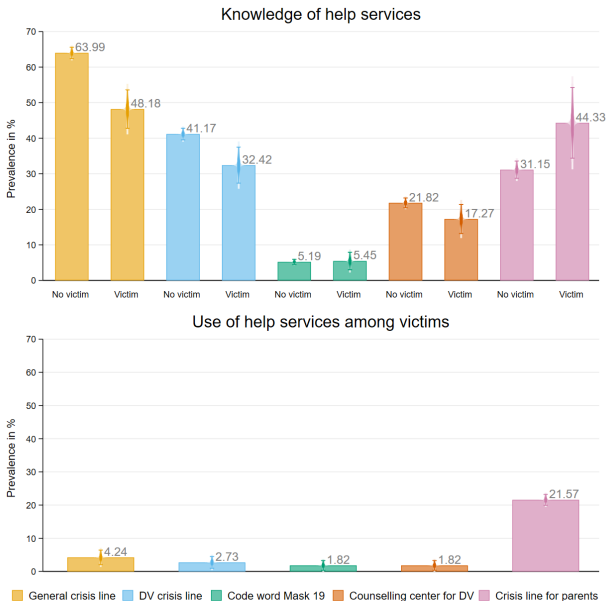


### 3 Predicted prevalence of violence by all risk factors combined

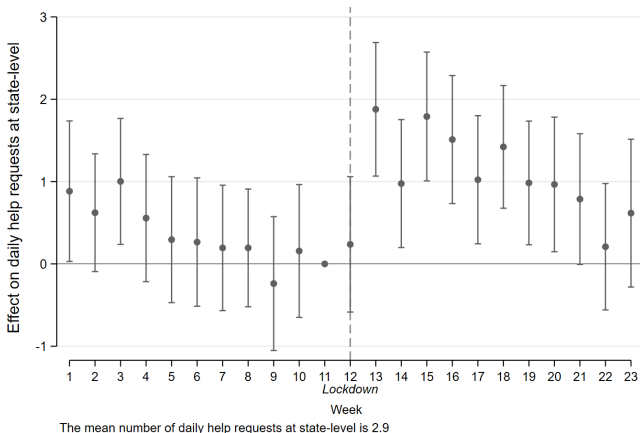
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### 3 Knowledge of help services and help seeking behavior

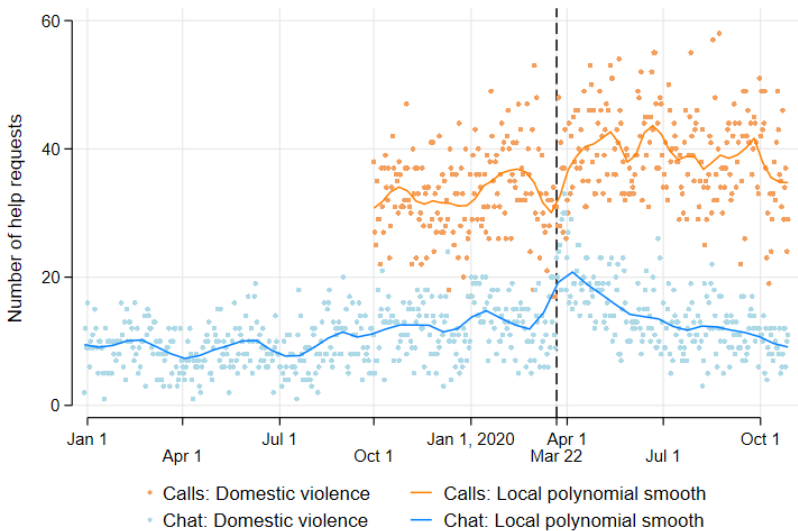


### 3 Event study: Weekly help requests at state level



- ▶ Social distancing laws were implemented March 22 (social lockdown)
- ▶ Controls for state-by-year, state-by-week and state-by-day of week fixed effects

### 3 Daily number of violence help requests by **contact method** | 11



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- ▶ Home quarantine, financial distress, mental health, and child care are risk factors of domestic violence during lockdown
- ▶ Longitudinal evidence (preliminary findings!)
  - > Immediate spike in chat requests among 15-39 year olds
  - > Subsequent and continuing high levels of call requests
- ▶ How can domestic violence be prevented?
  - > Advertise help services and provide online counselling
  - > Trust in politics and safety nets, e.g. easily accessible financial aid
  - > Offer and advertise easy to access and free mental health counselling, e.g. through apps
  - > Lower care burden → schools and kindergartens should remain open

