

OBSERVING CHILDREN IN DANGER IN GERMANY

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- Introduction
- Statistical observation mechanism
- Survey research and other research projects
- Conclusion

Introduction

- Increasing public sensibility for child maltreatment in the last ten years
- Some legal changes (i.e. Child and Youth welfare act, child protection laws on federal and Länder-level, SGB V - Volume V of the German Social Insurance Code)
- A great deal of discussion about child maltreatment in institutions (residential care homes, boarding schools, churches, sport clubs)

Statistical observation mechanism

- Four different official statistics
 - Health Statistic
 - Police Crime Statistic
 - Criminal Prosecution Statistic - Condemnation
 - Child and Youth Welfare Statistic

Health Statistic – Diagnostic Data of Patients in Hospitals

ICD-Code T 74 (Abuse) and OPS 1-945 (Child maltreatment)

- There was only one case (T 74) in 2013 documented in the statistic
- In 2013 the § 294a SGB V was modified so that the obligation is disestablished to report the diagnosis child maltreatment to the health insurances. Therefore there are no more economical reasons to avoid ICD-Code T 74 in cases of child abuse and OPS code 1-945

Health Statistic – Diagnostic Data of Patients in Hospitals

Advantages

- longitudinal data
- Information about
 - the type of maltreatment and the following health problems,
 - the age and sex of the victim
 - the time the victim spend in hospital
 - regional distribution

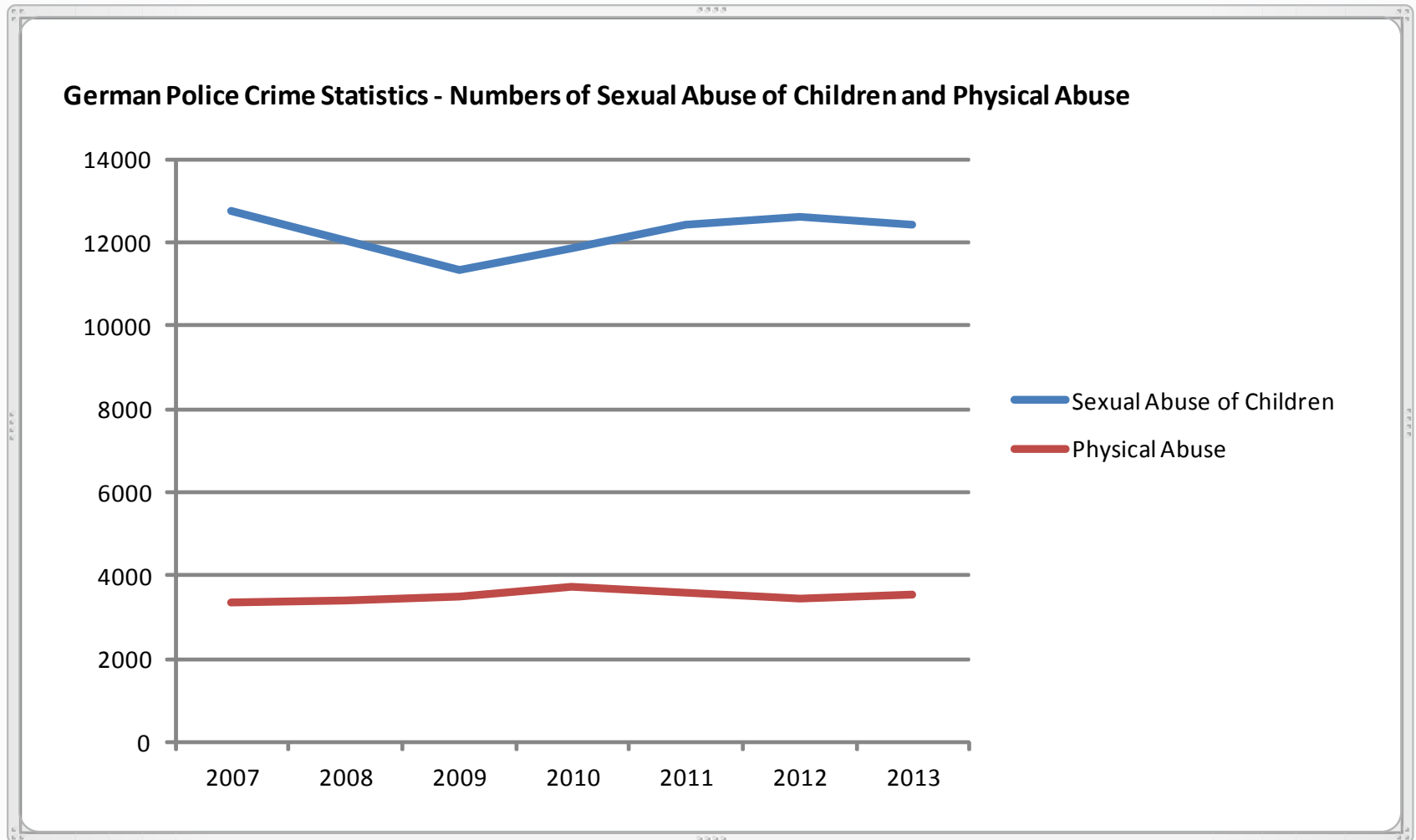
Limitation

- A new statistic – valid data are not available for the next years
- Only cases in hospitals

Police Crime Statistic

- Longitudinal Data about child maltreatment
- A lot of information about
 - Victims (i.e. age, sex)
 - Region
 - Type of maltreatment
 - Offenders (i.e. age, sex)
- Limitations
 - The thresholds for reporting the matter to the police are changing overtime
 - The motivation for a complaint to the police are complex
 - A large number of undetected cases – dark figure of crime

Police Crime Statistic

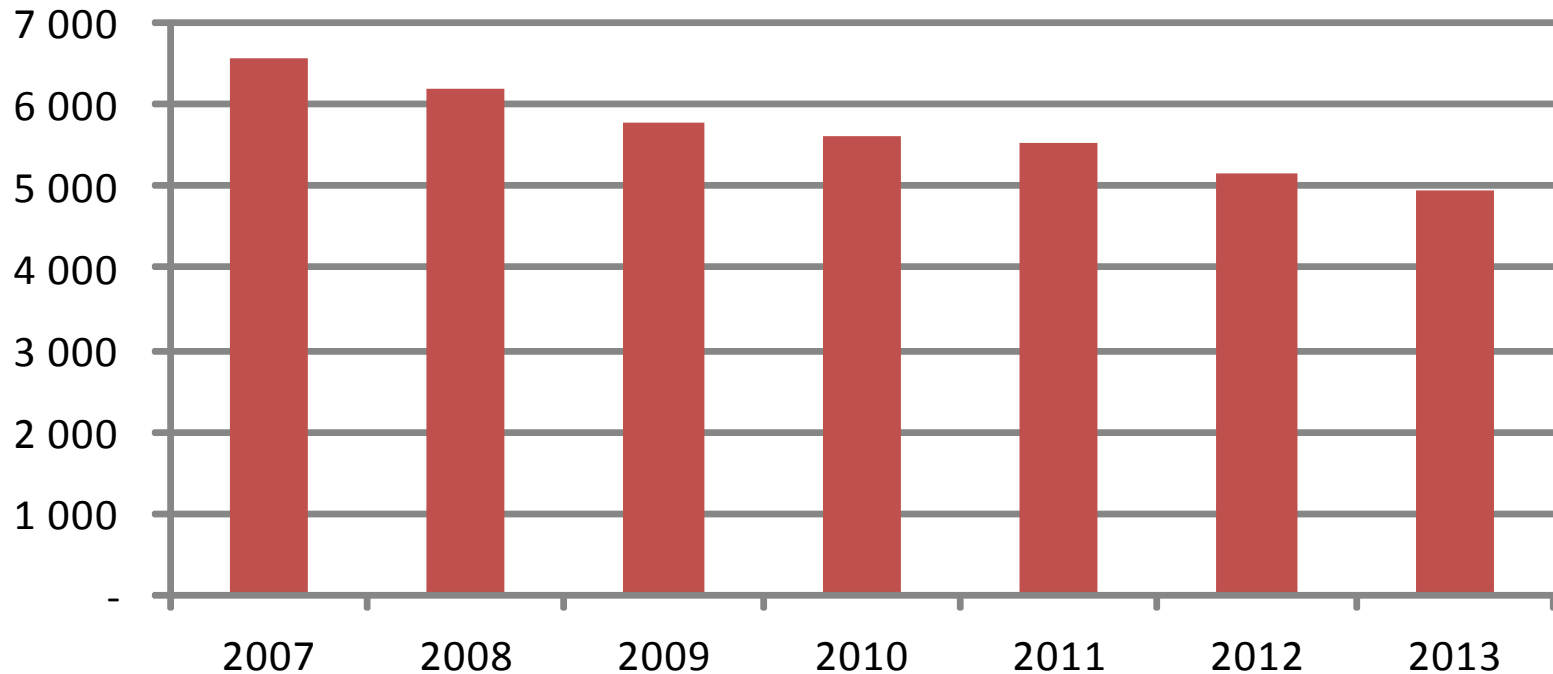


Criminal Prosecution Statistic - Condemnation

- Longitudinal data about crimes against children (since 2007 comparable for eastern and western part of Germany)
- A lot of information about
 - Different forms of crimes against children
 - Offenders (i.e. age, sex)
 - Number of victims
 - Regional differences
- Limitations
 - Temporal delay
 - High threshold
 - Human resources at court have probably a higher impact to the number of condemnation as the development of the crime rate

Criminal Prosecution Statistic - Condemnation

Number of Condemnations for Crimes against Children



Child and Youth Welfare Statistic

Two different ways of counting:

- Numbers of care orders – action to serve immediately protection
- Number of cases labeled as cases with a suspicion of child maltreatment (§ 8a SGB VIII)

Child and Youth Welfare Statistic - Number of Care Orders

Statistic data allows statements about

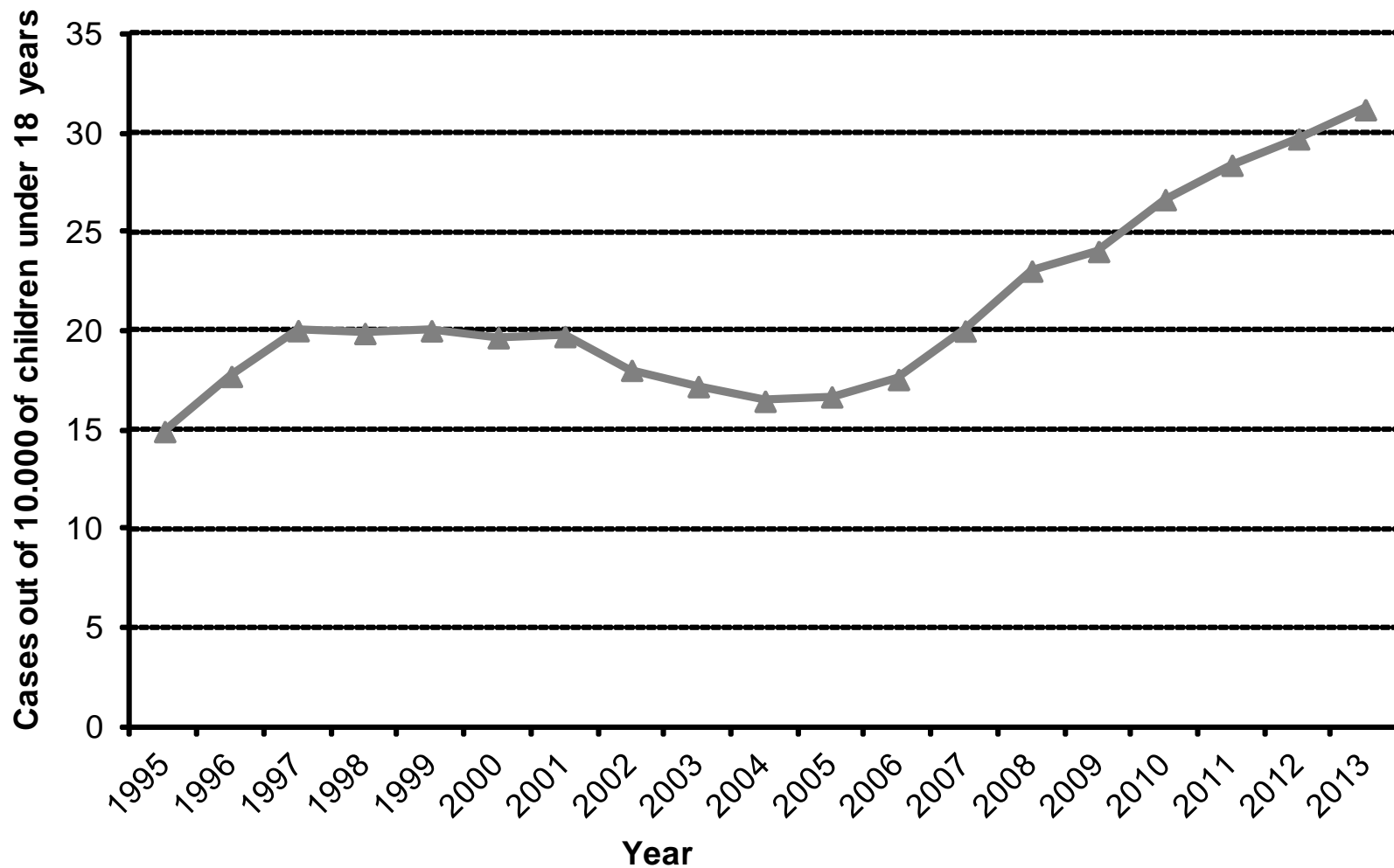
- Age and sex of the child
- Duration of the care order
- Residence before the care order (i.e. family, foster family, homelessness)
- Reason for the care order (i.e. child maltreatment, neglect, unaccompanied entry into Germany, drug addiction)
- The type of care after the child was taken in care
- Regional differences

Child and Youth Welfare Statistic - Number of Care Orders

Statistic allows statements about

- The person or institution who informed the child and youth office about the necessity to take a child in care (sometimes the child by himself)
- The care order is enacted with or without the permission of the parents

Number of Cases of Preliminary Measures



Child and Youth Welfare Statistic - Number of Care Orders

Advantages

- A wide range of data
- Longitudinal data

The German Child and Youth Welfare Statistic - Number of Care Orders

Limitations

- It's not sure, that the child is in danger
- There are cases of child maltreatment known by the child and welfare office without a care order, because i.e. outpatient measures are sufficient

Child and Youth Welfare Statistic - § 8a SGB VIII

Statistic allows statements about

- Age and sex of the child
- Regional differences
- Residence (i.e. family, foster family, homelessness)
- Who starts the process of investigation
- Results of the investigation

Child and Youth Welfare Statistic - § 8a SGB VIII

Advantages

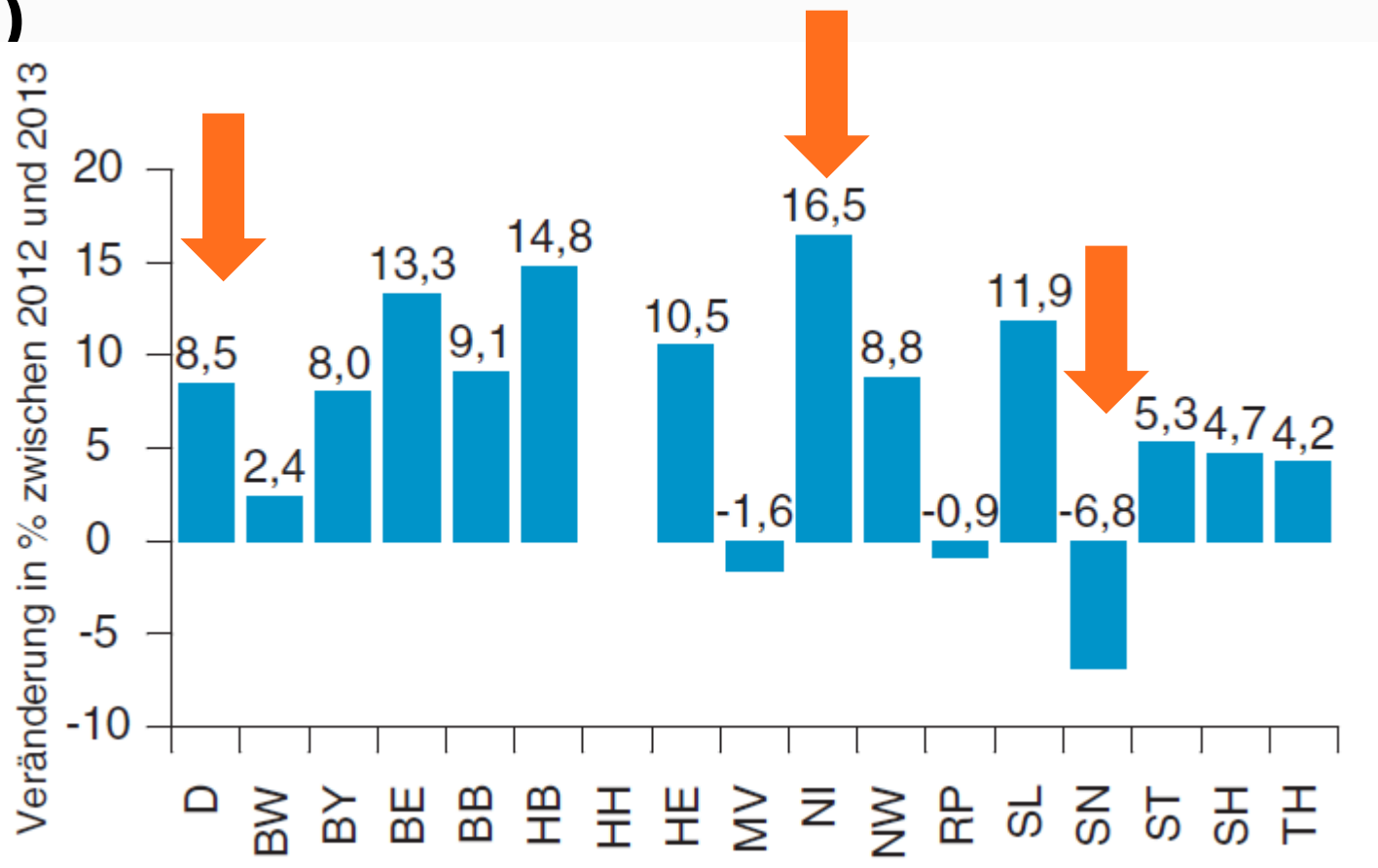
- The beginning of longitudinal data basis
- All child and youth welfare offices have to answer
- Many different analyses are possible
- Process data

The German Child and Youth Welfare Statistic - § 8a SGB VIII

Limitation

- A new statistic which need time to produce valid data
- Some cases labeled just for fear of legal consequences
- There's no possibility to know how often a child causes a case in this statistic

Changes in the number of cases labeled as a suspicion of child maltreatment in percent (2012-2013)



Source: Statistiken der Kinder- und Jugendhilfe – Gefährdungseinschätzungen nach §8a, Komdat Dezember 2014, Heft Nr.3/14 17. Jg.

Survey Research and other Research Projects

- Institutional Surveys ,i.e. child and youth welfare offices, residential care home, youth work organizations, schools
- Surveys with young people in institutions,
- Surveys with representative samples
- Studies to improve protection strategies and intervention programmes
- Assessing the impact of legislation

Survey Research and other Research Projects

Advantages

- To learn something more about the family background and the institutions
- To get Information about the effectiveness of protection mechanism
- To get information about the dark figure of crime
- To get information out of the perspective of minors, parents and offenders

Survey Research and other Research Projects

Limitations

- Not always representative samples
- Definition problems
- Ethical questions

Conclusion

- There are a lot of improvements in the last years
- Now it's time for using the new data and learn more about it's advantages and limitations
- All data give us hints
 - to enhance the sensitivity for child maltreatment
 - to improve protection mechanism in institutions
 - to train staff better
 - to improve cooperation
 - to improve legislation

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