



COERCIVE CONTROL IN TIMES OF A PANDEMIC

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN BADEN WURTTENBERG, GERMANY

Natalie Gehringer & Gunda Wössner, ESC 23.09.2022



INTRODUCTION



Coercive control can be a life or death issue in relationships. But few people even know how to recognize it

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-coercive-control-can-be-a-life-or-death-issue-in-relationships-but-few/>

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COERCIVE CONTROL: EVAN STARK (2009, 2012)





LOCKDOWN MEASURES AND THE CONSEQUENCES





THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FOR CRIME IN SOUTHWEST GERMANY

Modules

Module A:
Spatio-temporal
Development of
Crime in Baden-
Württemberg

Prof. Dr. Dietrich Oberwittler
Carina Hasitzka

Module B:
Development of
Violence against
Partners and
Children in Baden-
Württemberg

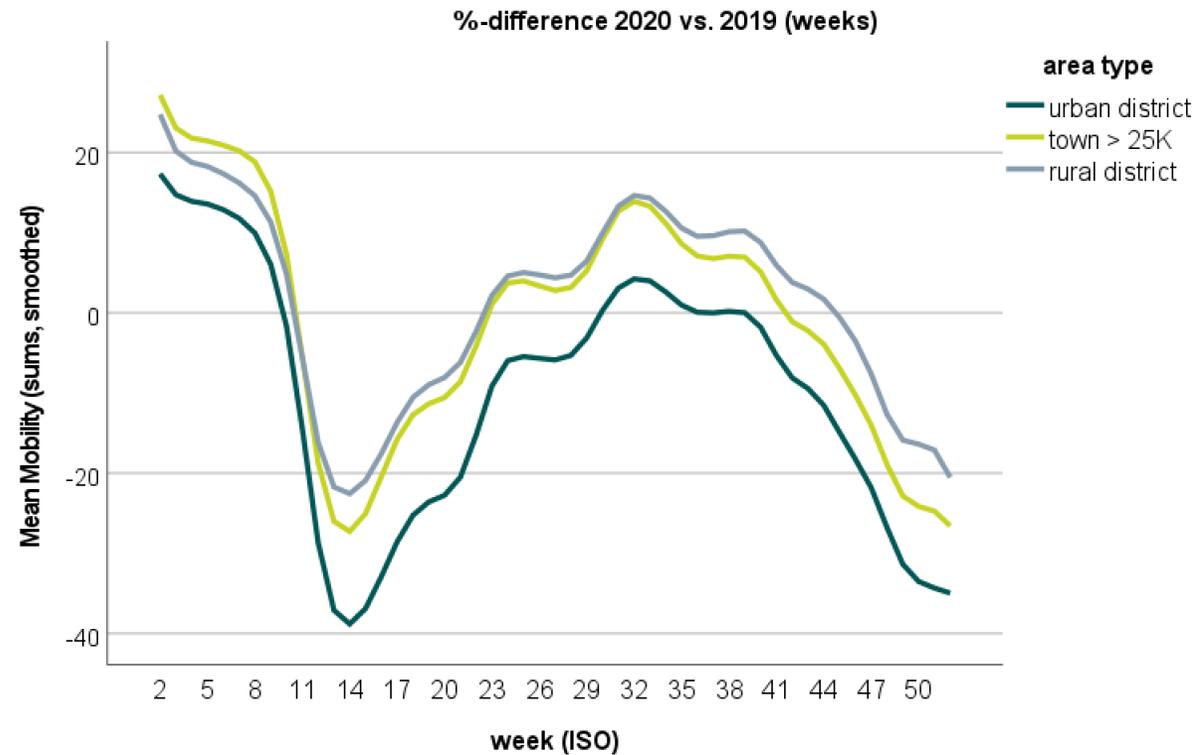
Dr. Gunda Wössner
Natalie Gehringer





THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FOR CRIME IN SOUTHWEST GERMANY

Method Module B





THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FOR CRIME IN SOUTHWEST GERMANY

Method Module B





PRELIMINARY RESULTS: COERCIVE CONTROL AS PERCEIVED BY PROFESSIONALS

More control through permanent presence

„There were also more tendencies, many more, to find arguments why the aggressor could, for example, also verbally or physically attack. X moments throughout the day, when the feeling was that this is a no-go and that you have to put your foot down.“
(IPV Counseling 5)





PRELIMINARY RESULTS: COERCIVE CONTROL AS PERCEIVED BY PROFESSIONALS

Barely possible contact

„I've never ever seen that before, that a woman only had the possibility to call me on the phone if she was allowed to go for a 15-minute walk. It was still good that she was allowed to do this at all. There was even one woman who had to leave her cell phone at home.“
(IPV counseling 9)





PRELIMINARY RESULTS: COERCIVE CONTROL AS PERCEIVED BY PROFESSIONALS

Technology Enabled Coercive Control

„I've never experienced that before, that cameras were installed in an apartment. We were told that the father wanted to monitor the homeschooling of his children, but it was really about something else. I assume it was to check on his wife.“
(Youth welfare 2)



PRELIMINARY RESULTS: COERCIVE CONTROL AS PERCEIVED BY PROFESSIONALS

Pandemic as an excuse for increased control

„Staying at home, to do remote work, for example, or short-time work, and even the occurring opportunities or arguments, “You can’t go here and you can’t go there”. Or if you wanted to go somewhere, it was easy to argue to hold back a woman. So, the control of women, I think, has increased massively.“
(IPV counseling 9)





PRELIMINARY RESULTS: COERCIVE CONTROL AS PERCEIVED BY PROFESSIONALS

Felt hopelessness

„Violence always makes you feel helpless. Something confronts you that you don't know what to do about. And this feeling has been massively intensified by the pandemic.“
(IPV counseling 2)

“It was a lot about putting a person down, a lot about crossing verbal boundaries, about verbal abuse and humiliation, but also about sexual assault. And the willingness to submit to that or not to oppose it in the knowledge that there is no escape puts even more pressure on you.“
(IPV counseling 5)



PROSPECTS

- **raise awareness on Coercive Control**
- **developing action guidelines**
- **strengthen the societal resilience**



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Please address any questions to:

**Max Planck Institute for the Study of
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