



Violent hate crimes in the 2010s in Germany: Types of offences, offenders, victims and bystanders

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1. Background
2. Data
3. Results
 - Offender characteristics
 - Offences
 - Victim and bystander reactions

1. Background

- Dramatical rise of refugee immigration in 2015 and at the same time highest number of hate crime incidents recorded in Germany since the early 1990ies
- Project: Hate crime violence in the context of far-right mobilization and refugee immigration: North Rhine-Westphalia 2012-2019
- Analysis of violent racist, right wing hate crimes
- Adds to the so far weak data basis on offenders and criminal acts of hate crimes in Germany

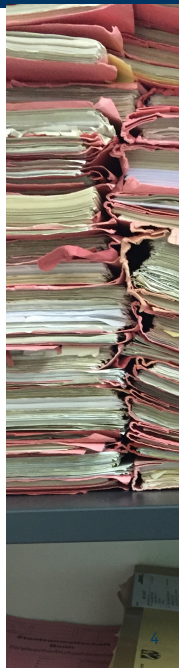
Guiding questions:

1. Who commits hate crimes and is there a change in the characteristics of offenders between 2012 and 2019?
2. What happens during the attacks and how do individuals involved interact?

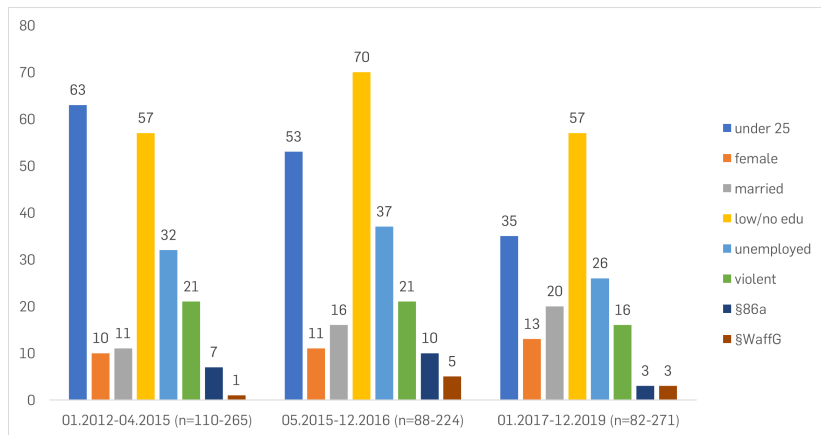
2. Data

1. Police Documents from the official reporting system on politically motivated crimes (Bleich/Hart 2008)
 - Information on all officially registered violent hate crimes in NRW 2012-2019
 - Cleared and uncleared cases
2. **Criminal Investigation Files, cleared cases**
 - Free-text accounts, e.g. investigation reports, statements of suspects, victims and witnesses
 - Offenders' social backgrounds
 - Outcome of the criminal case
 - Victims and victimization consequences
 - Crime sequences and interactions between crime participants

All in all, approximately 700 criminal investigation files were analyzed.



3. Results - Offender characteristics

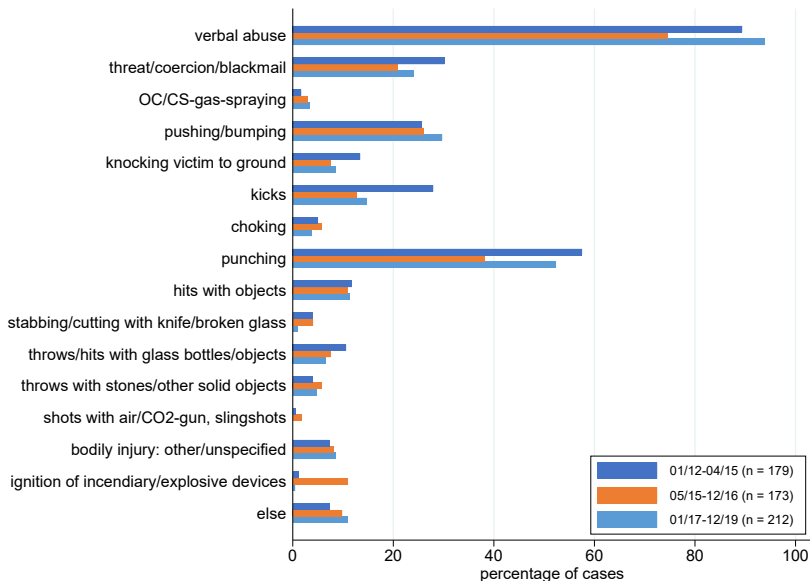


Data basis: Criminal investigation files, in % of all valid cases

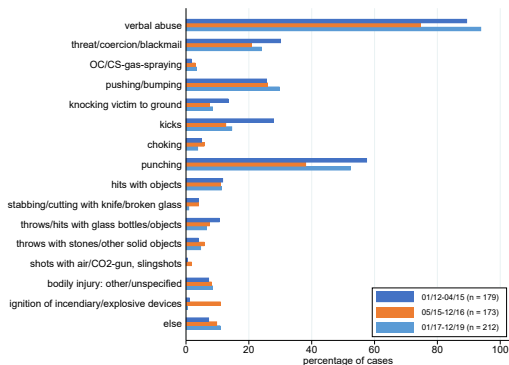
Previous findings and existing theses for Germany (Panayi 1994; Willems and Steigleder 2003; Köhler 2018; Zick et al. 2019):

- Hate crimes as juvenile crime
- Young and mostly male offenders from unstable social backgrounds
- Mobilization of ordinary citizens in the aftermath of the high influx of refugees to Germany

3. Results - Criminal acts



3. Results - Criminal acts



Offence types

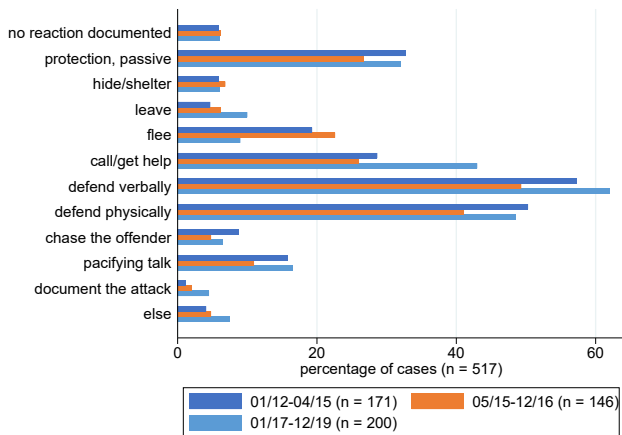
- Quite stable share of incidents over time for most types of offences
- Increase in *ignition of incendiary/explosive devices* in 2nd time period at least partly substitutes decline in the share of cases with *verbal abuse* and *punching*

	01/12 -04/15	05/15 -12/16	01/17 -12/19	Total
no crime tool	113 63%	93 54%	140 66%	346 61%
at least one	66 37%	80 46%	72 33%	218 39%
cases	179	173	212	564

Crime Tools

- Increase in cases with crime tools used in the 2nd time period
- Evidence for an increase in severity of attacks

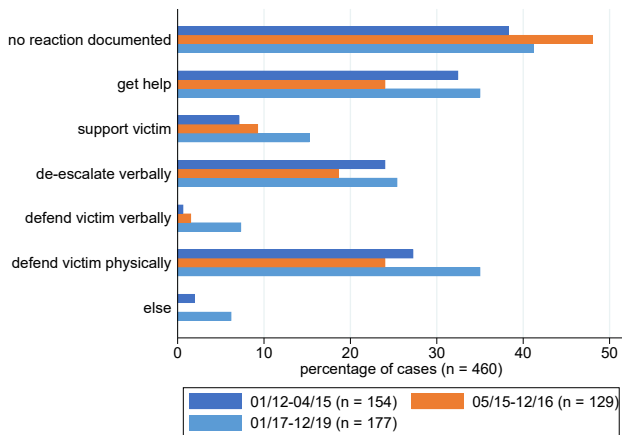
3. Results - Reactions of victims



Data basis: Criminal investigation files, multiple offenses per case
direct, immediate attacks on persons only

- Less reactions of any kind during 2nd time period
- Notable exemptions: fleeing, hiding

3. Results - Reactions of bystanders



Data basis: Criminal investigation files, multiple offenses per case
only cases with bystanders

- Lesser share of helping/defending reactions during 2nd time period
- Since 2017, helping/defending reactions increased again/above

Thank you for your attention.

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Analysis potential of process-produced data

- Process-produced data are not collected for the purpose of being scientifically evaluated
- File reality: no systematic recording of all characteristics of interest
- Higher rate of missing values compared to other data types, random or systematic failures?

but:

- Alternative to victim interviews, delinquency surveys, and victim counselling services
- No social desirability in the response behaviour
- Objectification through statements of suspects, victims, witnesses and police officers

Descriptive statistics - Offenders' social background

Education	<i>not yet</i>	<i>no/low</i>	<i>medium</i>	<i>high</i>	<i>missing</i>
	5%	23%	5%	4%	63%
Occupational-status	<i>unemployed</i>	<i>retired / other</i>	<i>medium</i>	<i>high</i>	
	31%	19%	46%	3%	
Criminal record (violence)	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>			<i>missing</i>
	35%	20%			44%
Parenthood	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>			<i>missing</i>
	34%	24%			42%
Marital status	<i>single</i>	<i>married/widowed</i>	<i>separated</i>		<i>missing</i>
	67%	14%	8%		11%
Living-situation	<i>alone</i>	<i>with partner / family</i>	<i>with others</i>		<i>missing</i>
	19%	30%	9%		43%
Connection right wing groups	<i>no</i>	<i>appearance</i>	<i>wight wing group / party</i>		
	82%	10%	8%		
Age	<i><21</i>	<i>21-26</i>	<i>26-35</i>	<i>>35</i>	
	30%	21%	23%	27%	

Data basis: Criminal investigation files, 2012 - 2019, n=791 Suspects

Descriptive statistics - Offenders' social background

Sex	<i>male</i>	<i>female</i>			
	89%	11%			
Unemployment benefits	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>		<i>missing</i>	
	33%	23%		44%	
Criminal record	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>		<i>missing</i>	
	20%	31%		49%	
Income	<i>obs</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>std.dev</i>	<i>min</i>	<i>max</i>
	107	1401,458	526,464	100	3000

Data basis: Criminal investigation files, 2012 - 2019, n=791 Suspects