

GERMANY

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Description of sample

The nationwide survey covered a sample of 4,999 people in East Germany and 2,027 people in West Germany. Tables 1 to 6 present the composition of the sample according to age, gender, income (both East and West Germany), family status, and size of household.

Data collection technique

The interviews were carried out by the interviewing company, GFM-GETA of Hamburg. The interviewers received prior specific training and data collection was then carried out between 9 September and 4 November 1990. Interviews were administered in German, using the face-to-face method.

Response rate and recontacting

Table 7 provides information about the response rate.

Victimisation rates

Table 8a and Table 8b show the prevalence victimisation rates for the 5 year period, for East and West Germany. The highest victimisation rates in both East and West Germany are for theft of bicycle and car vandalism. From a comparison of the victimisation rates in East and West Germany it can be noted that the latter has higher rates for all offences except theft of motorcycle, theft of bicycle and attempted burglary.

It can be seen from Table 9a and Table 9b, which present victimisation rates for the last year of the survey period, that the rates for that year tend to go in the same direction as for the whole survey period. It is surprising to note from a comparison of Tables 8 and 9 that the victimisation rates for the final year under survey are much more than one-fifth higher than those of the whole 5-year period. This difference is too great to be attributed to the effects of recall.

In both East and West Germany most people who were victims of car and motorcycle theft reported this offence to the police. The lowest reporting rate was for sexual incidents.

From a comparison of the reporting rates in East and West Germany, it can be seen that these are higher in West Germany for all offences except car theft, personal theft and assault/threat.

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Reasons for not reporting

Tables 11a and 11b list reasons for not reporting the offence to the police. In East Germany the two most frequently mentioned reasons for not reporting were that the offence was not serious enough and that the police could do nothing. Other categories that were quite often mentioned were "police won't do anything", "inappropriate for the police", and "solved it myself". The results were similar in West Germany, where the most frequently mentioned reasons for not reporting were "police could do nothing", "police won't do anything", "solved it myself", "inappropriate for the police" and "not serious enough". These findings show that reasons for not reporting are linked to a lack of esteem in the competence and capability of the police.

Crime seriousness

No data were available on this subject since the respondents were not asked to evaluate the seriousness of the victimisation experienced.

Victim support

Although only 2.6% of the victims in West Germany were assisted by some form of victim support institution, 20.5% of the victims thought this kind of assistance would have been useful. Since this form of victim support did not exist in East Germany when it was the German Democratic Republic, the victims for this area were asked whether they thought this kind of institution would have been useful and 16.8% of them replied affirmatively.

Attitudes towards the police

Table 13 provides the level of respondents' satisfaction with the police on reporting. As the table shows, more people were dissatisfied with police performance in dealing with their reported offences in East Germany than in West Germany. The reasons for dissatisfaction are shown in Table 14, the main ones being police's lack of interest in the case, and inability of the police to discover the offender. Another frequently mentioned reason was that the police did not find the stolen objects.

Data related to satisfaction with the police in controlling crime in the area of residence are shown in Table 15. Most people in West Germany were of the opinion that the local police do a good or fairly good job in controlling their area of residence. In East Germany the attitudes towards the police are not so positive, however, and a high percentage of the respondents thought that the work of local police is not so good. Furthermore, the percentage of respondents with this opinion increased after 9 November 1989.

Fear of crime

In order to measure fear of crime, the respondents were asked how safe they felt when going out alone at night in their area of residence. As Table 16 shows, in both

East and West Germany most people feel quite or even very secure. In East Germany, on the other hand, much more people feel quite or very insecure than in West Germany; this accounts for the higher degree of fear of crime in East Germany.

Crime prevention measures

Tables 12a and 12b indicate the percentages of crime prevention measures used by the respondents.

Attitudes towards punishment

The respondents were asked what kind of punishment they would propose in the case of a 21-year old who committed burglary for a second time (having stolen a colour TV set). The proposed forms of punishment are listed in Table 17. An interesting result is that in East Germany most people would propose a community service order, whereas in West Germany the majority of the respondents suggested a prison sentence. In general, the respondents in East Germany seemed less punitive in their proposals for punishment than those in West Germany.

TABLES

Table 1: Composition of sample according to age (East and West Germany)

Age	East Germany (%)	West Germany (%)
Under 21	7.4	6.7
21-29	17.1	17.5
30-39	20.6	19.7
40-49	15.9	18.0
50-59	16.5	14.3
60 and over	22.5	23.8

Table 2: Composition of sample according to gender (East and West Germany)

Gender	East Germany (%)	West Germany (%)
Male	47.1	47.9
Female	52.9	52.1

Table 3: Composition of sample according to net household income (East Germany)

Household income (net)	East Germany (%)
Less than 1,000 DM	18.6
Between 1,000 and 2,000 DM	50.9
More than 2,000 DM	27.8

No response	2.7
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Table 4: Composition of sample according to net household income (West Germany)

Household income (net)	West Germany (%)
Less than 600 DM	0.6
Between 600 and 2,500 DM	33.7
Between 2,500 and 3,000 DM	14.3
Between 3,000 and 4,000 DM	16.4
Between 4,000 and 5,000 DM	12.7
More than 5,000 DM	10.6
No response	9.7

Table 5: Composition of sample according to family status (East and West Germany)

Family status	East Germany (%)	West Germany (%)
Married	64.4	56.7
Single	17.2	24.3
Divorced	8.1	6.9
Widowed	10.3	12.0
No response		0.1

Table 6: Composition of sample according to size of household (East and West Germany)

Household size	East Germany (%)	West Germany (%)
1 person	16.9	26.2
2 persons	33.4	34.7
3 persons	24.5	20.7
4 persons	19.7	14.0
5 and more persons	5.5	4.4

Table 7: Response rate (East and West Germany)

	East Germany		West Germany	
	N	%	N	%
Gross sample:	7,500	100.0	3,360	100.0
Non-relevant contacts including:	799	10.7	470	13.9
- Address not found	27	0.4	54	1.6
- Dwelling uninhabited			61	1.8
- No target person in household	5	0.1	84	2.5
- Not covered by sample or singular addresses	719	9.6	223	6.6
- Other reasons for non contact	48	0.6	48	1.4
Adjusted sample	6,701	100.0	2,890	100.0
Relevant unsuccessful contacts including:	1,681	25.1	860	29.8
- Nobody at home	335	5.0	182	6.3
- Failure to contact person after several attempts	215	3.2	122	4.2
- Contact person ill	173	2.6	53	1.9
- Household refused interview	390	5.8	205	7.1
- Person contacted but unavailable during field work	120	1.8	64	2.2
- Contacted person refused	448	6.7	234	8.1
Effectuated interviews	5,020	74.9	2,030	70.2

Unusable interviews	21	0.3	3	0.1
Completed interviews	4,999	74.6	2,027	70.1

Table 8a: Prevalence victimisation rates (5 years, 1986-1990): East Germany*

	Victimisation rate (%)
Theft of car	0.3
Theft from car	4.9
Car vandalism	6.4
Theft of motorcycle	1.9
Theft of bicycle	11.0
(Owners)	
Theft of car	0.4
Theft from car	7.6
Car vandalism	10.1
Theft of motorcycle	7.3
Theft of bicycle	14.9
Burglary with entry	2.1
Attempted burglary	2.2
Robbery	0.7
Personal theft	5.1
Sexual incidents (only women)	2.1
Assault/threat	3.2

* Prevalence - percentage of respondents who have been victims of a specific form of crime once or more.

Table 8b: Prevalence victimisation rates (5 years, 1986-1990): West Germany*

	Victimisation rate (%)
Theft of car	0.8
Theft from car	8.0
Car vandalism	11.3
Theft of motorcycle	0.6
Theft of bicycle	10.1
(Owners)	
Theft of car	1.2
Theft from car	10.4
Car vandalism	14.5
Theft of motorcycle	6.7
Theft of bicycle	14.3
Burglary with entry	2.5
Attempted burglary	1.7
Robbery	1.7
Personal theft	7.1
Sexual incidents (only women)	3.9

Assault/threat	4.1
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* Prevalence - percentage of respondents who have been victims of a specific form of crime once or more.

Table 9a: Prevalence victimisation rates (1 year, November 1989-September 1990): East Germany*

	Victimisation rate (%)
Theft of car	0.1
Theft from car	1.6
Car vandalism	2.8
Theft of motorcycle	0.6
Theft of bicycle	3.0
(Owners)	
Theft of car	0.2
Theft from car	2.5
Car vandalism	4.4
Theft of motorcycle	2.3
Theft of bicycle	4.1
Burglary with entry	0.5
Attempted burglary	0.8
Robbery	0.3
Personal theft	2.2
Sexual incidents (only women)	0.7
Assault/threat	1.3

* Prevalence - percentage of respondents who have been victims of a specific form of crime once or more.

Table 9b: Prevalence victimisation rates (1 year, November 1989-September 1990): West Germany*

	Victimisation rate (%)
Theft of car	0.3
Theft from car	2.4
Car vandalism	4.6
Theft of motorcycle	0.2
Theft of bicycle	3.6
(Owners)	
Theft of car	0.4
Theft from car	3.1
Car vandalism	5.9
Theft of motorcycle	1.9
Theft of bicycle	5.1
Burglary with entry	0.8
Attempted burglary	0.6
Robbery	0.4
Personal theft	2.3
Sexual incidents (only women)	1.2
Assault/threat	1.9

* Prevalence - percentage of respondents who have been victims of a specific form of crime once or more.

Table 10a: Reported crimes (West Germany)

	%
Theft of car	94.4
Theft from car	86.5
Car vandalism	54.6
Theft of motorcycle	92.3
Theft of bicycle	79.9
Burglary with entry	84.0
Attempted burglary	
Robbery	70.6
Personal theft	46.5
Sexual incidents (women only)	19.0
Assault/threat	25.0

Table 10b: Reported crimes (East Germany)

	%
Theft of car	100.0
Theft from car	45.7
Car vandalism	33.0
Theft of motorcycle	85.3
Theft of bicycle	73.7
Burglary with entry	69.5
Attempted burglary	
Robbery	51.4
Personal theft	51.4
Sexual incidents (women only)	16.4
Assault/threat	29.2

Table 11a: Reasons for not reporting* (East Germany)

	Theft of car %	Theft from car %	Car vandalism %	Theft of motorcycle %	Theft of bicycle %	Burglary with entry %	Robbery %	Personal theft %	Sexual incidents %	Assault/threat %
Not serious enough		52.9	60.1	30.0	21.6	38.9	25.0	31.8	19.4	35.4
Solved it myself		2.0	4.9	20.0	14.7	22.2	18.8	6.1	8.3	20.7
Inappropriate for police		19.6	22.4	10.0	8.8	16.7	18.8	15.2	2.8	18.3
Other authorities		5.9	3.5	0.0	0.0	5.6	0.0	4.5	0.0	0.0
My family solved it										
No insurance		6.9	4.9	20.0	8.8	5.6	0.0	0.0	19.4	0.0
Police could do nothing		30.4	25.9	0.0	26.5	27.8	31.3	39.4	13.9	14.6
Police won't do anything		13.7	14.7	10.0	13.7	5.6	25.0	12.1	13.9	18.3
Fear/dislike police		2.0	0.0	0.0	4.9	0.0	6.3	0.0	5.6	7.3
Didn't dare		0.0	0.7	0.0	0.1	5.6	6.3	0.0	8.3	14.6
Other reasons		6.9	9.1	20.0	26.5	11.1	6.3	12.1	13.9	13.4
Don't know										

- * Percentages calculated on victims who said they had not reported the last incident of each type of crime to the police - multiple answers possible.

Table 11b: Reasons for not reporting* (West Germany)

	Theft of car %	Theft from car %	Car vandalism %	Theft of motorcycle %	Theft of bicycle %	Burglary with entry %	Robbery %	Personal theft %	Sexual incidents %	Assault/ threat %
Not serious enough		50.0	28.1		9.1		0.0	17.3	7.7	32.7
Solved it myself		4.5	2.2		0.0		28.6	5.7	26.9	21.8
Inappropriate for police		13.6	15.7		9.1		0.0	11.5	11.5	29.1
Other authorities		9.1	6.7		3.0		0.0	3.8	7.7	1.8
My family solved it										
No insurance		13.6	7.9		6.1		0.0	7.7	0.0	0.0
Police could do nothing		36.4	51.7		42.4		42.9	73.1	19.2	23.6
Police won't do anything		13.6	30.3		24.2		42.9	36.5	30.8	14.5
Fear/dislike police		0.0	2.2		0.0		14.3	1.9	19.2	7.3
Didn't dare		0.0	2.2		0.0		14.3	0.0	19.2	12.7
Other reasons		9.1	16.9		33.3		28.6		26.9	23.6
Don't know										

* Percentages calculated on victims who said they had not reported the last incident of each type of crime to the police - multiple answers possible.

Table 12a: Crime prevention measures* (East Germany)

	%
Installed burglar alarm	
Installed door locks	43.5
Installed window/door grills	7.0
Maintain watchdogs	
High fence	
House has a caretaker	
None of these	
Others	
Ask somebody to watch home	36.0
Neighbours watch anyway	17.9
Possession of firearms	
House is insured against burglary	75.8

* Percentages based on total sample of respondents.

Table 12b: Crime prevention measures* (West Germany)

	%
Installed burglar alarm	
Installed door locks	34.8
Installed window/door grills	27.7
Maintain watchdogs	
High fence	
House has a caretaker	
None of these	
Others	
Ask somebody to watch home	26.9
Neighbours watch anyway	22.8
Possession of firearms	6.0

House is insured against burglary	71.7
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* Percentages based on total sample of respondents.

Table 13: Attitudes towards police on reporting (East and West Germany)

	East Germany (%)	West Germany (%)
Very satisfied	14.3	12.6
Satisfied	33.6	34.5
Rather satisfied	18.8	26.7
Rather dissatisfied	9.3	11.5
Dissatisfied	13.4	8.3
Very dissatisfied	10.6	6.4

Table 14: Reasons for dissatisfaction (East and West Germany)

	East Germany (%)	West Germany (%)
Police has done little	38.5	33.3
Police were not interested	43.0	37.4
Police did not find offender	42.7	59.3
Police didn't find stolen object	32.9	43.9
Police didn't keep me informed	17.8	19.5
Police were unpolite	14.3	17.9
Police too slow to come	5.2	4.9
Other reasons	4.9	11.4

Table 15: Satisfaction with local police (East and West Germany)

	East Germany		West Germany (%)
	Before 9 November 1989 (%)	After 9 November 1989 (%)	
Very good	4.0	2.7	7.4
Good	26.2	21.6	42.4
Fairly good	29.3	28.4	30.3
Not so good	25.1	27.2	11.9
Fairly bad	8.0	10.6	2.4
Very bad	4.5	5.4	1.2
Don't know	2.9	4.0	4.4

Table 16: Fear of walking alone after dark (East and West Germany)

	East Germany (%)	West Germany (%)
Very secure	11.6	13.2
Quite secure	55.2	63.3
Quite insecure	25.1	19.2
Very insecure	7.8	3.9

Table 17: Attitudes towards punishment (East and West Germany)

	East Germany (%)	West Germany (%)
Prison	26.9	32.7
Fine	23.3	16.9
Probation	21.1	19.7
Community service	30.2	30.7
Caution	5.1	2.6
Others	1.4	1.2

