



Max-Planck-Institut
für ausländisches und
internationales Strafrecht

Research on Lethal Violence in Europe

Hans-Joerg Albrecht

Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law
<http://www.mpicc.de>



- Introduction
- Data and Methods
- Descriptions: Longitudinal and Cross-Sectional
- Explaining Lethal Violence (Three Examples)
- Conclusions



Introduction



■ Scattered Interest

- Social and legal definitions of homicide/murder
- Forensic Psychiatry/Medicine and homicide
- Prediction of dangerousness
- Extreme Violence and public/political concern
 - Genocide
 - Sexual murder and serial killing
 - Terrorist violence
 - School and random shooting

- Handbook on European Homicide Research 2012 and 2014
- European Journal of Criminology Special Issue Homicide
- Special data compilation



- European Journal of Criminology 2014 review article
 - Limited (2000 -2013); English language, selection of journals

 - European homicide research is
 - Increasing
 - relatively concentrated to specific countries with strong homicide research traditions
 - qualitative and mixed methods
 - research increasingly focuses on sub-types of homicide rather than on homicide in general
 - most frequent topic is intimate partner homicide (genocide and homicide-suicide studies)
 - Social control theory is the most discussed theory
 - fruitful tension between nomothetic and idiographic approaches

Lines of Research on Lethal Violence



- Socio-legal research on homicide and criminal law
- Forensic psychiatry/psychology
 - Mental health and the unsound mind, criminal responsibility and criminal/civil committals, diagnosis and prediction
- Longterm trends in homicide
 - Historical research and theories of social and political change
- Extreme violence (genocide)
- Domestic violence (infanticide, femicide)
- Culture and lethal violence
 - Honor killing (revenge killing)
 - Social control and lethal violence (illicit markets)
 - Gun culture and lethal violence
 - Professional killing (police killings, assisted suicide)

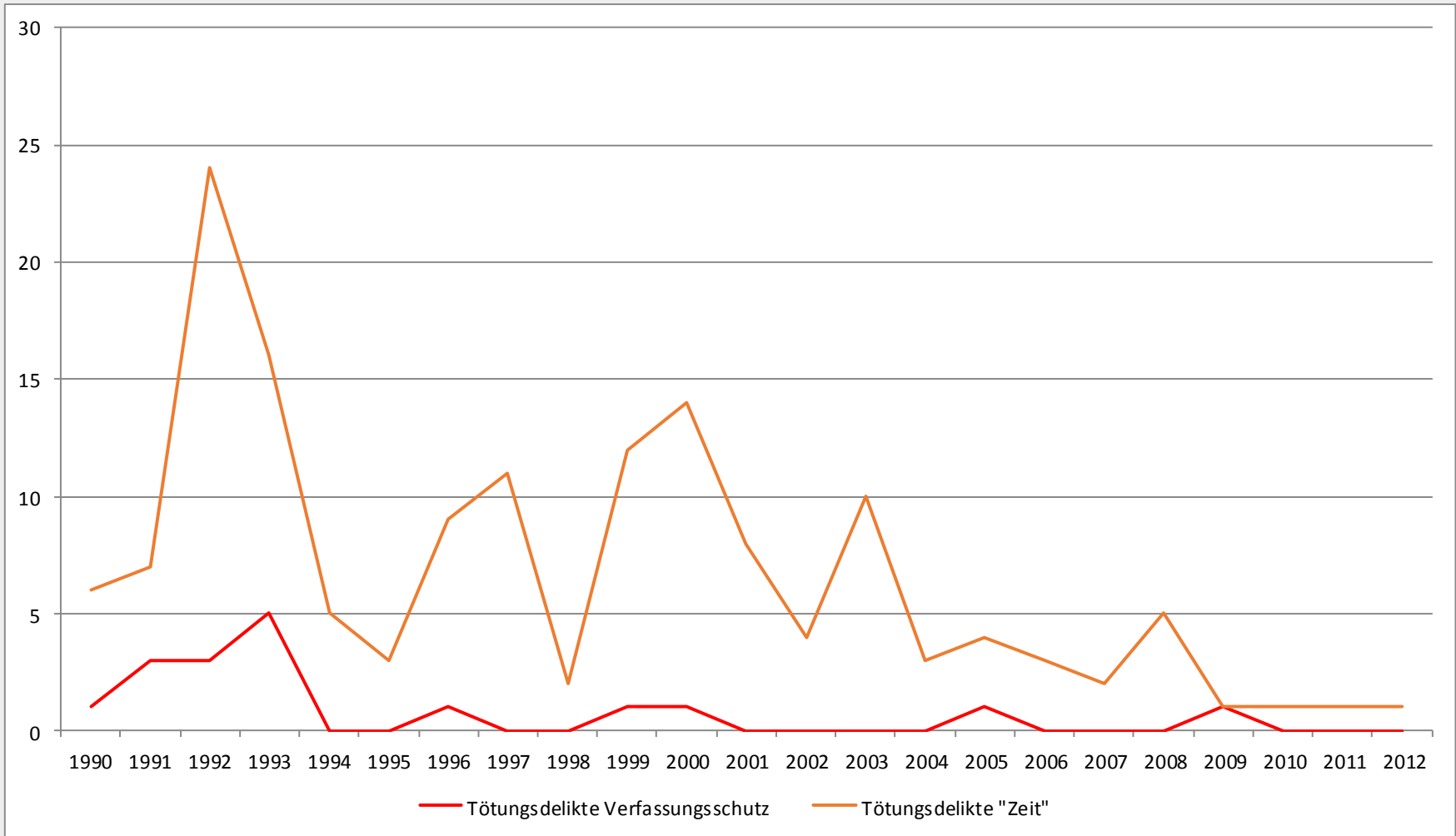


Data and Methods



- Police statistics (problems of definition and related offences)
- UNODC, United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems (UN-CTS)
 - UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime): Global Study on Homicide. Trends, Contexts, Data. Vienna 2014.
- Medical statistics (WHO)
 - International Classification of Diseases (ICD)
 - ICD-10: Causes of death
 - ICD Code X85-Y09 (intentional injuries)
 - Excluded: death resulting from war, legal use of force, death penalty
- Special data sets
 - http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/Homicide/Globa_study_on_homicide_2013_web.pdf

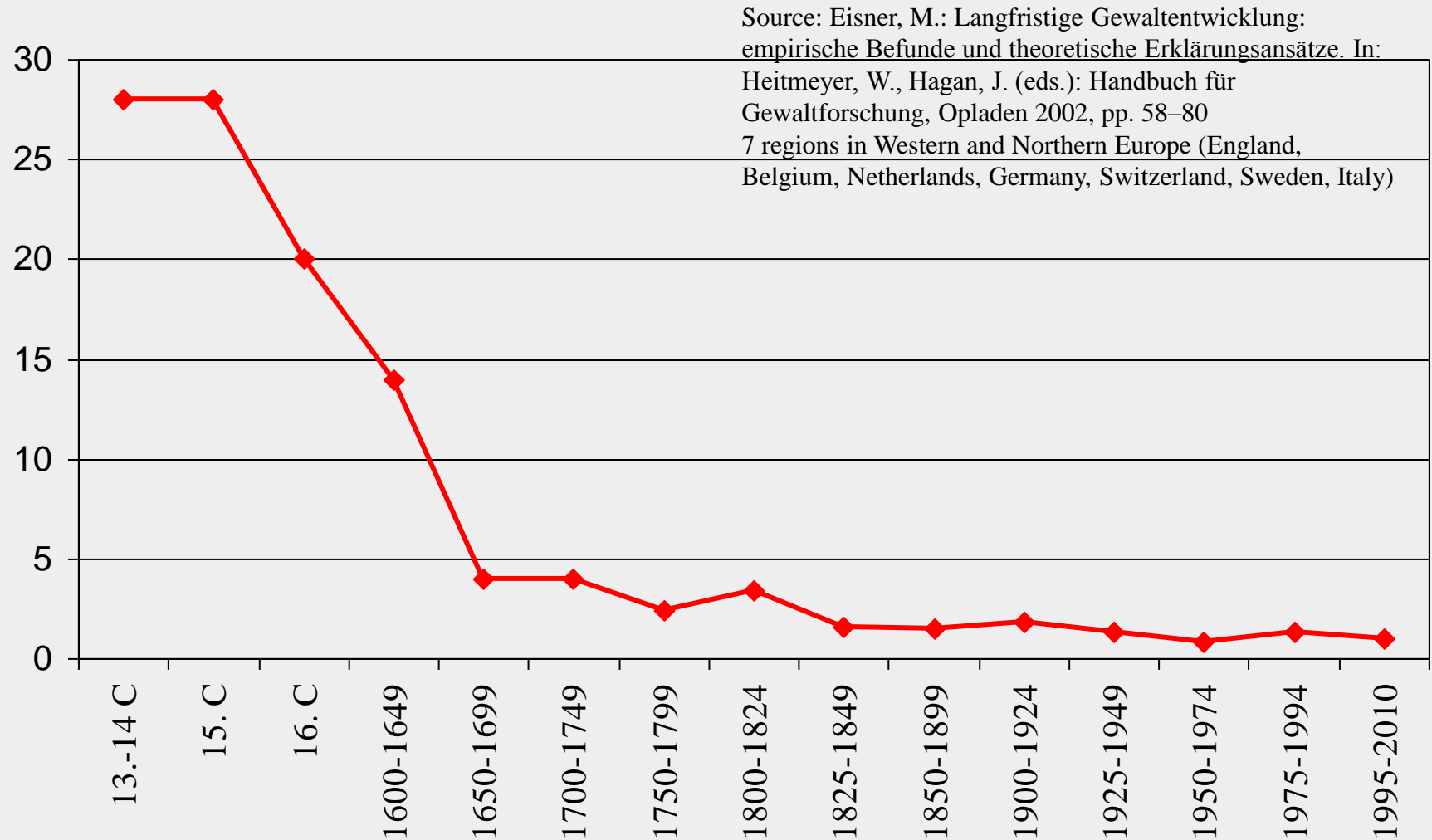
Accounting for Racist Homicide





Descriptions: Longitudinal and Cross-Sectional

A European History of Lethal Violence (Homicide Rates)

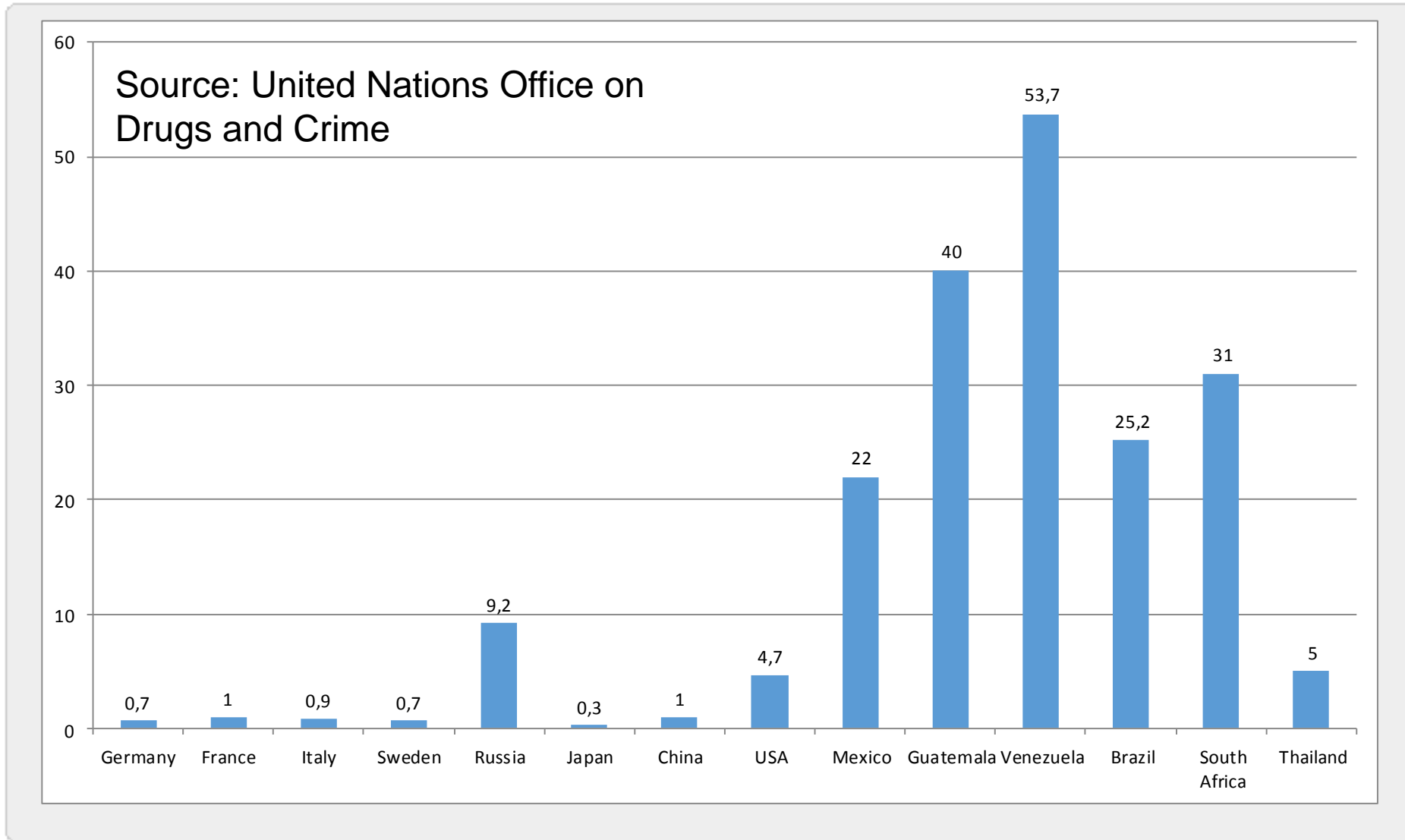




- The age of statistics: starting with causes of death
 - First half of the 19. century
 - Second half of the 20. century: court statistics

- Pre-statistic period
 - Local archives (cities)
 - 340 local estimates (average of 16 years and 130.000 persons)

Lethal Violence: A Comparative Perspective 2012



Regions in Europe and Homicide Rates

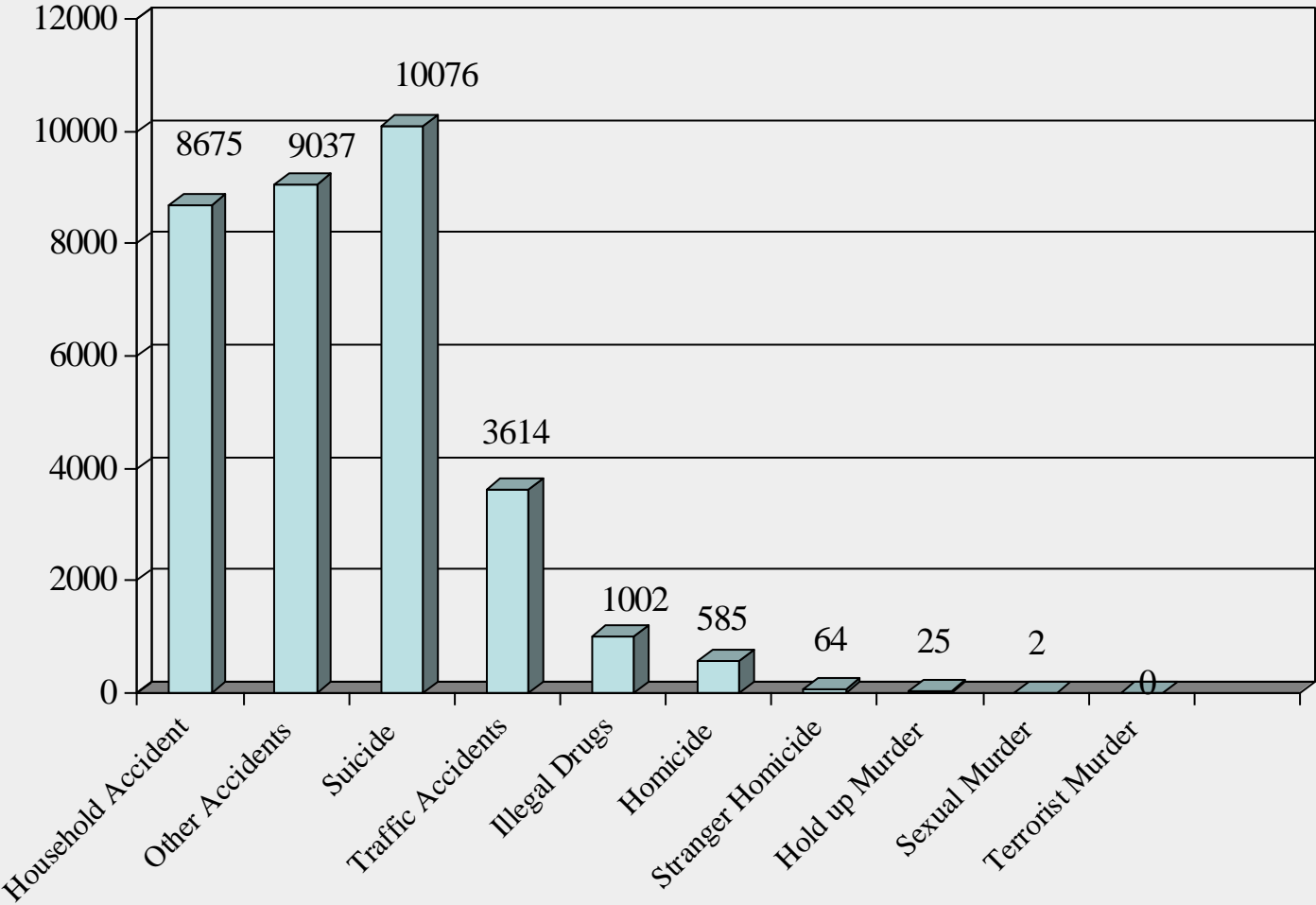


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Homicide Rate

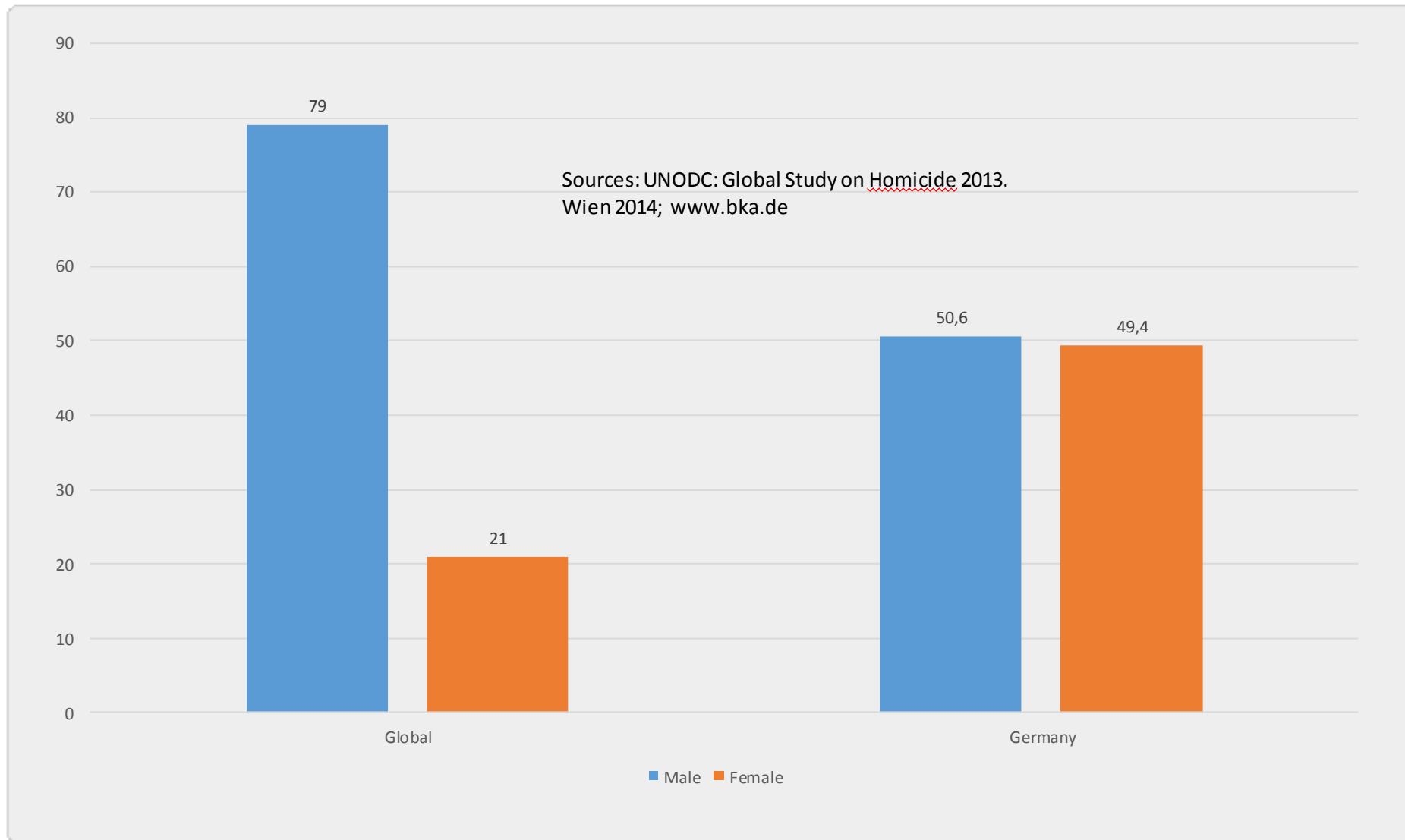
Region	Mittelwert	H	Standardabweichung
Northern	,8000	5	,48477
Eastern	4,9700	10	2,17309
South	1,1500	4	,40415
West	1,0000	8	,29761
Balkan	2,1182	11	1,27186
Central	1,2250	4	,17078
Gesamtsumme	2,2500	42	2,01848

Looking at Lethal Violence: Causes of Death 2013 Germany

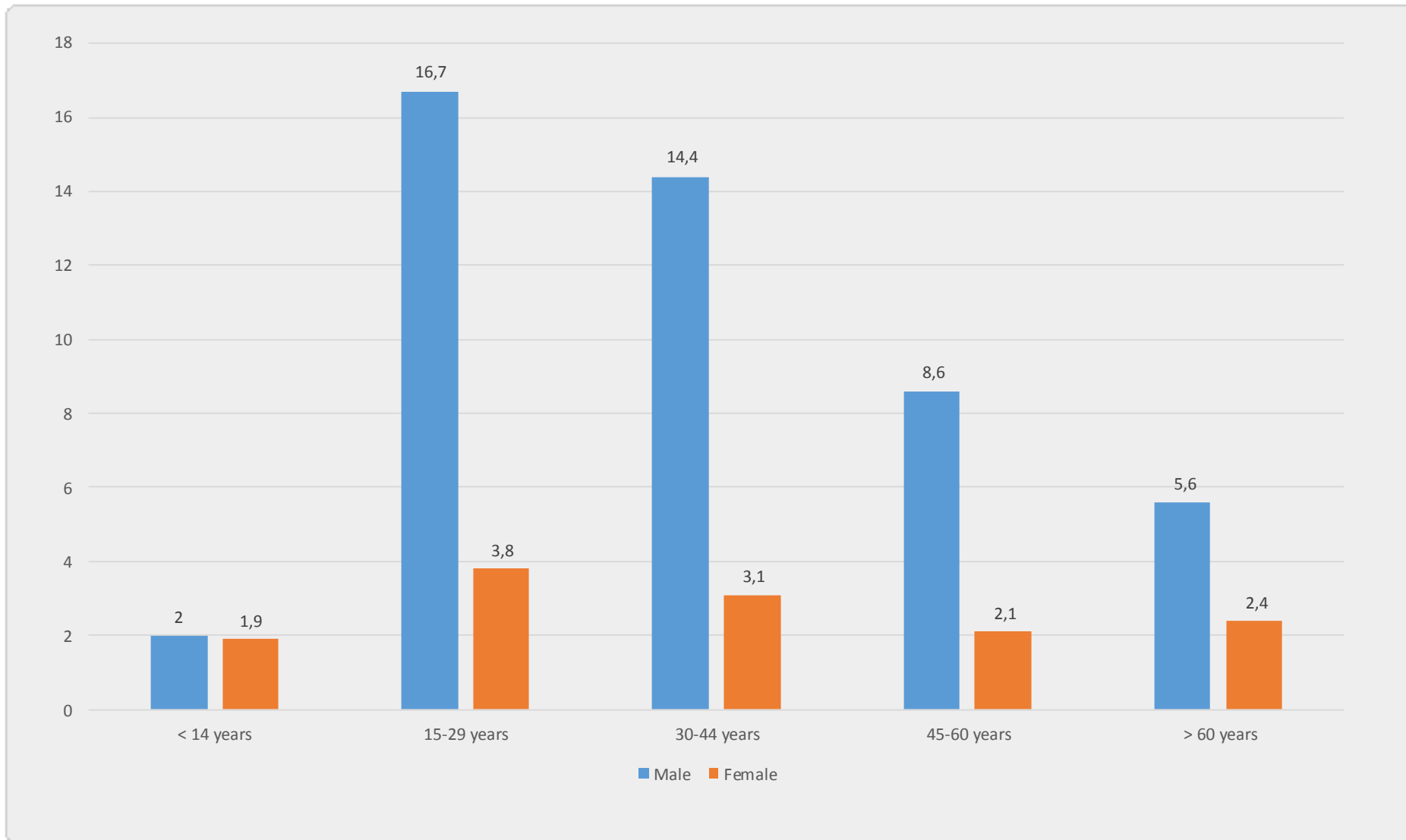


Sources: www.destatis.de; www.bka.de

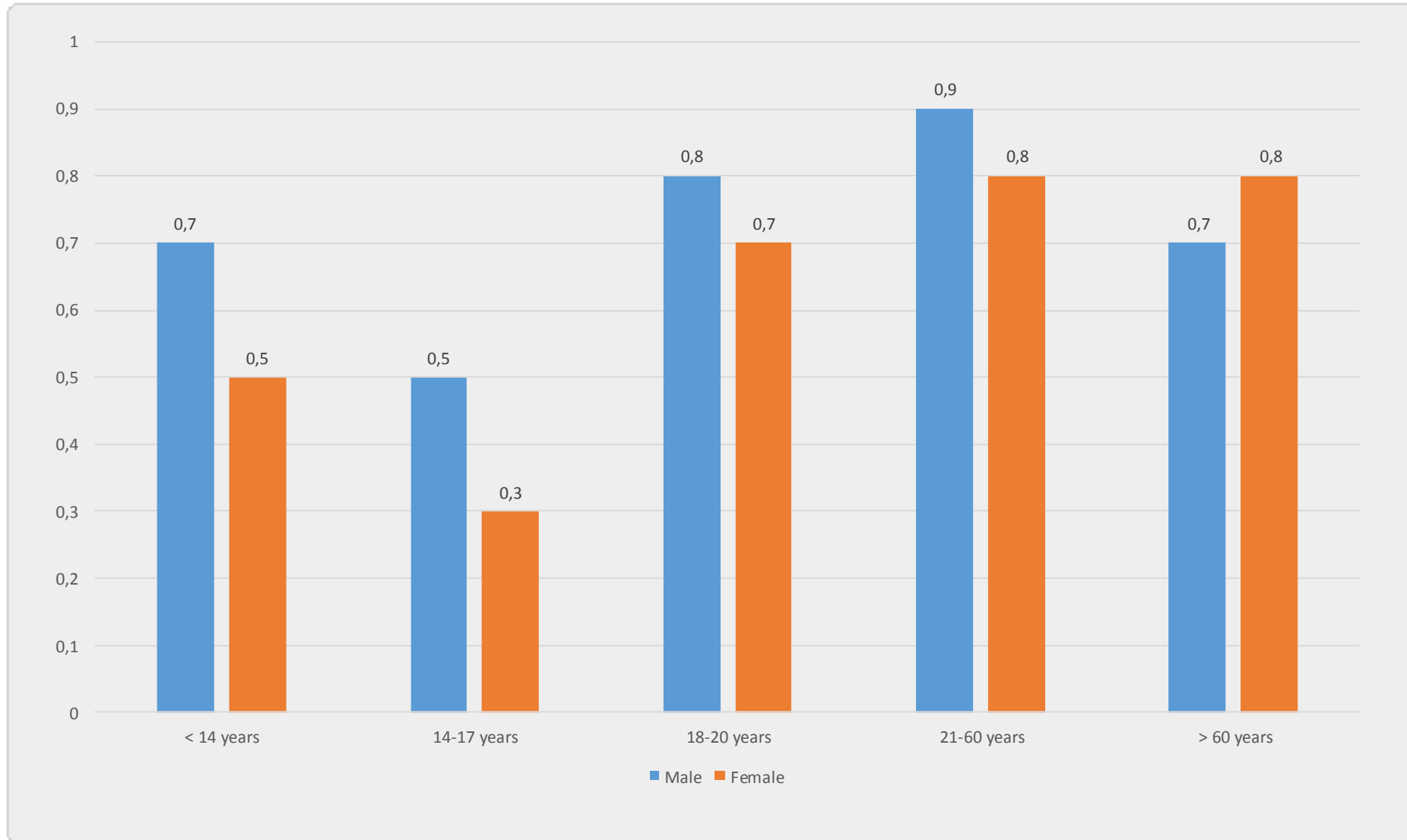
Lethal Violence and Gender



Homicide / 100.000 Global



Homicide / 100.000 Germany



What Else in Europe?



- Homicide rate
 - Min 0.3
 - Max 9.2
 - M 2.3
- Killing in intimate relationships
 - 61% of females killed
 - 19% of males killed
- Proportion of female victims
 - Min 7%
 - Max 51%
 - M 31%

Female Intimate Violence Victims (%)



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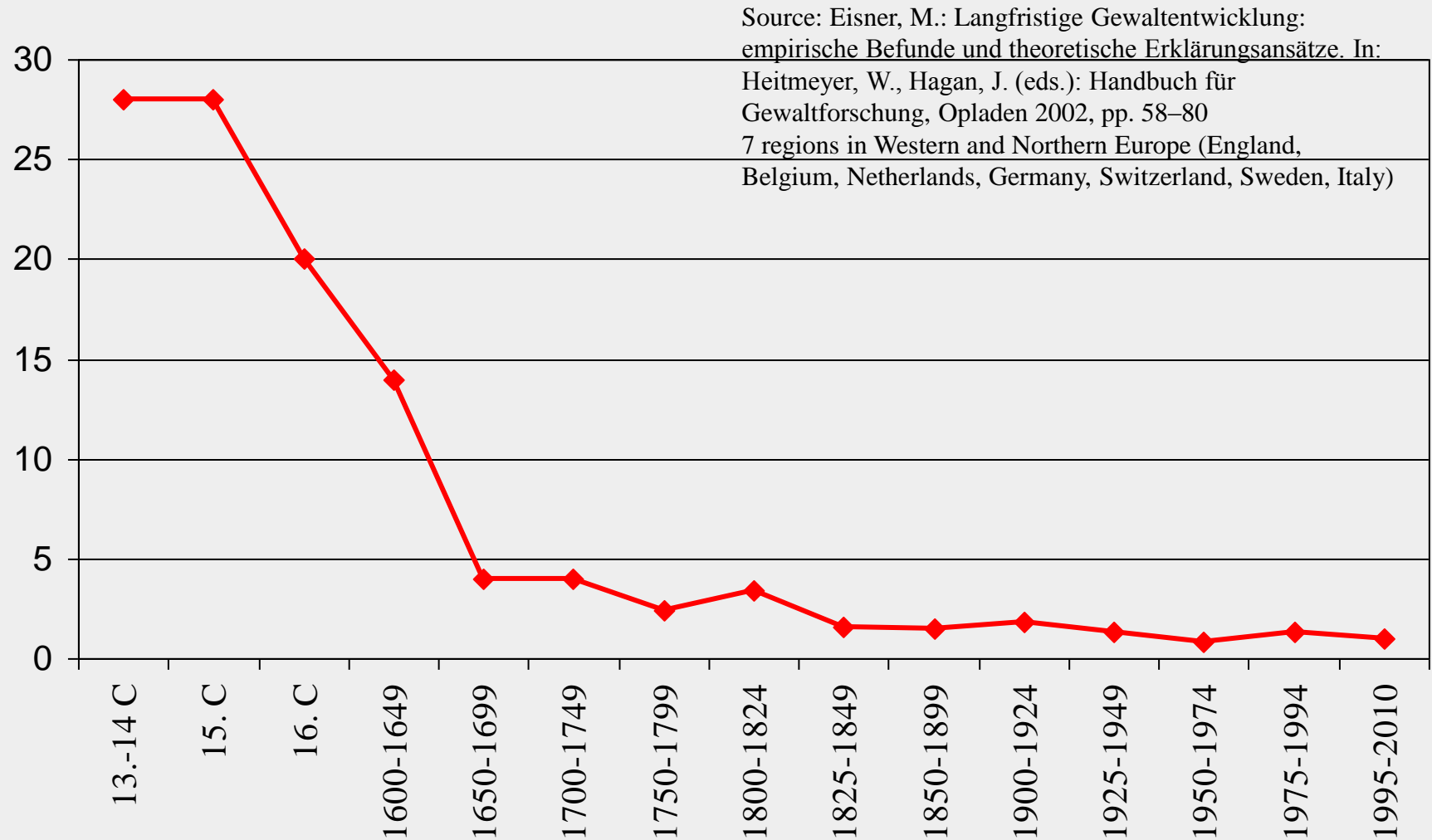
Intimate Female

Region	Mittelwert	H	Standardabweichung
Northern	80,0000	3	17,77639
Eastern	36,0000	5	37,06076
South	65,5000	2	10,60660
West	56,6667	3	9,86577
Balkan	70,8571	7	24,85577
Central	64,5000	2	9,19239
Gesamtsumme	61,1818	22	26,93314



Explaining Lethal Violence

A European History of Lethal Violence (Homicide Rates)





- Lethal violence dropped significantly during a period of some 700 years
- Focus should be placed on the 16th/17th century
- What happened in the 16th/17th centuries?

A Process of Civilization (Elias)



- Monopolization of force
 - Military and police
 - Development of a system of civil service (including justice system)
- Courtly life
 - Civilized behavior (polite behavior)
 - Self control and restrictions on emotions
 - Development of social and economic dependencies
- Development of the economy and early forms of capitalism
 - Loyalty based on economic and financial interdependencies (maintenance of military and civil servant systems)



- New systems of social control
 - Centralized enforcement of rules (law)
- Discipline enforced through law
 - Regulation of life through formal norms
- Social discipline
 - Schools and education
 - Industrial labor
- Strengthening of self control starting in higher classes and trickling down (top down and spillover)
- Explains the particular focus on „dangerous classes“ in the 18th and 19th centuries

Explaining Mexican Violence



- 2010, some 15.273 killings have been counted in Mexico, related to illicit drugs trafficking, a number higher than the one recorded for 2009 (and those for 2008 ...)

- Characteristics
 - Excessive violence, cruelty
 - Victims
 - Police, judiciary, politicians
 - Competitors
 - Family members, relatives
 - Bystanders, third parties
 - Escalation in retaliatory violence

Two assumptions



- Retaliatory violence is
 - A form of informal control due to a lack of access to protection of civil and criminal law
 - Prosecuting grievances
 - Punishing those who impede the pursuit of business
 - Deterring those who might interfere in business transactions
 - A characteristic of the social strata from which participants in illicit markets tend to be recruited
 - „To the extent violence does occur (in illicit markets), the best place to look for its explanation is in the societal and political context. Violent societies produce violent criminals and violent police and military forces” (Naylor 2009, p. 241)

The problems of actors in illicit markets



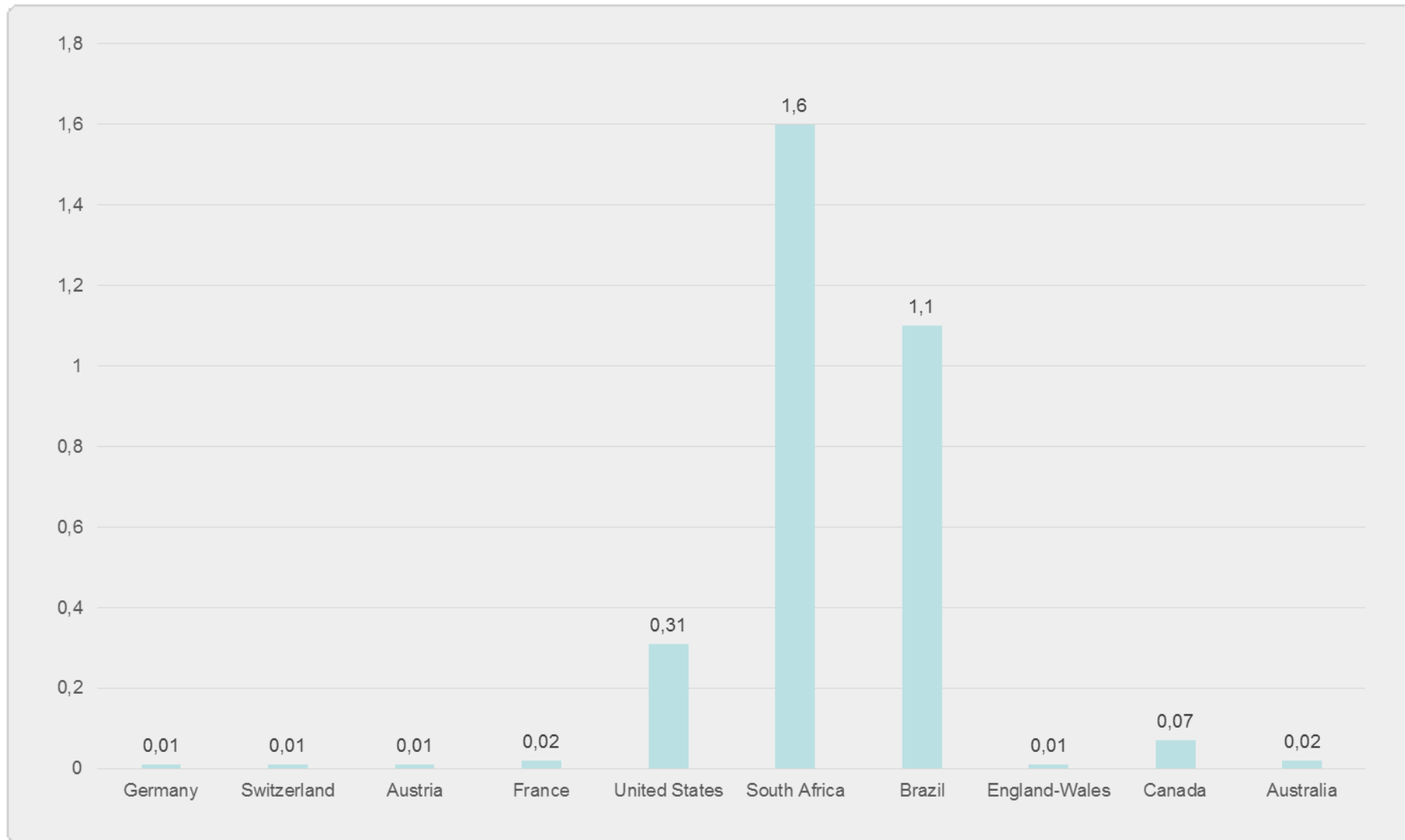
- Predators (Robbery, theft, rape)
 - Victimization surveys on drug (heroin, crack) and prostitution scenes demonstrate extremely high rates of robbery, theft, violence

- Non-compliance with contractual obligations

- Disputes about territory (and market shares)

- Internal transactions (succession and reward)

Professional Killing: Police and Lethal Force



What Do the Data Tell?



- Data on police shooting/lethal force are contested
- Only little information on why, how and who
- Wide variation in an international perspective
- US:
 - 32% of people shot by police are African-Americans (13%)
 - Every police encounter contains a risk
 - If that risk is accounted for, is there still a racial bias?
 - 29 % of arrestees are African-American
 - If police discrimination were a big factor in killings, we should expect a larger gap between the arrest rate and police shootings
 - Are encounters an expression of discrimination?



Conclusions

Where to Go?



- Data
- Longterm decline of lethal violence
- Research questions
 - Social control and lethal violence
 - Culture and lethal violence
 - Professional killing
- Criminal law and lethal violence