

## Homicide rate in France and Germany down by close to 60% in 20 years

*In 2014, the national police and gendarmerie recorded 660 homicides (excluding attempted homicides) in mainland France, i.e. 10.3 per 1 million inhabitants. In 1994, this figure stood at 24.4 per 1 million inhabitants. The homicide rate has fallen by around 58% in 20 years. In Germany, the number of intentional homicides fell from 18.2 per 1 million inhabitants (excluding attempted homicides) in 1994 to 7.7 in 2014, a fall almost equivalent in proportional terms to that recorded in mainland France.*

### A proportional fall between 1994 and 2014

The comparison proposed here relates to the trend monitored over 20 years and not annual figures obtained from statistics provided by police forces on intentional homicides (excluding

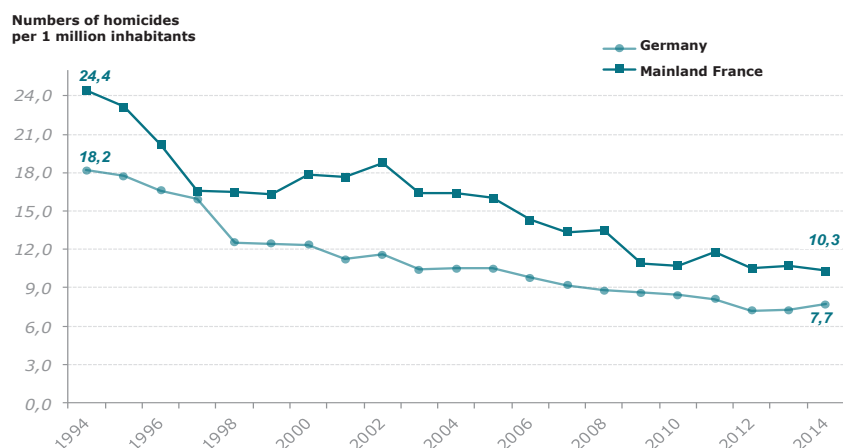
attempted homicides) in France and Germany. Indeed, while some conceptual differences are not critical for a comparison of variations over time, the same cannot be said for a level comparison.

Specifically, an analysis of the fall in the homicide rate between 1994 and 2014 (i.e. between the first year for which figures for the number of victims in Germany are available following reunification and the more recent year) shows a very close proximity between the two territories: in 20 years, the homicide rate (excluding attempted homicides) recorded by the police fell by close to 58%.

In 1994, the rate stood at over 24 per 1 million people in mainland France and more than 18 per 1 million in Germany. In 2014, this rate was 2.4 times lower: 10.3 per 1 million people in mainland France and 7.7 per 1 million in Germany.

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### Annual intentional homicides rates (excluding attempted homicides) provided by police forces per 1 million inhabitants in Germany and in mainland France



### A rate halved in 13 years in Germany and in 15 years in France

In Germany, the homicide rate (excluding attempted homicides) recorded by the police stood at 9.2 per 1 million inhabitants in 2007, i.e. half the rate recorded in 1994. Since 2008, it has been less than 9 per 1 million.

In mainland France, it took two further years to record a fall of more than 50% on 1994 levels. Since 2009, the annual homicide rate (excluding attempted homicides) recorded by the police and the gendarmerie has not exceeded 12 per 1 million inhabitants.



## Numbers of intentional homicides (excluding attempted homicides) provided by police forces in Germany and in mainland France and annual rates per 1 million inhabitants

Germany					Mainland France				
Intentional homicides (excluding attempted homicides) (Mord und Totschlag) provided by police forces (number of victims)	Population at 31 December of the previous year (in thousands)	Rate for 1 million inhabitants	Correlation with 2014 rate (in %)		Intentional homicides (excluding attempted homicides) provided by police or gendarmerie forces (number of victims)	Population at 1 January (in thousands)	Rate for 1 million inhabitants	Correlation with 2014 rate (in %)	
1 480	81 338	18,2	100,0	1994	1 406	57 565	24,4	100,0	
1 447	81 539	17,7	97,5	1995	1 336	57 753	23,1	94,7	
1 357	81 817	16,6	91,2	1996	1 171	57 936	20,2	82,8	
1 306	82 012	15,9	87,5	1997	963	58 116	16,6	67,8	
1 029	82 057	12,5	68,9	1998	961	58 299	16,5	67,5	
1 020	82 037	12,4	68,3	1999	953	58 497	16,3	66,7	
1 015	82 163	12,4	67,9	2000	1 051	58 858	17,9	73,1	
925	82 260	11,2	61,8	2001	1 046	59 267	17,6	72,3	
955	82 440	11,6	63,7	2002	1 119	59 686	18,7	76,8	
859	82 537	10,4	57,2	2003	987	60 102	16,4	67,2	
868	82 532	10,5	57,8	2004	990	60 505	16,4	67,0	
869	82 501	10,5	57,9	2005	976	60 963	16,0	65,5	
808	82 438	9,8	53,9	2006	879	61 400	14,3	58,6	
757	82 315	9,2	50,5	2007	826	61 795	13,4	54,7	
722	82 218	8,8	48,3	2008	839	62 135	13,5	55,3	
706	82 002	8,6	47,3	2009	682	62 466	10,9	44,7	
690	81 802	8,4	46,4	2010	675	62 765	10,8	44,0	
662	81 752	8,1	44,5	2011	743	63 070	11,8	48,2	
578	80 328	7,2	39,5	2012	665	63 376	10,5	43,0	
585	80 524	7,3	39,9	2013	682	63 652	10,7	43,9	
624	80 767	7,7	42,5	2014	660	63 920	10,3	42,3	

Sources: Polizeiliche Kriminalstatistik, Bundeskriminalamt - Population at 31 December of the previous year / état 4001 annuel, DCPJ - Population estimates at 1 January, INSEE

## SOURCES and DEFINITIONS

In France, the unit used by the police and gendarmes to count intentional homicides is the victim. There are four lists of offences used to record confirmed cases of homicide (excluding attempted homicides):

“The settling of scores between criminals” (List 1), “Homicides with a view to theft and during the commission of a theft” (List 2), “Homicides for other reasons” (List 3) and “Homicides of children under 15” (List 51).

The nomenclature used to record instances of intentional homicide (excluding attempted homicide) therefore does not include the terminology of the French Penal Code which contains the terms “murder”, defined as “the intentional killing of a person” and “premeditated murder” or “assassination” (Articles 221-1 and 221-3 of the Penal Code).

### « Mord und Totschlag »

On the other hand, the German Federal Criminal Police Office (OPFER), the *Bundeskriminalamt*, publishes statistics on intentional homicides (excluding attempted homicides)

(vollendet) using the same concepts as those outlined in the German Penal Code (*Strafgesetzbuch*), i.e. the terms “Mord” (which can be defined as aggravated intentional homicide) and “Totschlag” (non-aggravated intentional homicide) defined in Articles 211 and 212, respectively.

The grounds for aggravated homicide stipulated in the German Penal Code differ from those outlined in the French Penal Code. In particular, premeditation does not figure in Article 211 (which defines aggravated homicide, or *Mord*).

By dividing the number of victims of intentional homicide (excluding attempted homicide) recorded by the police by the size of the population, one arrives at a homicide rate for Germany and for mainland France that is homogeneous in its method of calculation. This allows a comparison to be made between the two countries<sup>1</sup>. However, this does not mean that there is a strict equivalence between what constitutes intentional homicide (excluding attempted homicide) in France and *Mord und Totschlag*<sup>2</sup> vollendet in Germany.

(1) One cannot rule out the possibility that within a few years' time, greater use of the “[International classification of offences for statistical purposes](#)” (ICCS) of the United Nations. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) will refine this comparison further.

(2) The absence of a reference to the intention to kill in the definition of intentional homicide (*Mord und Totschlag*) in the German Penal Code does not introduce the distinction that exists in France between murder and violence that results in unintentional death (Article 222-7 of the French Penal Code).