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Conflicts of Norms and Violence

Descriptions and explanations of the situation and behavior of minor emigrants from the Former Soviet Union (FSU) in Germany and Israel

Technical Report

This study is part of the:

German-Israeli Research Consortium: Migration and Societal Integration

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1 Technical Data

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2 Concept of the study

2.1 Research goals

The process of migration and integration is mostly embedded in conflicts with norms, groups, and so on. Sometimes these conflicts have further consequences and are combined with violence and other anti-social behavior; violence per se is quite rare, especially among adolescents.

One main goal of this study had been to identify factors that make some minors violent and delinquent in general. Moreover it addressed the issue of whether those factors serve as buffers as well and – in other words – enable others to overcome the difficulties and pass through the crisis of migration without becoming offenders, identifying them as resiliency factors. Based in a comparative design we examined such factors in two populations: ethnic Germans from the former Soviet Union (FSU) who have migrated to Germany (*Aussiedler*) and young Jews from the FSU in Israel.

The study considered firstly the socialization in the FSU concerning norms, violence, and the set of normative values as a cultural inheritance with which the immigrants arrived to the new society and which might have been the initial guideline for the newcomers. Secondly, we addressed the chances of integration in the new social surroundings of school, labor market, and so on. Thirdly, we examined the role of peers and family in the process of increasing or decreasing norm conflicts and violence.

The central assumption had been that only a small number of immigrants would regard delinquency in general and violence in particular as an acceptable way to act, however, such behavior when it occurs, might obstruct social integration. As an alternative we saw high-risk integration in sub-cultural milieus with a high probability of developing a deviant “career”.

Our research design aimed on studying the common aspects and differences among and between both populations. The ethnic Germans seemed to be quite different from the Jewish migrants from the European part of the FSU, particularly in terms of family size, education, and other aspects of social background.

But our approach also required a common understanding of some basic terms that is outlined in the following:

Values and norms

The terms “value” and “norm” are often used in one breath and sometimes their differences are neglected. However, a review of the research literature indicates some marked differences. Generally, a value can be defined as a clear or unclear idea of something desired that affects preferences for the choice between different options for action (Friedrichs 1968). Becker (1973) holds a similar view when he describes values as vague and general preferences. Parsons (1951) speaks of value orientations when certain values are shared by several actors. Correspondingly, Joubert (1973) defines value orientations “as conceptions of what is generally desirable in social action and relations“. In fact, the distinction between “values“ and “value orientations“ points to an important difference. From a psychological viewpoint, the values of a singular person are arranged hierarchically because when one chooses a certain value he or she often has to decide against other values (Kaplan 1980). However, in a social situation values first of all help to find a common ground. They give an idea about what can be expected from others even if we do not know them. Thus, values are an indisputable starting point for any kind of communication. The implicit expectation is that everyone should at least agree with the values. If this holds true, one can try more concrete expectations. But even if the own values are not accepted by others, one can adhere to them. For example, freedom remains an important value for people living in a dictatorship.

The common element of values and norms is the notion of “expectations“. However, expectations are more concrete in the case of norms. Actors expect a certain behavior, but they also expect reactions to their behavior, and they react to the behavior of others. In a terse statement, Friedrichs (1968) defines a norm as an expectation of a certain behavior plus sanction. Thus, for instance a professor might not be willing to learn and accept that some of his employees come late to meetings and sticks to the expectation that everyone should be on time. Therefore, a normative expectation means that we deliberately refuse to learn (Strobl 1998a). If we start to learn and accept that things are different from what we expect, a norm will vanish. In other words: Unlike values, norms tend to disappear if they are violated without consequences. Thus, after a violation the validity of a norm has to be confirmed to ensure its controlling power.

Conflict

The third meaningful concept of this study had been “conflicts”. In a first approach a conflict can be described as an interactive or – more generally without the condition of physical presence – a communicative process with a particular dynamic. Messmer (2003) holds that the starting point of a conflict is the rejection of a communicative proposal which is not accepted. Thus, the starting point of a conflict can be described as a sequence with three elements:

1. Request: “Shall we go to the pictures tonight?“
2. Rejection: “No, not tonight, darling!“
3. Rejection of the rejection: “You never go with me anywhere anymore!“

Such a conflict episode often ends quite soon because in communication there exist several stop mechanisms, such as submission, leaving the opponent alone, and so on. But what happens if a contradicting communication is not stopped but intensified and consolidated? In this case Messmer (2003) distinguishes between three types of conflicts: factual and material conflicts, interpersonal conflicts, and power conflicts. In a factual and material conflict the opponents disagree on a specific topic but may recognize each other on a personal level. An interpersonal conflict concentrates on personal relations and contains diverse forms of personal accusations. A power conflict implies the creation of marked prejudices and the use of a friend-foe scheme. Messmer (2003) sees an increasing degree of severity from factual and material conflicts to power conflicts.

In this context Weiß (2001) describes power differences as a major reason for the transformation of cultural differences into escalating conflicts. Hirschman’s (1994) differentiation between divisible and indivisible conflicts – which is based on Coser’s (1972) distinction between functional and dysfunctional conflicts – corresponds quite well with Messmer’s typology. Typically, divisible (functional) conflicts are found in the realm of goods and money and indivisible (dysfunctional) conflicts are centered on relations and power (see Anhut/Heitmeyer 2000). As functional conflicts occur *within* a common framework of norms and rules, such divisible conflicts do not involve fundamental principles but only their implementation in a special case. They may also help to modify problematic regulations that have become inappropriate. However, if the regulation of these divisible conflicts is suppressed or missed, a conflict can nevertheless escalate and

become an interaction system in which the conflict partners are reduced to adversaries and concentrate all their energy on destructive strategies (Greve/Strobl 2004).

Normative conflicts

The discussion of the three concepts "norm", "value", and "conflict" may help to clarify the compound "normative conflict". With respect to the dimension of values general expectations may be regarded in a social situation as a starting point. Concepts like honor and male domination on the one side and equal rights for women on the other side may be different values, but they do not necessarily cause a conflict. However, if these values take shape in norms that demand a certain behavior (i.e. that a man shows strength and sees to the virtue and purity of women vs. that a woman is allowed to live with whom she wants) there is in fact a starting point for conflicts. These conflicts may also be called *conflicts of difference* because the reasons for the conflicts are incompatible norms. For this sector of conflicts Sellin's (1938) explanation is still plausible: One culture demands a behavior that the other prohibits. Thus, migrants might get into trouble in a host society if they do not give up their traditional norms and the underlying values. Illustrative examples are quite easily found: cases of vendetta or violent suppression of women seem to prove Sellin's view. In fact, research in causes and possible prevention strategies of these serious crimes is an important issue.

However, a quantitative look at crime data shows that generally the first generation of immigrants has a very low crime rate although this generation normally clings to old values and norms. The major reason may be that so-called "traditional" values and the corresponding norms still regulate a wide range of social behavior in most societies. Norms concerning the respect for other people's property, for authorities, or other basic standards of social behavior are in most cultures undisputed. Even people who violate these norms normally feel the need to legitimize their behavior. Our research results show that it is almost irrelevant in terms of delinquency whether a person clings to traditional or modern values (Strobl/Kühnel 2000).

Does this mean that cultural differences are unimportant for conflicts? This is obviously not the case as the remarkable study of Elias and Scotson (1990) demonstrates. One interesting point in their study is that values of opponents are very similar. But even minor misunderstandings and differences on the expressive level can trigger off

severe conflicts. This is also an important issue for culturally diverse groups as Weiß (2001) demonstrates. Both, misunderstandings and the strategic use of cultural misunderstandings, can have an escalating effect on conflicts. Thus, if we look again at the causes of conflicts we can distinguish between *conflicts of misunderstanding* and *strategic conflicts*. Conflicts of misunderstanding do not result from different norms but from a different interpretation of the situation and a peculiar application of norms. However, such a different interpretation has not to be the result of a real misunderstanding. In the context of conflicts there is also the possibility of a strategic use of cultural misunderstandings. Nevertheless, between culturally diverse groups there may also be differences in the normative translation of values and thus there may be real differences below the abstract level of values.

All in all, we can define a normative conflict as any kind of controversy between individual persons or groups that is caused by actual or supposed differences of normative expectations. Of course, conflicts can also be triggered off by other reasons like greed, jealousy, anger, and so on.

2.2 Design of the study

This research applied an explorative design, which had been particularly based in the methods of *Grounded Theory* (Glaser/Strauss 1967). The Grounded Theory approach favored here is ideal for relating theory formation very closely to the object of research. In this approach, data collection and analysis are conducted in parallel. At the same time, Grounded Theory is particularly well suited for comparative research because theory formation and data collection always depend on contrasts and counter-examples (Strobl et al. 2003). Finally, Grounded Theory also offers the advantage that it is inherently able to bring together different data collection methods (Glaser/Strauss 1967).

Strauss and Corbin describe the "Grounded Theory" (1996: 7). Data collection and theory formation stand in a mutually beneficial relationship. Data collection is theory-led and theory formation, in turn, empirically guided. Induction and deduction interact on each other. The methodological heart of this approach is the "theoretical sampling" (Glaser/Strauss 1974; Strauss/Corbin 1990); here the researcher acts as an "active sampler of theoretically relevant data" (Glaser/Strauss 1974: 58). In order to prevent the qualitative surveys from degenerating into a naive empiricism, remaining trapped in

one's own theoretical hypotheses (Geertz 1983), Grounded Theory demands the researcher to conduct a systematic search for contradictory examples and evidence. The permanent search for contradictory evidence is a matter of collecting data according to maximum similarity and maximum difference (Glaser/Strauss 1974). "Ultimately, the whole Grounded Theory approach, including its data collection, is based on a technique of permanent comparison" (Strobl et al. 2003: 49). And this process of permanent comparison can be applied point by point to the present comparative design.

However, before we enter the hermeneutic circle of theory formation, data collection, and data analysis, we must first lay out the assumptions on which the research is based. This comparative research project had been designed as a comparison between two extreme groups. This means that both migrant groups were each further divided into two groups:

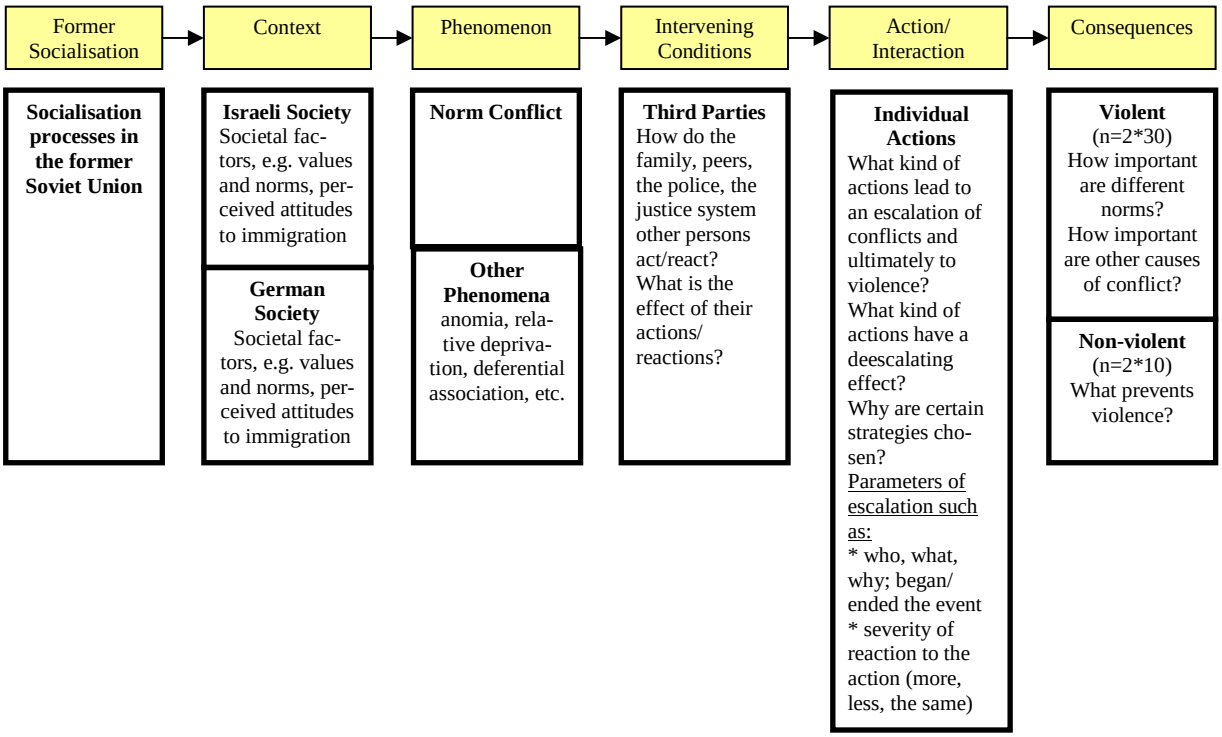
1. Similar initial experiences in the society from which they emigrated form the basis for inclusion in the sample. The two samples came from a society – the FSU – that has transformed from a repressive authoritarian state and had been trying in the past two decades to establish some democratic patterns of government and free economy, but still suffered from lack of democratic tradition and the trauma of the former repressive regime. Retrospective interviews were conducted in this connection.
2. The two groups in each of the receiving societies were based on the widest possible differences in low and high normative conflict and delinquency, including violence.
3. The interviews focused on integration careers with low normative conflicts and low levels of delinquency and on integration barriers with a high level of normative conflict and resort to delinquency.

For a qualitative project it is an obvious possibility to use theoretical sampling as an established sampling procedure. However, as there has been no fixed plan concerning the composition of the sample at the beginning of the research we had to discuss how to start the sampling procedure. In remarkable contrast to some statements in the "Discovery" book (Glaser/Strauss 1967), Glaser and Strauss (1974) mention that they developed

a rough sampling plan for their study "Awareness of Dying". Such a rough plan also seemed to be appropriate for our research project.

Thus the study had been designed in such a way that in both societies, 40 ethnic German migrants and 40 Jewish emigrants should be interviewed on the key issues, 30 of each facing barriers to integration and 10 who have integrated successfully. This approach is illustrated by Graph 1.

Graph 1: Research approach



Once again the comparative nature of this study is worthwhile to mention. Each step of the research considered and reflects that different and similar constellations were examined in both societies. This was based in the idea that young migrants with similar socialization experiences got suddenly confronted with different migration conditions in the respective receiving societies. These different conditions had to be taken into account. We knew from the Israeli situation that a massive immigration "wave" created a strong Russian enclave which preserves its culture and has formed social structures and points of focal identification that can be seen not only in the form of residential segregation or the establishment of private schools and two political parties of immigrants from the FSU. It is also manifested in the availability of many Russian stores as well as a

developed Russian language media, including several newspapers, magazines, and broadcasting stations. This cultural autonomy, one could argue, might be detrimental to individual assimilation into the host society, however, initial findings from a study in Israel showed that strengthening one's cultural identity might build up resiliency and in fact help the integrative process. There seemed to be nothing comparable in Germany other than residential segregation and inward orientation toward one's peers.

Moreover, Israel sees itself first and foremost as a Jewish state which serves as a safe haven for all Jews. This makes it, by definition, also an immigrant inviting country and a society of immigrants. The favorable policy toward immigrants is enhanced also due to Israel's unique geo-political situation. Facing continuous threat to its survival in the form of war or terror makes immigrants even more welcome and being a society of immigrants, it adopted also an open attitude toward different forms and modes of integration.

In contrast, Germany for a long time did not perceive itself as an immigrant society and lacked an open mind towards different integration models. Ethnic German emigrants were not seen as a unique and distinct migratory group because legally they counted as Germans. At the same time integration problems, faced by the most recent influx of young ethnic German migrants in particular, were underestimated. This had a grave effect given that the structure of opportunities the labor market in Germany offered and the level of support the welfare state provided had deteriorated drastically, especially for people with low qualifications. This of course affected many young ethnic German migrants (Heitmeyer 2002). The restrictive vocational integration conditions contrast with what is still a liberal society that faces neither internal nor external threats. That being the case, the control and monitoring apparatus is still bound by liberal constitutional requirements. They include the requirement of legality and appropriateness of intervention options to enforce norms in the event of crime, violence, and so on. That has positive consequences for the climate of society even though the security debate may be shifting toward stricter controls in view of the international situation. This must not have repercussions on normative controls in everyday life, so ethnic German minors may be assumed to have different socialization experiences – tough and low-threshold intervention, including swift resort to the use of force, in the society from which they

emigrated as opposed to higher-threshold controls and less recourse to force in the German receiving society.

Finally, it has to be mentioned that this study – in contrast to the other studies of the overall research consortium "Migration and Societal Integration" – only consists of one wave of interviews. The research team agreed that our research questions did not ask for a longitudinal approach, we rather preferred to offer further comparisons by including a prison sample in Germany and Israel.

2.3 Method of conducting the study

Narrative biographical parts of the interviews were combined with problem-centered interview parts. The former investigated in retrospect experiences of socialization in the authoritarian, repressive society that the migrants left, while the latter focused on their current integration careers and barriers in the two receiving societies and their experiences with control institutions in these societies.

We collected information on the motivations and situational definitions of actors in conflicts, as well as actors who exert a more or less cooperative influence on conflicts. Problem-centered (or reconstructive) interviews are well suited for this purpose (Böttger/Strobl 1997; Strobl 1999; Witzel 1982). In contrast to the ethnomethodological and symbolic interaction approaches, problem-centered interviews also take into account those aspects of a social situation that are independent of subjective interpretation, such as residential segregation. Corresponding theory-led scientific hypotheses are included at an early stage, when the interview strategy is drafted (on hypotheses: Strobl 1998b). For purposes of reconstruction the problem-centered interview may have to be augmented with elements of the thematic or focused interview, where a selected stimulus is used in the interview to throw light on a particular issue.

Giving the interview a theoretical structure (formulated in the interview strategy) has two advantages. Firstly, it allow for inquiring in greater detail during the course of the interview, if the interviewee brings up surprising new aspects that contradict the theoretical hypotheses or have simply been overlooked by the researcher. On the other hand, it makes the data comparable and contrastable, which has been a crucial aspect for the comparative design of this project.

Experience with this method has shown that such inquiries by the interviewer are not disruptive, but are often rather understood as a sign that the interviewer is taking the interviewee seriously. The goal of the reconstructive interview is to get as close as possible to the actual subjective experience in the moment the event occurred. In contrast to the narrative interview method (Schütze 1977; critical: Böttger/Strobl 1997), implausible accounts and glossing over are not simply accepted but questioned in the form of polite inquiries that avoid disrupting the interview situation.

The interview strategy of the problem-centered interview should cover the whole thematic range of the issues. But care had to be taken to arrange the questions in such a way that the interview could be conducted as a coherent discussion, while the adherence to the interview strategy should not be allowed to stifle the interactive dynamic of the interview. The flow of the discussion should not be halted by excessively schematic intervention (Witzel 1982). In the ideal case the interviewer has to have the interview strategy at the back of their mind and is able to keep track of the themes that have already been spoken about exhaustively and of those that still have to be dealt with in greater depth.

In a deviation from earlier applications of the problem-centered interview method, we began the interviews with a narrative-biographical introduction. This variant is particularly fruitful when a change of context has occurred, for example when an adolescent has emigrated/immigrated.

A narrative-biographical introduction offers two main advantages. Firstly, this method allows us to record the individual's particular, biographically mediated perspective on integration. Secondly, experience with qualitative field research has shown that accounts of the interviewee's life history give a certain impetus to the interview as a whole, which the interviewer can then channel towards the strategy-based questions. Especially where sensitive topics are involved, this allows the interview partners to free themselves from inhibitions and considerations of political correctness and to talk frankly. Concerns that this method might result in the collection of excessive amounts of data are unfounded, because there is no intention to subject all these spontaneous biographical narratives to exhaustive in-depth hermeneutic or sequential analyses.

A common way to deal with the content aspect in qualitative research is the condensation of qualitative material. There is a range between more extensive descriptions

like in ethnography (Geertz 1973) and a more focused categorization, such as in qualitative content analysis (Mayring 1983). However, the common ground is the organization of the data along aspects in which the researcher is interested. Terms like openness and inductivism are often employed for this research, and they are justified insofar as new aspects of interest normally emerge during the research process. However, one has to concede that a notion of observation, which leaves out the specific expectations, that is, some sort of theoretical approach of the observer, is untenable from an epistemological point of view (see Popper 1974). Thus, the question for a qualitative approach is not whether we need a theoretical framework or not but how elaborated and explicit this framework should be. Of course, this is again dependent on the research issue.

Referring to our research topic "conflicts of norms and violence" it seemed that we required a comparably dense theoretical framework at the beginning of the research: We had to know the main aspects of the terms "norm", "conflict", and "violence" before we could formulate our questions and start our research. A descriptive approach that only adds some stories to these categories would probably not have yielded interesting new insights. The interesting question was rather, how certain causal conditions lead to certain phenomena and what consequences context factors, intervening conditions, and action or interaction strategies do have in a specific population. Thus, one aim was to formulate a limited theory for the question of norm conflicts and violence for the group of migrants from the FSU in Israel and Germany, based in the empirical data that we might gain. For this aim Grounded Theory provides elaborated qualitative research strategies.

Data analysis in Grounded Theory is interwoven closely with data collection. The method of continuous comparison, already applied in the data collection, is the core of the analysis procedure. Three fundamental steps can be distinguished: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Strauss and Corbin (1990) conceive open coding as a fine-grade analysis: A text is analyzed precisely word for word, and each phenomenon that seems to be significant is assigned a conceptual label. When labeling phenomena, the researcher can invent new terms, use terms from the text, or refer to scientific terms. What is important is that the codes formed should not simply paraphrase the text but already represent abstractions leading toward a theory. The next step is to study relations between several categories. Strauss and Corbin (1990) call this axial coding be-

cause the categories are arranged along the "axis" of a very general theoretical model. The final step is selective coding: This procedure arranges the categories around an empirically saturated central category (Strauss/Corbin 1990; Strauss 1991). The outcome is a theoretical model of limited range addressing the typical activity of typical actors in the field under study.

2.4 Research questions

The research questions focused on the identification of resiliency factors that make some minors violent and delinquent, while others are able to overcome the difficulties of the integration process. The three contexts that were mainly addressed had been: a) socialization in the FSU, b) social conditions of integration in Germany and Israel, and c) the social circumstances and influence of peers and family.

Concerning the peers, the most important aspect was whether the groups are homogenous or heterogeneous. Fishman and Mesch (2005; with regard to the immigrants from the FSU) and Kühnel (1995; in general) present empirical evidence that one indicator for adjustment is the character of such groups. Homogenous groups – with many friends from the FSU – have many more problems than heterogeneous groups with friends from several social and ethnic milieus.

With regard to the family, on the one hand we looked for support by the families, and on the other we closely examined the experience of violence in family socialization as a "circle of violence" (Sutterlüty 2001).

Concerning the background to these contexts, we focused on six main issues:

1. How does the societal and political "reception climate" compare in the two receiving societies?
2. What degree of segregation exists for the two migrant groups in the two societies, or in other words, what institutional provisions or spatial compression exist in society and can be described by way of comparison?
3. How do ethnic German minors in Germany and young Jewish migrants in Israel handle change from a context of collectivist, authoritarian norms, including a high level of force by state institutions, to what by comparison is an individualist, liberal norm context and "restraint" in the use of force by state institutions because its use is subject to the rule of law?

4. How do “common” experiences based on comparable starting conditions in the society from which the two groups migrated look against the backdrop of new – and different – constellations in the receiving societies with their own migration histories, different integration mechanisms and segregation patterns and very different political situations (a lengthy peace with no threat vs. no peace and a high level of threat from war and terrorism)?
5. Which normative conflicts and forms of violent behavior are apparent in the two groups with their identical initial experiences in the different conditions that exist in Germany and Israel?
6. What degree of social support do the adolescents receive from their families?

Moreover, we addressed the migrant’s identity issue. One can have a strong Israeli/German identity (controlling for time) or a strong Russian identity, or both identities are strong or weak simultaneously. We found in a prior Israeli study that strong Israeli identity is associated more with delinquency than strong Russian identity. The reason (we think) being that once assimilated in the society they exhibit frustration and disappointment. As long as the immigrants maintain their closure, the frustration level is not high-due to low expectations, and the delinquency is low. Association with Israelis, which occurs over time, increases their identity as Russians. When these feelings push them to associate with other youth in cliques of Russians, delinquency increases. This is very interesting because it is counter intuitive but a very solid finding which questions some of our eagerness to assimilate the immigrants. The question that evolves then is to what extend maintaining an old identity is a resilient factor and to what extent, and under what conditions, assuming a new identity might be a disintegrative force?

This comparative project sought to analyze the different integration careers and barriers of ethnic German minors and young Jewish emigrants.

What integration-inhibiting effects does a collectivist, authoritarian socialization combined with institutionalized state repression applied via brutal means have on normative understanding, normative integration and approval of violence and delinquency, readiness to resort to illegal means and use of violence in the new society with its individualist, liberal characteristics? Is such an “easy” social set up perceived as an easy hunting field for people who have learned to respect the law only when enforcement

brutally and have little respect for whoever has a more lax and tolerant attitude toward deviance? To what extent this attitude and lack of respect for the law is also affected by the individual or group characteristics of the immigrants?

In that respect, it was interesting to conduct a comparative study of Germany and Israel. Both are Western liberal societies, but the immigrants are very different. The immigrants that came to Israel can be characterized as urbanites, belonging to small families and highly educated. The difference in human capital may serve as a factor that mitigates the cultural conflict and also reduces the antagonistic attitudes of the absorbing society.

The main issues of the interview guideline have been:

1. Important norms of young male emigrants from the FSU
2. Experiences with authoritarian and violent behavior in the FSU
3. Relevance of street culture norms for conflicts
4. Issues of social and cultural misunderstandings
5. Mechanisms for the escalation and de-escalation of conflicts (dimensions to be developed)
6. Consequences of the interventions of the police and the justice system for the development of conflicts
7. Trust/mistrust in the police in the country of origin and the host country
8. Delinquency and violence
9. Legitimization strategies
10. Victimization in the family and outside the family
11. The story of immigration
12. Comparison between expectations and what actually happened
13. Story of life at the present
14. Social network
15. Material participation, anomie, strain, gap between means and ends (Merton)
16. Competences (language, skills, etc.)
17. Personal and social identity

Once the whole team had agreed on these issues, the German team developed a first draft of the guideline in English. The instrument was then sent back and forth within the

team for further elaboration. The first “complete” version had been additionally discussed with practitioners that worked with the target group of this study. This form of plausibility test offered some final improvements. The guideline had been subsequently translated into German and Hebrew, supported by professional translators.

3 Sampling

3.1 Sampling

This section describes the original sampling criteria on which the research team agreed before conducting the pretest and main study. As one can see in the following chapters, it had been necessary to adjust some of these criteria during the field work. These adjustments are described and justified in the respective chapters.

The first agreement – which we maintained throughout the whole research – was to include only male youth since the prevalence of delinquency in both migrant populations is much higher and more frequent among them than among the young female migrants. As to age, we agreed on interviewing adolescents who were 15-19 years old (since in Israel after the age of 18 most young people are drafted to the military for a three year service). The criterion of duration of residency in the receiving society had been from 3-6 years, this should give plenty of opportunity to adjust to new norms or get into trouble on the one hand, and on the other not to be too removed from the country of origin to be able to recall past experiences of life in the FSU. The minimum length of stay should further allow for sufficient German/Hebrew skills among the interviewees to conduct the study in both languages. Moreover, we decided to split the sample in such a way that in both societies 30 of the 40 minor migrants were involved in at least one violent incident as a perpetrator, while 10 were not involved in any violent event as a perpetrator.

Finally, the German team planned since the beginning of the study to conduct about 10 additional interviews with young male prison inmates of this migrant group due to the ongoing political and scientific debate about their prison communities. Little had been known about these communities and no scientific studies were done so far. As Israel had less trouble with such prison groups and as it seemed to be much more difficult to get the required permissions for such interviews, we agreed merely to do these interviews in Germany. However, after the end of the funding period the conduction of prison interviews seemed to have become easier in Israel so that the Israeli team decided to do also about 10 interviews. These interviews are still in progress while this report is written and the data archive developed. Thus, they can just be analyzed by the Israeli team later and then be integrated into the archive.

The age range as well as the range of the duration of residency in the receiving society among the inmates differs from the criteria of the non inmate sample primarily due to the original decision to conduct these interviews only in Germany. It appeared not necessary to rely on the same age range and we decided therefore to address a more relevant age group concerning the prison communities. Indeed, we agreed on an age range of 18-23 years old in order to examine young men that had been convicted based in the laws of adults. Subsequently, the Israeli sample applied a similar age range of 18-21 years old, and no interviewee should have arrived younger than eight years old in Israel. The rationale of this age range referred to the military service of three years in Israel. In other words, the Israeli prison population should consist merely of young men that did not go to the army but that were convicted instead. The Israeli team assumed that the military service changes young men so much that the older ones who were just convicted after being in the army would not be comparable with those.

Due to legal restrictions and practical opportunities, the sampling strategies in general differed between Germany and Israel. The *German* sampling of the *non inmate interviewees* was based in contacts to gate keepers in schools and social institutions, especially recreational facilities for youth (so called "youth clubs"/*Jugendtreffs*). Both kinds of institutions were chosen because they are typical meeting points of young FSU migrants. Specific schools, schools in specific areas and neighborhoods, and specific social institutions and youth clubs are highly frequented by these migrants so that it appeared to be easier to get in touch with them in these places.

Several gate keepers were already known by us and trusted by the youth which contributed to our access to the youth. Other gate keepers had to be "recruited" and were chosen according to the above mentioned location criteria. The gate keepers' "job" had been to arrange appointments or bring us directly into contact with possible interviewees (in their institutions). Due to the trust that the youth should have in them – we assumed – it might be easier to convince the minors to participate in the study. But the gate keepers enabled us not only to get in touch with ethnic German youth, but – and this was more important – with specific young men, according to the sampling criteria. In this way the gate keepers allowed for a rather quick identification of relevant youth

and thereby also contributed to the application of the theoretical sampling that is a corner stone of Grounded Theory.

Furthermore, the choice of an institutional setting (schools or social institutions) for the interviews was not only based in practicability but also in avoidance of disturbances, for instance, by family members, friends, and others. Such disturbances seemed to us more likely if we would have conducted the interviews at the interviewee's homes or in public places, such as cafés or restaurants. Thereby we also avoided doing the interviews in a place of which they might feel ashamed; we knew from prior interviews that these migrants feel ashamed of their poor living conditions at times. The institutional setting had two further advantages. On the one hand, the interviewees knew that they were much more used to these places than us (the interviewers) which should make them feel relaxed and in control of the situation. On the other hand, it was beneficial for the project that all interview locations provided sufficient space to conduct the interviews in a private room without any disturbance by (too much) noise or interfering third parties.[1]

The *German* sampling of the *inmates* was grounded in two strategies. On the one hand, we contacted two German prisons with a medium-size population of FSU migrants. The few available prison data on this group indicated that approximately 8–14 percent of the total prison population was ethnic German (Federal Ministry of the Interior and Federal Ministry of Justice 2006). However, there were regional differences because the migrants live in certain federal states especially. For instance, one prison had 25 percent of ethnic German inmates while others only had about 4 percent. Therefore we choose prisons with a population of about 10 percent of FSU migrants. In order to conduct the interviews we had, at first, to get several permissions (e.g. to do the interviews and to ask all questions of the guideline). After getting these, we were invited by the prison officials to conduct the interviews on specific dates. On these days we could meet on an one-to-one-basis possible interviewees in a separate room without any time limit.[2] The prison staff was instructed by us to "randomly" choose them according to our criteria

1 Therefore we also instructed them to turn off their mobile phones during the interview.

2 The prison staff just knew that each interview would last about 1.5 to 2 hours.

(age, length of stay in Germany, and kind of offense(s)[3]) and based in a general willingness to participate in an interview. Therefore the young men should already be roughly informed about the goals of the study and its background; scientific research by a university. Of course, these aspects and the means of maintaining anonymity were explained in detail by the interviewer prior to each interview.

The second strategy was to let a social worker with sociological background and research experience participate in doing the qualitative interviews. He was in good contact to a prison with a population of also about 10 percent of FSU migrants, but he was primarily hired due his Russian language skills (native speaker). The goal of including him had been to allow us for interviewing inmates with lack of German language abilities but also for interviewing FSU migrants in their mother tongue because we assumed that this might make it easier to convince even some defiant inmates to participate in the study. Our general concern regarding the prison study had been that many inmates might reject any cooperation with an institution, even a university. Moreover, we assumed that inmates might talk more openly about stressful and emotional subjects in Russian. However, the results show that even if the Russian interviews were successful, they provided no further information than the German interviews. The willingness to participate in interviews among the prison population was surprisingly high and the German language abilities as well. Our research experience does hence not indicate any necessity to conduct prison interviews with these migrants in Russian.

The *Israeli* sampling of the *non inmate interviewees* was based in four strategies. Firstly, interviewees were contacted that were already known to the research group due to a prior study. Secondly, the municipality of Haifa was asked to support the research team by providing access to youth counselors that could suggest youth that participated in social programs; the participation in programs was voluntary. Thirdly, the Department of Education of Israel provided the permission to conduct interviews with pupils and to recruit them in school. Schools with a high proportion of Russian pupils were preferably asked to support the study. Fourthly, the research team used a snowball-

[3] Since we were primarily interested in youth violence, they should rather be convicted for violent offenses.

sampling to expand the sample through contacts of those that already participated in the study or that were asked to participate.

Thus, interviewees, youth counselors, and school officials functioned as gate keepers in Israel. Their "job" had been to bring us into contact with possible interviewees. Due to the trust that the youth should have in them – we assumed – it might be easier to convince them to participate in the study. But the gate keepers made it not only easier to get in touch with the youth, but with the specific young men, according to the sampling criteria. In this way the gate keepers supported the identification of relevant youth and thereby also the application of the theoretical sampling that is a corner stone of Grounded Theory.

Due to prior experience with this sampling approach and the involved institutions, the Israeli team decided to conduct all interviews in the homes of the interviewees in order to avoid disturbances by third parties. In contrast to the German case, such disturbances seemed more likely if the interviews would have been conducted in the institutions that usually provided few options to talk in separate rooms. Moreover, the Israeli team had no experience that the interviewees of this migrant group might feel ashamed of their homes. Finally, this setting also had the two advantages that, firstly, the interviewees were much more used to this place than the interviewers which served to make them feel relaxed and in control of the situation. Secondly, it had been beneficial for the project that the interview locations provided sufficient space to conduct each interview in a private room without any disturbances by (too much) noise or interfering third parties.[4] The appointments were arranged in such a way that no other people were around during the interview. However, it turned out to be problematic to conduct the interviews not immediately, but to arrange later appointments. These difficulties are discussed in chapter 5.4.

The *Israeli* sampling of the *inmates* was grounded in one strategy. The research team had firstly to get several permissions from state institutions and the different prisons in order to get contact to relevant young men. Thereafter all prisons in Israel were contacted in order to get a sufficient sample. It turned out that it was – in contrast to Germany – usually not possible to conduct more than one interview each time; the first nine

[4] Therefore we also instructed them to turn off their mobile phones during the interview.

interviews were conducted in six different prisons.[5] The interviews could be done on an one-to-one-basis in a separate room without any time limit.[6] The prison staff was instructed to "randomly" choose possible interviewees according to certain criteria (age, length of stay in Israel, and especially violent offenses) and based in a general willingness to participate in an interview. Therefore they should already be roughly informed about the goals of the study and its background. These aspects and the means of maintaining anonymity were explained in detail by the interviewer prior to each interview.

3.2 Sampling population

As mentioned above the basic population of non inmates covered all male ethnic German migrants in Germany and all migrants from the FSU in Israel who were 15-19 years old and stayed for 3-6 years in the receiving society. The basic population of the inmates covered all migrants of both groups that were 18-23 years old.

However, several problems identifying the sampling population have to be considered. Ethnic Germans receive the German nationality on arrival in Germany. Thus they cannot be separated from native Germans by nationality in resident lists. In other words, official statistics do not allow for exact data about how many of these migrants live in Germany, in a specific federal state, city, or neighborhood. We just know how many people arrived in Germany (about 2.4 million). But it exists, indeed, no reliable information about what became of them since the arrival. It is just known that there had been movements to the southern federal states of an unspecified number. Moreover, no data is available about migration to other countries, also back to the countries of origin. In addition, no information exists about fertility rates, children that were just born in Germany, and marriage within and outside this minority. Even though it is known that this is a relatively "young migrant group", no data exists of the total number or percentage of adolescents and youth among them. Therefore it is, for instance, impossible to compare the percentage of their prison population (in specific prisons) with the percentage of the basic population in a certain region, area, or city; the latter simply does not

[5] These are the interviews that had already been conducted when this report was written.

[6] The prison staff just knew that each interview would last about 1.5 to 2 hours.

exist. Due to this problem it is illusionary in general to conduct representative studies on this migrant group.

The selection of specific areas for this study had been, hence, especially based in practicability. As there are no reports and scientific studies that indicate different levels of violence by this group in specific federal states of Germany, we decided to conduct the interviews in the federal state of our university (*Northrhine-Westfalia*), one neighboring state (*Lower Saxony*), and *Berlin* because of our contacts to gate keepers that could support us to get in touch with possible interviewees.[7] In contrast to the pure urban area of Berlin, we further decided to conduct the interviews not only in big cities but also in smaller – and therefore usually calmer – cities of a size of more than 50.000 inhabitants in the two other federal states. The purpose of this sampling strategy was not to increase the "representativeness" of the data of this study – this is no goal of qualitative research – we rather aimed on farther bandwidth of cases, for instance, in order to examine whether certain aspects of living in smaller cities have an impact on the development of violence after migration.

The selection of the prisons for the inmate interviews had been based in the above mentioned percentage of about 10 percent of FSU migrants among the prison population on the one hand. On the other hand, we decided to conduct the interviews also for reasons of practicability and a better chance to get all permissions in Northrhine-Westfalia and Lower Saxony. We assumed that it might be easier to get the permissions in the federal state of our university and in a neighboring region.[8]

Even though it is in general easier to identify Russian Jews in *Israel* than ethnic Germans in Germany, this study was also not meant to allow for representativeness. Due to the relatively small total area of Israel the interviews had been conducted without any regional restrictions. They were not only done in the North, South, West, East, and Middle of Israel but also in cities and villages. This also aimed on a farther bandwidth of cases, for instance, in order to examine whether certain aspects of living in smaller cities

[7] Due to our terms to maintain anonymity we do not name the cities in Northrhine-Westfalia and Lower Saxony as well as the neighborhoods of Berlin in which we did the interviews.

[8] Especially in the case of the prison interviews, we avoid specifying the names of the cities in order to maintain anonymity.

have an impact on the development of violence after migration. As mentioned above the Israeli prison sample also included all areas of the country, which was even necessary to provide sufficient options to conduct this study.

4 Pretest

4.1 Pretest

The pretest had been conducted according to the same standards and premises as the interviews of the main study. It was not meant to be merely a test of certain aspects of the guideline or of specific conditions of the interview situation. It was rather meant to be a test of the comprehensibility of the guideline and whether the questions provide the intended impulses to the interviewees so that they could be "guided" effectively through the interview. Moreover, the pretest served to estimate the average time per interview that would be required in the main study. Finally, another purpose of a qualitative pretest is that the interviewers shall already get used to the instrument in a concrete field situation.

All pretest interviews were conducted face-to-face in separate rooms – avoiding disturbances – in schools and social institutions for youth in Germany as well as in the homes of interviewees in Israel. In the German case, these interviews should also be a kind of pretest for the supporting institutions because it was planned to conduct further interviews in their schools and youth clubs. We did four interviews in Germany (with two violent and two non violent youth) and four interviews in Israel (with two violent and two non violent youth).

Furthermore, the interviewers were already instructed in the way that we intended to apply in the main study, which was based in prior research experience. According to the interview strategies of Grounded Theory, all questions of the guideline were meant to be tentative and suggestive. It was more important to follow the thread of the interviewee. The order of questions was not important, just to have them covered by the end of the interview. The interviewers had to learn the questions but were allowed to use the guideline in the actual interviews.

First of all, each interviewee was instructed about the goal of the study and measures for anonymity (both in terms of data storage and analysis), asked permission, and had to sign a form of informed consent. All questions of the interviewee about the mode of the interview and the study were answered before the interview, or if more questions occurred after it. Further instructions for the interviewers had been to move from general thematic questions to specific probing questions. They should remain neutral in

their questioning and attitude and take nothing for granted. They should ask questions from a position of educated naiveté. This was necessary in order to capture the interviewer's meaning of reality rather than to present the interviewer's opinion. It was important for the "flow" of the talk that they made no judgments and were patient and respectful throughout the interview. Whenever an information was contradictory they had to be sure to probe.

Finally, the mode of getting the basic demographic information of the interviewees differed in Germany and Israel. By the end of each qualitative interview in Germany, the interviewee was asked to fill out the brief demographic questionnaire. The German team preferred this approach due to its research experience with this migrant group. Based in different research experience in Israel, the Israeli interviewers used the questionnaire in the beginning of each interview. The empirical data do not indicate that one approach was superior in comparison to the other one.

4.2 Interviews

The pretest had already been done in a way that was meant to avoid any form of disturbance. By the choice of specific locations, unnecessary noise and interference by third parties (e.g. presence, calls on mobile phones) was minimized. Third parties were never required, for instance, in order to act as a translator.

The only peculiarity of the German pretest sample had been that one non violent interview was already 23 years old. This interview was conducted because the youth with whom we arranged an appointment through a gate keeper had been absent this day, while this young man fulfilled all criteria, apart from his age. Moreover, the gate keeper informed us before the interview that most of his friends were at an age of about 18 years old and that he had been non violent for his whole life. Therefore we decided that his higher age was tolerable for the pretest.[9] The Israeli pretest showed no peculiarities and had not been interrupted by any disturbances.

[9] This would have been different if we would have been seeking for a violent youth and the possible interviewee would just have been violent until the age on 18 or 19 and since then desisted from violent behavior.

4.3 Interviewer

The German pretest had been conducted by two interviewers (Dr. Rainer Strobl and Dr. Steffen Zdun) that were also mainly responsible for the main study. Both have considerable experience in conducting qualitative interviews, not just but also with violent and non violent young male ethnic Germans. Due to their research experience in this topic, they were chosen for the study. This choice turned out to be helpful throughout the whole process of field research because it allowed for more detailed follow-up questions on specific narrations of the interviewees. Both interviewers additionally provided several contacts to possible gate keepers which made the sampling easier and quicker.

The Israeli pretest had been conducted by two interviewers (Chaya Koren PhD and Jonathan Davidov) that were also responsible for the main study; Jonathan Davidov was even only responsible for the prison interviews. Chaya Koren had considerable experience in conducting qualitative interviews and also experience with youth groups. Jonathan Davidov had been a MA student with no prior experience in qualitative interviews. However, he had extensive experience with FSU youth in Israel and Germany and even speaks Russian. He was instructed and trained by Zvi Eisikovits and Chaya Koren on the job, including test interviews. When both approved him ready for the study, he started to participate in the pretest interviews of the project.

4.4 Results

The results of the pretest did not indicate any necessity to change the general design of the study. This could already be assumed prior to the pretest due to our research experience with this migrant group of both involved research institutes. However, the results of the pretest helped us to do some final changes on the master guideline on which the whole research team agreed before we conducted the main study. These changes were done on the English master guideline and once again just afterwards translated into German and Hebrew.[10]

In both countries some minor developments of the guideline seemed to be useful. Even though no major problems occurred during the pretest interviews, the tentative

[10] The English master guideline and its translations (German and Hebrew) can be found in the archive. Professional translators supported the translations.

guideline turned out to be slightly too long to ensure a duration of 1.5 to 2 hours per interview. Therefore we developed the final structure of the guideline, mainly avoiding repetitions of topics and avoiding objectives that were not essential for the study and previously just integrated due to specific research interests of singular members of the team. Based in the comparative nature of the project we, finally, mainly focused on questions and topics that were relevant for both countries but also considered some aspects that were primarily relevant for one country, such as of the Jewish religion and the army in Israel.

Finally, we improved the field routines for increasing the willingness of the interviewees to participate in the study during the pretest. Apart from a trustful relationship between gate keepers and possible interviewees, our presentation and explanation of the objectives and purposes of the study turned out to be essential to increase the general motivation of the participants but especially that they share detailed information and personal experiences in the interviews. During the pretest, in the joint discussion of its results, but also during the whole process of the main study we elaborated on the motivational procedure. In addition, we began to pay the interviewees an allowance which further increased the motivation to participate in the main study; this payment was also announced by the gate keepers when the first told them about the interview. The payment was especially useful in order to also get in touch with youth that would have otherwise rejected the request because of a) public transport costs to come to a meeting point just for the interview, b) scarce spare time that they would rather spend with friends, and c) temporary jobs for which they were paid.

5 Main study

5.1 Conduction

The mode of conducting the main study did almost not differ from the conduction of the pretest. The main study was also done in a face-to-face setting in separate rooms – avoiding disturbances – in schools and social institutions for youth in Germany as well as in the interviewee's homes in Israel. The main difference to the pretest was that we had to include more institutions and gate keepers to achieve a sufficient number of interviews.

Once again the interviewers were instructed that all questions of the guideline were meant to be tentative and suggestive. It was more important to follow the thread of the interviewee. The order of questions was not important, just to have them covered by the end of the interview. The interviewers had to learn the questions but were allowed to use the guide in the actual interviews. However, according to Grounded Theory the guideline further developed throughout the process of conducting the interviews. Some questions were added when new relevant topics emerged during singular interviews that bore the potential to be essential for more interviewees. Also based in Grounded Theory, singular phrases and the order of questions and topics were modified during the field period, grounded in the developments of each interview but also as an individual reaction on the language skills and way of speaking of the interviewees.

First of all, each interviewee had been instructed about the goals of the study and means for anonymity (both in terms of data storage and analysis), asked permission, and had to sign a form of informed consent. All questions of the interviewee about the mode of the interview and the study were answered before the interview, or if more questions occurred in its aftermath. Further instructions for the interviewers had been to move from general thematic questions to specific probing questions. They should remain neutral in their questioning and attitude and take nothing for granted. They should ask questions from a position of educated naiveté. This was necessary in order to capture the interviewer's meaning of reality rather than to present the interviewer's opinion. It was important for the "flow" of the talk that they made no judgments and were patient and respectful throughout the interview. Whenever information was contradictory they had to be sure to probe.

Finally, the mode of getting the basic demographic information of the interviewees differed in Germany and Israel. By the end of each qualitative interview, the interviewee was asked to fill out the brief demographic questionnaire in Germany. The German team preferred this approach due to its research experience with this migrant group. Based in different research experiences in Israel, this team used a questionnaire in the beginning of each interview.

5.2 Interviews

5.2.1 German interviews

Like in the pretest, all interviews of the German main study could be done without any form of disturbance. Due to the choice of the locations, unnecessary noise and interference by third parties (e.g. presence, calls on mobile phones) was minimized. Third parties were never required, for instance, in order to act as a translator.

The German research team met its goal to conduct 40 interviews with young male FSU migrants. However, the sample differed slightly from the initial criteria. Instead of an age group of 15-19 years the sample ranged from 14-20 years old, and instead of a duration of residency from 3-6 years the sample ranged from 2-9 years. In order to justify this change, one has to recall the rationale behind the initial criteria. It was particularly based in a common understanding of the research team that that it might take time to adjust or to begin engaging in violent behavior and that it might take up to three years to have sufficient German language skills for the interviews. Four participants had been in Germany for less than three years and one participant had been just 14 years old, but all of them spoke the language sufficiently and were already perpetrating violence. Furthermore, the attitudes and behaviors of the interviewees that lived 7-9 years in Germany did not really differ from those that had been there for fewer years. Thus, we acknowledged them as comparable with the participants that met the initial criteria.

This extension of the sample became necessary because it turned out to be quite a challenge to conduct all interviews with minors of the age 15-19 years old that just live in Germany for 3-6 years. Even with the extended sampling criteria it took nine months to conduct all interviews, which was planned to be done much quicker. The main reason for this unexpected difficulty seemed to be that the number of migrants from the FSU significantly decreased in recent years. Even though the study had been done in several

German cities and with the assistance of many schools and youth clubs, it was particularly difficult to find a sufficient number of violent youth. This is also indicated by the fact that only 16 youth were engaged in violence both in the country of origin and in Germany, and not just in one society (10 interviewees). This problem might have been caused by the sampling strategy but it can at least be seen as an empirical indicator of an ongoing reduction of violence among the ethnic Germans in Germany. Thus we also included more non violent youth in the sample than originally planned (14 instead of 10 youth). This difference appeared tolerable as we had 26 youth that engaged in violence as perpetrators, and because it offered more information about those that completely reject violence; a group of FSU migrants that was seldom considered in this kind of research so far (see Zdun 2007).

Table 1: Distribution of demographic characteristics and violence among the German non inmate sample

Age	Years in Germany	Country of origin	Parent's marital status	Use of violence
14 years old: 1	2 years: 4	Kazakhstan: 18	Married to each other: 32	Violent in Germany and in FSU: 16
15 years old: 6	3 years: 12	Russia: 16	Divorced: 6	Violent in Germany only: 3
16 years old: 12	4 years: 3	Ukraine: 3	Mother widowed: 1	Non violent in Germany but violent in FSU: 7
17 years old: 13	5 years: 10	Uzbekistan: 3	Living separated: 1	Non violent: 14
18 years old: 2	6 years: 7			
19 years old: 5	8 years: 2			
20 years old: 1	9 years: 2			

Due to the political and scientific interest in this topic and the lack of empirical data, the German team conducted 9 interviews with young ethnic Germans in prison. The interviews were done in three different prisons in order to control effects of singular institutions. As mentioned above the sampling of the inmates differed from that among the non inmates; most inmates were older and lived longer in Germany. Table 2 shows the sample.

Table 2: Distribution of demographic characteristics and violence among the German inmate sample

Age	Years in Germany	Country of origin	Parent's marital status	Use of violence
18 years old: 1	6 years: 1	Russia: 4	Divorced: 4	Violent in Germany and in FSU: 6
19 years old: 3	7 years: 1	Ukraine: 2	Married to each other: 3	Violent in Germany only: 3
20 years old: 3	8 years: 1	Kazakhstan: 2	Living separated: 2	
22 years old: 1	11 years: 2	Kirghizistan: 1		
23 years old: 1	12 years: 1			
	13 years: 1			
	14 years: 2			

Interestingly, apart from the long forerun to get all permissions and let the prison officials pre-select and contact possible interviewees, the sampling and conduction of these interviews turned out to be much easier than expected. At the days of the interviews the prison officials "randomly" brought us separately in contact with the pre-selected inmates that had agreed to talk to us. In some cases we still had to convince the interviewees of the relevance and confidentiality of the interviews, in other cases no further explanations were necessary so that we just had to give them the basic instructions and explanations concerning our approach. Finally, all of them agreed to participate, also to the digital recording of the interviews. We just had to assure the two inmates that were interviewed in Russian that the tape records would not be made available to any third party and just be used for transcription.[11] However, they had not been afraid and agreed that the research team might publish and share the transcripts. They basically explained the rejection concerning the audio records by an indefinite fear that someone might recognize their voice. The interviewer additionally had the impression that they felt uncomfortable with the very idea that different people might listen to the record after the talk. Thus they even felt more secure when they got assured that the other members of the research team would just get to know the transcript. Therefore but also because of his Russian language ability this interviewer did both transcripts.

[11] In order to assure anonymity it is not planned, in any way, to publish the tape recordings in order to avoid that any interviewee might be recognized by his voice.

It should also be mentioned that we had the impression that the inmates did talk more openly about several topics, especially violence and group hierarchies among peers, than many violent non inmates did. At least the latter often seemed to require at first some trust in the interviewer before they finally talked openly about rather sensitive topics and their involvement in delinquent behavior. One plausible explanation for this difference might be that the inmates thought that we already knew about the offenses for which they had been convicted, although we merely knew that they were involved in at least one violent offense.[12] However, this would not explain why they even told about offenses for which they had not been convicted.

Their openness throughout the interviews was particularly surprising because several prison studies about this migrant group indicate that they usually reject institutions and cooperation with state officials (see for an overview Zdun 2008). Before we started the sampling, we were even afraid that many inmates might already reject the "invitation" by the prison officials to participate in the study. At least we expected that they would partly reject to talk about several relevant topics because they might be instructed by other (higher ranking) ethnic Germans in the prison to do so. Thus it has even been one finding of this study that at least not all ethnic German prison communities seem to have leaders that control the actions of their members and their interactions with third parties, and demand that they shall not talk at all about these communities.

5.2.2 Israeli interviews

Like in the pretest, all interviews of the Israeli main study could be done without any form of disturbance. Due to the choice of the location, unnecessary noise and interference by third parties (e.g. presence, calls on mobile phones) was minimized. Third parties were never required, for instance, in order to act as a translator.

The Israeli team met its goal to conduct 40 interviews with young Russian Jewish migrants. It has to be highlighted that only due to tremendous efforts it became possible to maintain the intended age range of 15-19 years and the duration of residency from 3-6 years. It has already to be mentioned that the main challenge of this project group had also been the rather narrow restrictions of the sample. Therefore the process of conduct-

[12] We decided to avoid detailed information about the inmates in order to allow for a more explorative character and less bias.

ing the non inmate interviews even took more than 17 months in Israel. The main reason for this unexpected difficulty had also been that the number of migrants from the FSU significantly decreased in recent years so that it became very difficult to find enough youth that met the criteria. The difficulty of the Israeli team also consisted in its lack of opportunity to let older youth participate in the study. As mentioned above these had to be excluded due to the army service. Moreover, the individual rejection of participation in the study was much higher in Israel than in Germany,[13] and it had been necessary to get various permissions, particularly in the school setting. Indeed, it took about 8-9 months to get all permissions from the Department of Education, the Israeli head researchers, the individual schools, and the parents before the interviews could even start. However, once all permissions were given, this approach was quite successful because more than one interview could usually be done per school.

Table 3: Distribution of demographic characteristics and violence among the Israeli non inmate sample

Age	Years in Germany	Country of origin	Parent's marital status	Use of violence
15 years old: 7	3 years: 5	Ukraine: 22	Married to each other: 17	Violent in Israel and in FSU: 11
16 years old: 10	4 years: 13	Russia: 8	Divorced: 18	Violent in Israel only: 16
17 years old: 11	5 years: 13	Kazakhstan: 6	Mother widowed: 5	Non violent in Israel but violent in FSU: 8
18 years old: 11	6 years: 9	Moldova:2		Non violent: 5
19 years old: 1		Kavkaz:1		
		Belarus:1		

As mentioned above the Israeli team just started to conduct prison interviews after the funding period of the study and they were still in progress when this report was written. It is hence intended to extend the report afterwards when the interviews are completed, transcribed, and analyzed. Further more, the transcripts shall be added to the archive. The Israeli team intends to do 12 inmate interviews and decided to address a similar age group like the German inmate sample. The Israeli sample shall have an age range of 18-21 years old, and no interviewee shall have arrived younger than 8 years old in Israel.

[13] The high level of rejection is explained and documented in chapter 5.4.

They shall be mainly convicted for violent offenses, but further kinds of offenses are also possible. However, the Israeli team also instructed the prison officials to provide no information to the interviewer about the reason of imprisonment and conviction.

It has to be mentioned that even though the Israeli research team had several prior contacts to possible gate keepers at the administration and in various prisons, it turned out that these contacts did not offer much support to get all permissions. Various attempts of the team had been necessary before it could get the first permissions to have a general allowance to do inmate interviews. And even then this permission was not accepted, acknowledged, or sent by the officials to all prisons. Thus, it was necessary to start the whole procedure of getting the permissions for singular prisons more than one time again. All in all, it turned out that prison interviews in Israel are a rather time-consuming endeavor, even if a research team has good contacts to officials.

5.3 Interviewer

The German main study had been conducted by three interviewers (Dr. Rainer Strobl, Dr. Steffen Zdun, Sergej Aruin (two prison interviews)). They all have considerable experience in conducting qualitative interviews, not just but also with violent and non violent young male ethnic Germans. Due to their research/applied experience with this topic they were chosen for the study. This choice turned out to be helpful throughout the whole process of the field research because it allowed for more detailed and better follow-up questions on specific narrations of the interviewees. The interviewers provided the required contacts to possible gate keepers which made the sampling easier. Sergej Aruin was additionally chosen due to his Russian language ability.

The Israeli main study has been conducted by two researchers (Chaya Koren PhD and Jonathan Davidov). Chaya Koren had considerable experience in conducting qualitative interviews and also experience with youth groups. Jonathan Davidov had been just instructed and trained on the job to do qualitative interviews in the beginning of this study. However, he had extensive experience with FSU youth in Israel and Germany and even speaks Russian. Due to his specific research interest, increasing interview experience, and his Russian language ability he finally did all inmate interviews by himself.

5.4 Response

The research team interviewed the intended 40 non inmates and about 10 inmates in each country. As this was no longitudinal study, we had not to cope with problems of sample mortality. We assume that this cross sectional design even contributed to the motivation of several interviewees to participate in the study. On the one hand, they mainly had not to agree spontaneously on participating in several interviews. On the other hand, it served the understanding of confidentiality that the German research team got no data at all about them (e.g. name, phone number, address, and so on) that could later be used to trace them back. Even in the Israeli case, where the interviews were conducted in the interviewee's homes, the participants were not afraid that their personal data would be later used by the research team.

It is worthwhile to mention that the German team was able to convince all preselected interviewees to participate in the study. Although some interviewees had some doubts before we explained the goals and approach of the study, they finally understood that this kind of research meant no personal harm to them and was rather a way to provide valuable information that might, for instance, be used for political consulting and the development of prevention programs. In other words, many interviewees participated with the intension to improve the situation of future migrants in Germany.

The Israeli situation had been quite different. It turned out that the Israeli sampling strategies were not only rather time-consuming but also less successful than the German approaches. However, this cannot only be explained by the method, but some other factors have to be considered. About two third of the contacted youth did immediately or after first acceptance reject an interview; most of them immediately. This seems to be mainly caused by making appointments instead of directly contacting and meeting the youth and then immediately conducting the interviews. Youth seem to prefer thinking not too long about this decision and doing an interview immediately instead of meeting the interviewer personally just some days later in the case of a first phone contact or instead of making appointments for later dates. It especially turned out to reduce the willingness of participation when appointments could be just made more than three days after the initial talk. All in all, it can be concluded: The longer the time between the first contact and the interview, the higher the chance of rejection.

These youth seemed not to plan many days and weeks ahead. Thus it could happen that they did not appear to an appointment because they suddenly had something else to do. This experience, which coincides with the German high response rate, indicates that such interviews should be done without a long fore-run. It appears as the best option to conduct interviews immediately in the place/setting, in which the interviewee and interviewer first meet. In contrast, first contacts by phone calls or other forms of making appointments seem to bear a higher chance for rejection, in the case of phone calls also due to the less binding character of this rather impersonal approach.

Nevertheless, it has once again to be mentioned that the sampling process of this study had even been quite difficult in Germany, especially the sampling of the violent youth of a certain age and duration of residency. It hence appears to be recommendable to choose less narrow sampling criteria, particularly for specific populations that are rather small in a country. Both migrant groups had been decreasing in Germany and Israel since 2000. The number of youth among these migrants is constantly decreasing so that it gets more difficult to recruit them for interviews. Many schools that had a huge population of FSU migrants some years ago nowadays just host small groups. The same development can be observed in social institutions. Many social institutions that were quite busy in the 1990s are even closed nowadays due to lack of "customers". Overall, the number of young visitors and clients with FSU background is decreasing.

We assume that this development in general also contributes to a decreasing number of deviant groups. Such groups had been quite omnipresent in various neighborhoods with high proportions of FSU migrants in the 1990s. It seems that this change refers less to positive effects of prevention programs but that especially the decline in migrant numbers dried out the potential of youth to get attached to deviant groups and get involved regularly in violence. It might be that nowadays rather those with major problems to integrate into the German and Israeli society get involved in such groups, while many others eventually stick to a less deviant environment. It might even be that violent groups are seen as less "cool" than before, since these groups are decreasing and thereby might have lost their charisma and attraction among migrants. This would, for instance, explain why several violent youth reported that their circle of friends got smaller over the years because their mates lost the interest to engage in former behavior patterns.

As the number of juvenile FSU migrants with conscious knowledge, memories, and experience (of violence) in the country or origin is steadily decreasing, it may be a better or even the only option for future research on these migrants to conduct studies with those that came as babies or young children but especially with those that were just born in Germany and Israel. However, it will become a challenge to develop precise means to sample them because they will not only have the German/Israeli passport and most likely perceive themselves as Germans/Israelis but also speak German/Hebrew fluently without any accent. It can even be assumed that their names will not indicate their origin anymore.[14] Options to identify them might be, for instance, the birthplace of parents and grandparents and the cities or neighborhood where they live, in the case of still high percentages of FSU migrants and their descendants in certain areas.

Finally, our measures to improve the motivation for participation among the interviewees have to be mentioned. First of all, the main means had been the use of gate keepers. They were not only trusted and essential for the promotion of the project but also provided the space to conduct the interviews in an undisturbed setting in the German case. Moreover, our personal explanations of the purpose of the study and approach of the interviews helped to motivate the interviewees. Last but not least, the payment of an allowance for the participants – 20 Euro in Germany and 50 Shekel in Israel – contributed to the individual motivation. Especially the inmates appreciated this due to the lack of opportunity to earn money in prison. Although we were not allowed to give them money we got the permission to buy goods in the prison shops which they could privately consume (or exchange with other prisoners[15]). All interviewees gave us the impression that they considered this allowance rather as an appraisal for their support of the study than just as a payment. Thus it did not seem that they merely gave information for money but that the allowance mainly improved their motivation.

[14] In the German case, apart from typical Russian first names, the current juvenile generation of FSU migrants can often be considered by strange, old-fashioned German first names that root back to former centuries and are seldom used by the native population.

[15] Even though this is forbidden in many prisons, such exchanges are an everyday routine of prison life.

6 Data preparation

In contrast to the quantitative projects of the research consortium "German-Israeli Research Consortium: Migration and Societal Integration", the data preparation of this qualitative research team consisted of doing the above mentioned three coding steps: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. As a short reminder, open coding means a fine-grade word for word analysis of each interview. Axial coding aims on examining relations between categories that are based in the insights of the open coding. The final step, the selective coding arranges the categories around an empirically saturated central category, heading towards a theoretical model of limited range.

Therefore it had been essential for the comparative approach of this study to agree on various issues before we started the coding process. Firstly, we agreed to use the same strategy for the open coding in both countries. Secondly, we did the axial coding not just on the basis of each national data but also in a comparative way. Thirdly, we combined the common findings for the selective coding in order to develop a common theoretical model.

The archive of the GESIS contains the data sets of the open coding – a MaxQDA-file from Germany and a ATLAS.ti-file from Israel. Moreover, it includes a presentation and illustration of the joint theoretical model. The singular steps and results of the axial coding are not documented in the archive because they had mainly been work-in-progress and results of common discussions that were not further specified in singular files and papers. However, we conducted detailed analyses of many categories that were derived from the empirical data that can be found in publications of the research team.

6.1 Data entry

The open coding had been conducted in both countries by the researchers themselves.[16] Due to our knowledge of the content of the empirical data – based in doing the interviews – we were able to develop a preliminary list of codes before starting the coding process. Thus this preliminary list did not only contain the main codes that were basically derived from the major topics of the guideline but already several the sub-codes.[17]

[16] In Israel only by Chaya Koren.

[17] The final lists of codes of both countries are included in the archive.

Subsequently the open coding had been conducted, assigning a conceptual label to each phenomenon that seemed to be significant. Thereby various other sub-codes and further sub-codes could be developed that culminated into the final lists of codes of both countries.

The open coding was based in the agreement that each new code should not simply paraphrase the text but already represent abstractions leading toward a theory. Moreover, a constant exchange of new formed codes had been done in order to allow the others for using them as well;[18] this means particularly that it could be necessary to reread specific parts of already coded interviews once more in order to control whether a new code also applied for certain statements.

Although different codes could be applied to the same statement, we intended to avoid too much repetition. Thus we agreed to be as specific as possible, using preferably sub-codes. In other words, if we could use one or more sub-codes on a statement, we just used the sub-code(s) and avoided the main code. Singular statements were just linked to main codes if they matched with no sub-codes at all and if they were too general or if it seemed not necessary to develop a further sub-code.

Finally, we agreed that the open coding of each interview should be only done by one person; we did not intend to share the content of singular interviews. Thereby we intended avoiding difficulties that could occur if two or more researchers just knew limited parts of an interview and might therefore miss the context of certain statements. It is known in qualitative research that some statements of an interview can be just "completely" understood, or better to say, more insightfully coded knowing the whole script.

However, we also discussed singular statements within the team during the coding process if a coder required support because (s)he felt unsure about its meaning. In addition, the whole team of coders had a meeting before starting the coding process in order

[18] Intensive and easy data and code exchange is, however, just possible within the same software. Both programs allow for working independently at the same time on a data set and exchanging all kinds of data updates. It had been just necessary to inform the other team members about new codes which they could immediately apply after the data set update. Due to the use of two different programs, this kind of exchange could be just done manually between the countries. However, the joint work with and discussions about new codes – via internet chat – brought up no problems; a complete data exchange had not been necessary in any way because of the different languages of the empirical data. Therefore we just exchanged and described new important codes to each other.

to develop a common routine. Therefore we translated some interviews into English to be able to work jointly on them.[19] This procedure did not only sharpen our views on the data but allowed us already for developing common codes.

6.2 Quality control

Although the quality criteria of qualitative research rather differ from those of quantitative research, validity and reliability do also matter. *Validity* of qualitative studies refers, for instance, to the question whether the used method and setting had been standardized in such a way that would allow for the same results in the case of repetition by other researchers. Nienaber (1995) argues that this kind of "ecologic validity" requires – amongst others – interviewing an individual in familiar surroundings and in a way that matches with his language skills and way of speaking. She further gives to consider that the method of Grounded Theory itself provides continuous validation due to ongoing controls, changes, and developments of the sample and sampling. This openness in the examination of the empirical data, indeed, serves as a kind of validity control.

The repetitious addressing of the same topics in interviews with youth that had partly quite different and partly very similar vantage points allowed for considering a relatively broad bandwidth of attitudes, behaviors, and interpretations of situations and experiences. Even though such similarities should not be misinterpreted as representativeness, they allow in qualitative research for an approximation to the reality of a specified group. This "broad view" requires contradictory cases that show similarities but also differences among a set of certain categories. This is why the "development" of common categories is so essential in the process of axial coding.

In diametrical opposition to the quantitative understanding of *representativeness* stands this corner stone of Grounded Theory; it aims on empirical generalization. The theoretical modeling is based in the best possible generalizability. Nienaber (1995: 185) argues the "typical-ness" has not only to be based in experiences but also in reactions. Behaviors and attitudes become typical due to their linkage to specific situations, coping strategies, and prioritization. In other words, generalizations in qualitative research are

[19] This had been done by the same professional translators that supported the development of the guideline. Both are native English speakers with sociological background.

grounded in individual relevance and weightings that can be found in the same way across different individuals.

Further challenges of qualitative research concern *reliability* and the obstacles of the human abilities to objectively narrate subjective experiences and to allow for inter-subjective comprehension. One major problem of reliability is based in the nature of retrospective data; the memory of individuals is, for instance, selective and effected by further biases. This may also cause that certain incidents are – intentionally or unintentionally – dramatized or relativized. Moreover, specific narrations can require certain reflections. If an individual is not able or willing to do this, these narrations are also biased. These problems have been considered in the coding and the interpretation process, although they can never be completely controlled by the researcher. However, we tried to minimize these problems, for example, by repeated inquiry of certain issues if an interviewee avoided an answer at first or by unveiling inconsistencies between different statements of the same person.

Finally, we had to cope with the problem of understanding "foreign" attitudes from a different culture. It is, indeed, possible that two people from different countries talk about the same topic, believe that they have the same understanding, but fail to perceive the different meaning that they give to certain statements or narrations. Thus it had been necessary that the interviewers showed great openness to the point of view of the interviewees in order to not just understand their attitudes but also their cultural background. This approach is promoted by Grounded Theory that demands for engagement with the interviewee and empirical data in such a way that nothing is taken for granted. The interviews have to contain repeated inquiries of individual and emotional meanings. Even though the interviewers were already familiar with both migrant groups, this could not be avoided. However, this might have improved the quality of the inquiries, for instance, by asking questions that could easier be answered by the interviewees.

Apart from considering these quality standards, the coding process has to be mentioned once again. The research team did not only meet before starting this process and stayed in contact during this procedure but also met after for common axial coding. Firstly, all members of the team developed individually several categories for the next step of the

data analysis. Then these were discussed internally by each national team and finally by the whole group. This procedure served for cross-checking whether different researchers came to the same categories and interpretations; this is called *discursive validation* in qualitative research.

The team agreed in this meeting on various categories that were identified and interpreted independently in the same way. Further agreements were achieved through intensive discussions on other categories when the opinions differed among the researchers. The discursive approach largely allowed for common ground in these cases, based in the joint reading and interpretation of certain aspects. Nevertheless, no common understanding could be achieved concerning some tentative categories. On the one hand, some categories only applied for one country because they were based in data that was merely relevant there.[20] This was the majority of cases that were subsequently not used in the same way, just because they merely mattered in one country. However, we agreed jointly on the use of these categories. On the other hand, some aspects varied so much between the countries that it was necessary to use different categories in both societies. This occurred particularly in regard of some issues of identity and national self-perception, as well as reasons for immigration among the non violent and violent youth in both societies. In these cases we agreed to apply different categories and to use their contradictions for cross-national comparisons.

Further common discussions were required throughout the whole process of the axial coding and finally applying its results in the selective coding. While the draft for the theoretical model has been developed by the Israeli team, the result was based in the comparative discussions, common findings, and the feedback of the German team. Therefore the theoretical model can be used in both countries; it may serve for quantitative falsification in the future.

6.3 Data protection and security

Data protection and security belongs to the everyday routines of both research institutes. It included the safe storage and handling of all data on the one hand, and on the other decisive means of confidentiality and anonymity for the interviewees.

[20] This happened, for instance, in the case of addressing the meaning of religion and of the army, which were almost not considered in the German interviews but quite relevant in Israel.

The empirical data were exclusively stored on password-protected computers, hard-disks, and other storage media. After conducting each interview with a digital voice recorder, the voice recording had only been saved on such a media and was immediately after erased from the voice recorder.[21] The voice recordings were given to the transcribers that already worked faithfully for each institute for several years also on a password-protected storage medium. This password that differed from the passwords on the storage media and computers at the institutes was only known to the transcribers and team members. We got the voice recordings and transcripts back; also password-protected, and the transcribers were instructed to delete these files from their computer. The contract of the Israeli team with the company that did its transcriptions contains that all files are deleted from the company's computers after six months; this period shall allow for asking for the transcripts if they get lost by the researcher or to verify claims if the researcher notices any mistake.

The members of the research team were the only people that had access to the voice recordings and transcripts.[22] The coding has only been conducted by them. The exchange of the coding-file in MaxQDA and ATLAS.ti within and between the teams followed the same security procedures. All data is password-protected stored on different storage media at both institutes individually since the end of the funding of the project.

The original questionnaires of the demographic data are also stored securely at both research institutes. The empirical data were entered by the team members after each interview. No third party got in touch with the original questionnaires because they contained some personal information that was not meant to be entered in the data sets, for instance, the location of the interview. The data sets which are included in the archive were not shown to third parties so far and they are password-protected stored on different storage media.

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21 This standard procedure also serves to gain enough storage space for further recordings.

22 Apart from the transcribers and the translators who translated few interviews into English for cross-national comparison and discussions. The translators got the interviews also password-protected and were instructed to handle erase them in the same way like the transcribers.

Finally, data protection in terms of anonymity for the interviewees had been essential. All terms and means of maintaining anonymity were explained before each interview to the young men. The interviewees were given the chance to ask any kind of question and demand for further modes of providing confidentiality; this option was used rather rarely.[23] Just then they had to sign a form of informed consent. Moreover, they were informed that no voice recordings, transcripts, or single parts of the interviews would be given to gate keepers, relatives, institutions, or any third party. The interviews would only serve scientific purposes and no statements would be published that could indicate who they are and where an interview had been conducted.[24]

Before we got in touch with any interviewee, we instructed the gate keepers only to arrange the meetings with the youth and not to tell us anything about them, especially not their names. In the interview we also instructed the interviewees to avoid telling us their real name and other personal data (e.g. birth date, address, phone number, mail address). Instead we offered them to choose a fake name for the interview and to invent further fake names if they wanted to talk about friends, relatives, and places. Thus the voice recordings did usually not even contain any real personal data. In the few cases that an interviewee did a mistake, note had been taken of this during the interview, and the transcribers were instructed to make this information anonymous. This could be done by giving false names (of people and places) or by erasing the information and exchanging them against "XXX". Even the allowance had always been paid cash and in no way that could be used later to trace back singular individuals.

[23] As mentioned above two inmates insisted that their voice recordings should just be heard and transcribed by the interviewer himself. This matched with the planned procedure and did not affect the data analysis.

[24] This mattered particularly for the prison interviews but also for those among the non inmates.

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