Twitter Thread by Elly Arrow



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On International Day to End Violence Against Women In The Sex Trade, I am going to compile statistics and evidence about my country Germany specifically and how with 18 years of highly permissive laws towards brothel keepers, pimps and sex buyers we have arrived at the following:

Violence frequently starts prior to entry into the sex trade. It is not a myth that women in #prostitution are disproportionately neglected and abused physically, sexually or emotionally in childhood. According to gov-funded study half faced regular abuse: https://t.co/Die71nZAE1

According to one study that asked 54 women in German prostitution, 41% entered were first exploited as minors. https://t.co/0IuOyrf1kt International pro-prostitution oriented researchers confirm a rate of 20-40% entry into sexual exploitation as minors: https://t.co/T9Uk37AXfo

Notice the language around children's commercial sexual exploitation? Many international organizations so preoccupied with destigmatizing adult #prostitution, that they will call children "sex workers". This is not a weird one-time thing, it's a pattern: https://t.co/oyTY2tWtY8

Back to Germany: Pro-prostitution organizations, as well as the government, readily admit: #Pimping is rife in the legal German sex trade. Two-thirds of women are having to pass on more than 50% of their earnings to third parties (add taxes to that...). https://t.co/Xs53ztu5GY

This is why our government kindly reminded pimps in 2017 to please stop taking so much money from women, systematically undercutting their chances of contact with support services & forcing them to be available for specific acts to specific men (only legal definition of pimping).

Acts of #pimping in Germany are legal. Pimps can run brothels, agencies, set prices, times when women need to be available, demand they be naked (!) "at work". If she wants to sue for #exploitation, she has to prove she had no chance of escaping & had specific men forced on her.

In reality, women are usually too scared to report - and for good reason since organized crime runs huge sections of the legal industry. They don't trust authorities or are actively abandoned because their exploitation is invisibilized. https://t.co/7qFRci0AOK

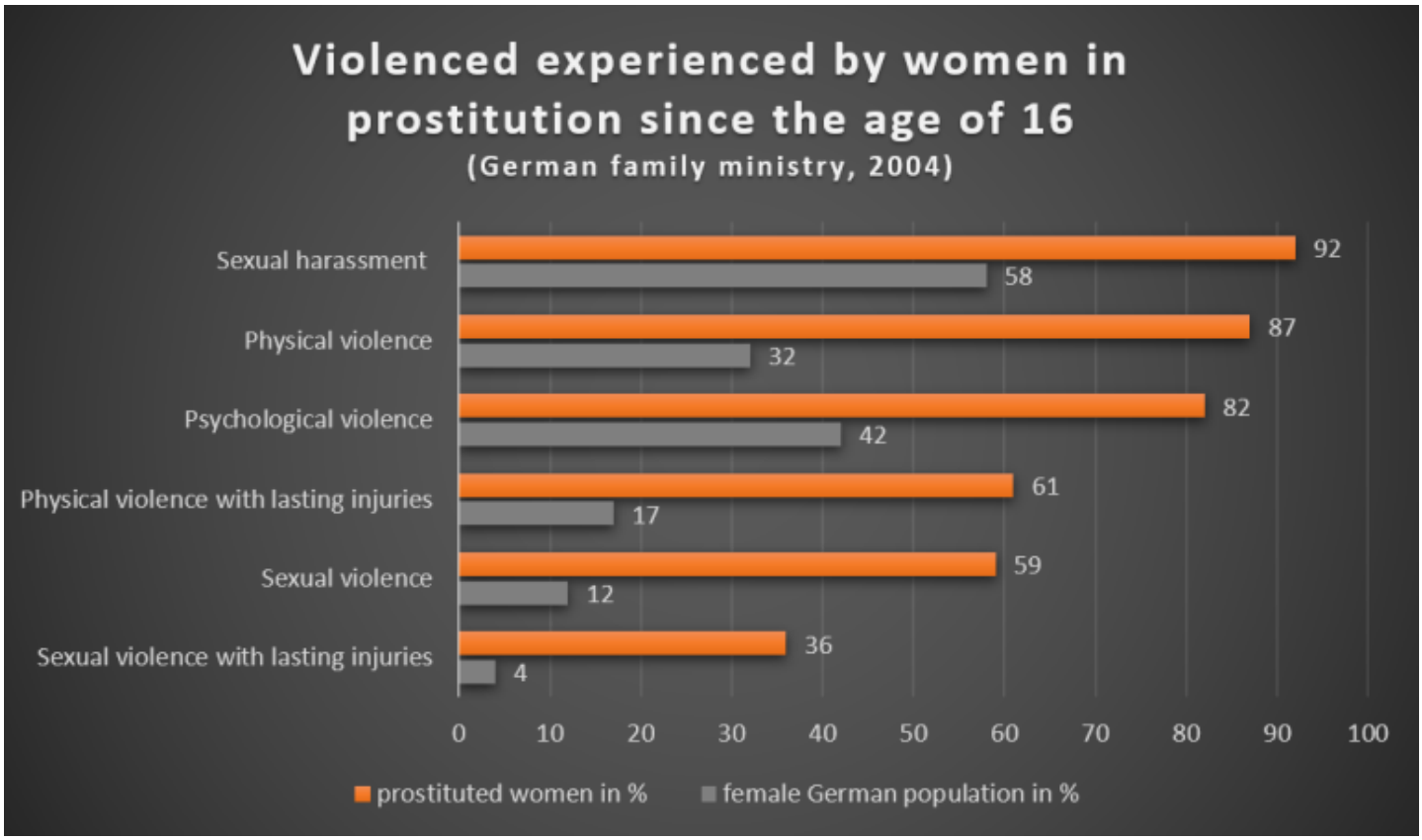
Even pro-prostitution sources confirm: In Germany, women are frequently not in control even of such basic things as demanding condom use from buyers which means their very lives are at risk every day. A third to a half have nearly no control over sex acts. https://t.co/Xs53ztu5GY

Various sources confirm: Women in German legal #prostitution face rates of violence much much higher than the average population - and they do so specifically "on the job", at the hands of sex buyers, pimps, and strangers who think them "easy prey" (see previous sources).

According to the gov funded study compared to the average female German citizen a woman in #prostitution is 6 times more likely to be assaulted in a "work place context" and 2x as likely to be victimized by a stranger. I will follow with the kind of violent acts being perpetrated

Women in German #prostitution are: 2x as likely to be victims of burglary (16%). 40% had been victims of robbery. 35% had experienced being held hostage for a prolonged period of time. A significant number of these crimes happened in a #prostitution context.

Lifetime experiences of violence for women in German #prostitution: 92% sexual harassment, 87% physical violence, 82% psychological violence, 61% lasting injuries, 59% sexual assault, 36% injuries from sexual assault. Compare to the average population:



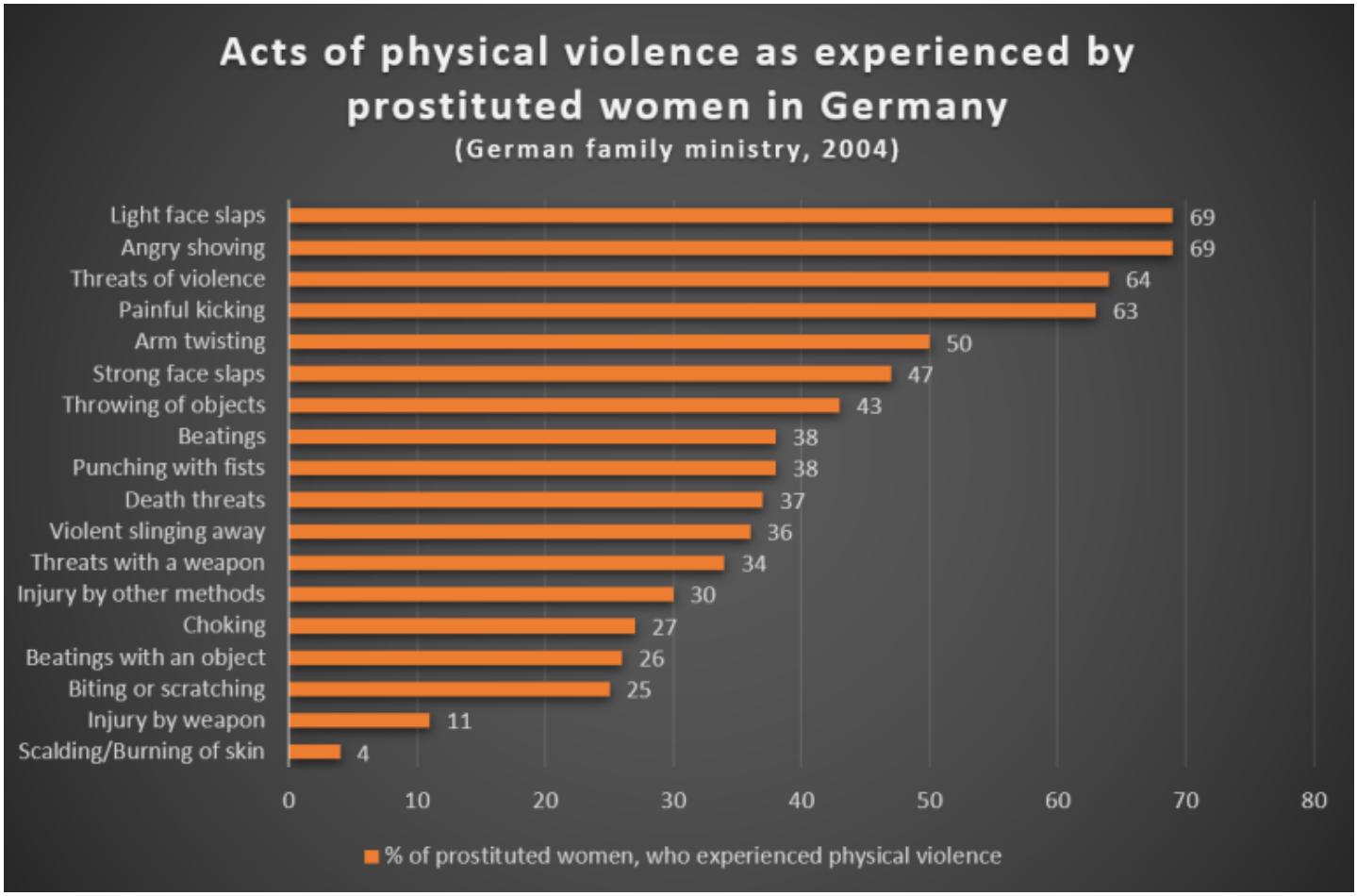
Making it more concrete: These acts for many women in #prostitution are a normalized part of their "work environment". After all, men seeking to pay comment on or prod their bodies, weighing whether they are "worth the money" or not. This takes a psychological toll.



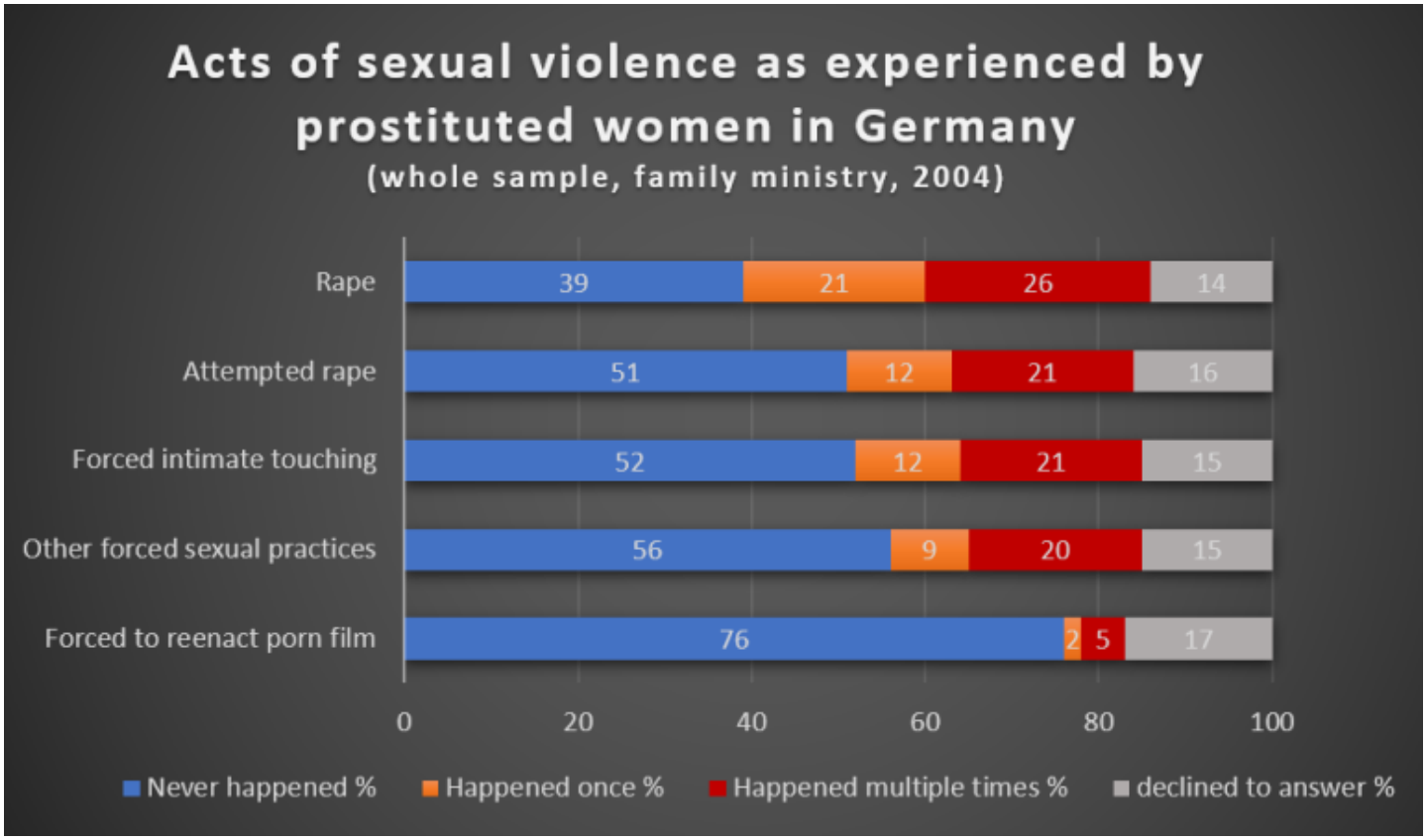
Psychological violence should never be underestimated. Physical wounds may heal, but many women who survive #prostitution may face years or lifetimes of PTSD, depression, panic attacks, severely low self-esteem, suicidal ideation. Healing is possible but rarely assisted.



A lot of violence committed against women in German legal #prostitution happens in the context of a "disgruntled" sex buyer, arguing over how much more time or what sex acts he is owed or whether she is truly "worth the money". These cases rarely go to court.

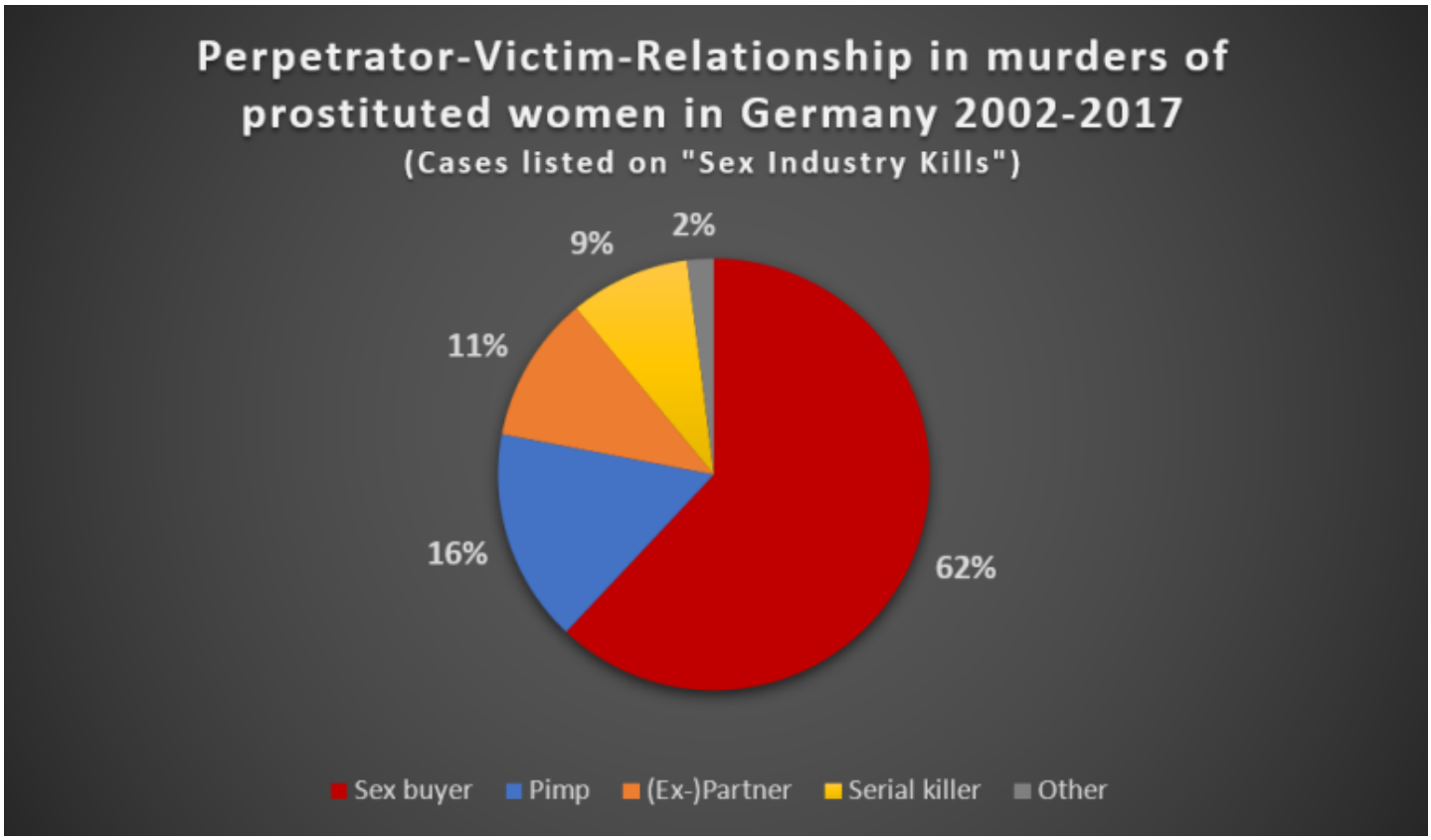


An estimated 47% of women in German legal #prostitution have been raped. 33% survived attempted rape. 33% were intimately touched against their will. 29% forced to do other sex acts. The rate of reenacting pornography will have risen since. Buyers also film women without consent!

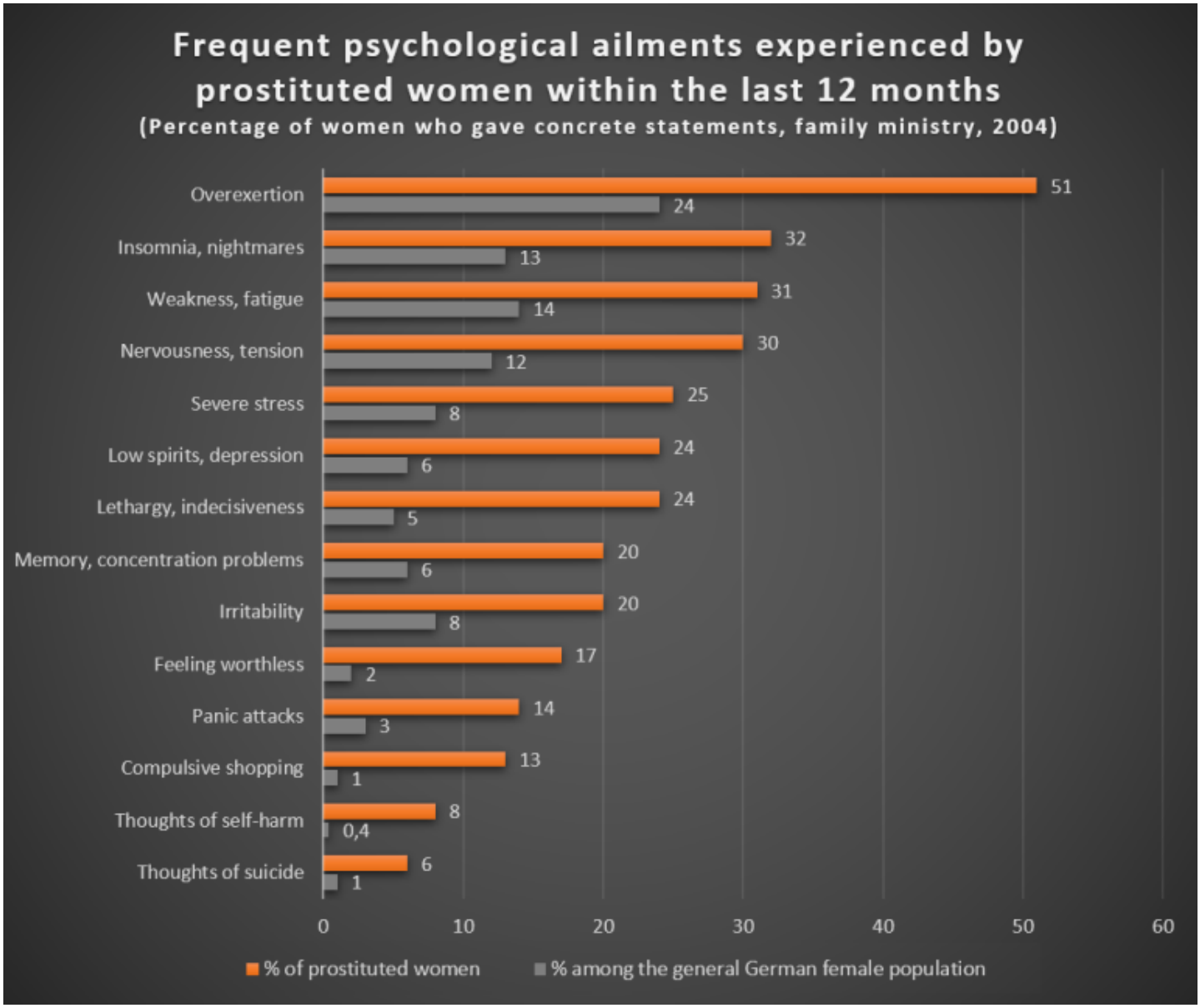


Finally women in #prostitution are between 12 and 18 times more likely to be murdered than the average population. There are no official stats in Germany, but what anyone can confirm for themselves is the most likely perpetrator... https://t.co/6T9p4YQ0cf; https://t.co/kpK5zExZ9I

The most likely murderer of a woman in #prostitution in legalized Germany is a #sexbuyer. This is based only on cases reported in media where a suspect was found and convicted. Cases often remain unsolved because of the high number of potential suspects. https://t.co/OgcmEoIHPS



Violence against women in #prostitution as well as living with the daily fear of it has long term consequences. Here is a side by side comparison of how much the average German woman suffers from these long-term health problems and how much women with sex trade experience suffer.



Taking a closer look at the primary perpetrators: There hasn't been a systematic study of German #sexbuyers since 1994 and this study focused on marital status and HIV prevention. International studies looking at attitudes and awareness of harm paint a bleak picture:

2 out of 5 sex buyers in a British study admit knowing about the frequent and serious physical and mental health effects of #prostitution. https://t.co/cVmVjVii4q About half show high levels of awareness of pimping & trafficking. https://t.co/1CEgVuJNlu; https://t.co/TWypG0djnB

German #sexbuyers see poverty & pimping all the time and don't act. They don't fear consequences for committing serious acts of physical and sexual violence. This is just from forum evidence. Who knows what they are indeed scared to tell each other about: https://t.co/VC1kBjmGLA

I would like to go into a lot more detail especially on the subject of sex buyers perpetrating all kinds of violent crimes against women in #prostitution, but I am pressed for time today. I hope this thread inspires some to take a closer look. This is the reality of legal Germany

One more thing about legal #prostitution in Germany: The role of police. A lot of police can be charged with ignorance or incompetence, yet others try to act against organized crime, but don't have the tools to do so. Yet others are actively involved in sex buying and pimping!

The role of police in relation to #prostitution really should be focusing solely on exploiters and letting social workers and if police, then female staff, handle interactions with women in the trade. Many come from countries where police are incredibly dangerous and mistrusted.

We are slowly realizing that victims of rape and intimate partner violence need to be assisted ideally for the entire process of whatever their wants and needs are by female staff! Male police officers shouldn't be alone with women in #prostitution at their most vulnerable.

Case in point: During #Covid19 Germany has returned to prohibition and police are again arresting everywhere because prostituted women are seen as illegal "workers" not vulnerable. A woman was caught by an undercover cop posing as a buyer & charged 1.500€ https://t.co/yRY4Z7Q4tn