Criminal case file analysis

The Centre for Criminology (KrimZ) sub-project is mainly concerned with the analysis of files from criminal proceedings against extremist offenders and persons suspected of such offences in Germany. Two groups of cases are included in this data collection. On the one hand, these are criminal proceedings that have led to convictions for offences under the criminal law on terrorism, regardless of whether these offences have a right-wing extremist, left-wing extremist or "Islamist" background. On the other hand, criminal investigations based on suspicion of a criminal offence with an "Islamist" background are considered, regardless of whether a conviction was reached. Finally, biographical case analyses are carried out for selected cases.

This does not primarily consider cases that have led to terrorist attacks against people or other targets. Such attacks are typically covered by numerous offences in criminal law, such as homicide. The special criminal law on terrorism (in Germany, ss 89a-89c, s 91, ss 129a-129b of the Criminal Code – StGB) is rather designed to prevent serious crimes as early as possible. This involves, for example, the activities of terrorist organisations in Germany or any other country. In recent years, offences concerning the actions of individuals have become increasingly important. These include, for example, leaving Germany with the aim of supporting the establishment of an "Islamic state" in another country.

The files analysed contain a wealth of information on such cases that were investigated by the police and prosecution authorities in Germany. This also includes data on the biography of the accused persons going beyond information already known to the public. At the same time, the files document how criminal law on terrorism is applied in practice. Overall, the project allows for a description of the practice of criminal law beyond those cases that are consistently in the public eye. At the same time, it contributes to the explanation of terrorist crimes.