



GfG

Gesellschaft für Geburtsvorbereitung – Familienbildung und Frauengesundheit –
Bundesverband e.V.

Country report Germany 2009 - 2010

Midwives campaign: An electronic petition has been launched to bring the subject of the rise of the professional insurance for midwives (more than 4000€/year) to the Parliament. Within 3 days the necessary number of signatures (50 000) was already hit. A great success which shows how the profession is appreciated. The position of GfG was to support the campaign, so that women will continue to have midwives at their side, but our opinion is that the midwives do not do their work properly, especially in the hospitals where they do not give the best care and are under the authority of the ob/gyn. We are in favour of strong midwifery for pregnancy and birth attendance. All the midwives who want to quit their profession want to enter our realm of work, e.g. the support of the young family. They already kicked us out of the childbirth education which WE developed in the early 80s, then they took over the work with young mothers (post partum): our classes on body and mind adjustment. Now they want to offer the classes for which we designed a curriculum with financial help from the Ministry of Family affairs... They don't like the doulas because they do the work they were supposed to do ... We are quite upset because the fee for the midwives classes are refund by the health insurance! Money Money!!! This shows nevertheless that the GfG has always been in touch with the women and could detect in the first place their needs around the time of becoming a mother/family and offer support. Our approach did not change and is still the one coming from the feminist women's health approach aimed at empowering women

GfG 30 years old, the festivities will take place in Berlin in October 2010 under the auspices of the Minister of Family affairs who sponsors part of the event.

Statistics: C-section: from 30% rate still rising. At the same time logically the number of epidural anaesthesia drops. Locally I can see efforts to support "natural" birth and a move to less intervention in hospitals. Birth out of hospital stays by 2% despite the re-imburement by the health insurance. This might show that even before women who wanted this option have chosen it

Use of synthetic hormones for birth is the world widest practised intervention: use and duration of drip or other way of administration which inhibits the release of one's woman own hormones are not included into statistics. As we know today (work by Kerstin Uvnas Moberg Karolinska Institut Stockholm) the release of Oxytozin during parturition is the key for contractions and all the other hormones production during birth and AFTER, for breast feeding and for bonding (so called love hormones), with long term consequences on individuals and thus on society as a whole. A small minority of women today gives birth with the help of her owns hormones. **TOPIC FOR ENCA?**

In between 18.5% of the father take the so called "**father's leave**" of at least 2 months. There is a study going on: does the presence of the partner/father influence the birth process? This has never yet been scientifically evaluated! How could childbirth education better address the specific needs of fathers to be? GfG conducts a project co-financed by the Ministry.

Less **abortions**: 110 700 for 685 000 births. Comparison with France: 200 000 for 800 000 births means 1 abortion for four births. For Germany the same ratio would lead to 170 000 abortions. Since 1990 the rate is constantly decreasing, 2009 less than 3.3% compared to 2008. These figures show good information and practice of contraception and a better counselling practice for women in a conflict situation. The majority of women (3/4) who have abortion are aged between 18 and 34 years of age, 15% between 35 and 39. Some of the family-women's health centres lead by GfG-members offer official counselling which is free of charge for the women.

I was happy and surprised to meet ENCAs from Spain, Poland, Portugal in Las Palmas Gran Canaria. A great conference on "**Birth and Primal Health**". The next one 2012 will be in Honolulu. I had a poster on "free standing birth centres in Germany".

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