Projekt Paulus

When Action No Longer Makes a Difference

Systemic powerlessness, institutional gaslighting and human harms arising from years of compulsory contact with authorities

Professional report



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Ex officio et ex conscientia.

Reading guide and contents

This report brings together the theoretical and empirical case concerning the harmful effects of losing the ability to make a difference. It is written from the perspective of Projekt Paulus and connects human loss with demands for documentation, accountability and restoration.

The source numbers in the text are clickable. All bibliographic information and source notes are collected at the end. A distinction is drawn between original theories, research findings and the report's application of them to contact with authorities.

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1. Main conclusion

Losing the ability to make a difference is harmful because it can sever the connection between a person's efforts and the possibility of protecting what those efforts are directed towards: health, children, family life, livelihood, dignity and a future in which they can participate. When a person is still expected to act responsibly, but relevant actions repeatedly receive neither substantive examination nor an opportunity to change the situation, the result may be sustained mobilisation without relief. This is the report's overall argument, supported by research.

> *A person can retain their insight, resolve and sense of responsibility while institutional access to translating them into change is blocked. Powerlessness can therefore exist in the midst of extensive, persistent effort.*

Projekt Paulus treats this as a question of the conditions for human activity and protection. What matters is whether evidence, objections and attempts to act can lead to independent investigation, correction, clarification and relevant action. An acknowledgement of receipt or a new procedure may leave the original strain entirely intact.

The overall evidence consists of several connected elements. Psychological theories explain the importance of meaning, opportunities to act, attachment and perceived entrapment. Experiments and research reviews show that uncontrollability, social evaluation, persistent worry and sleep loss can affect psychological and physiological functioning. Studies of public-benefit processes and the loss of care of children show that institutional processes and their consequences can be associated with serious psychological distress.

The strain intensifies when the relationship is compulsory or effectively inescapable. The citizen may need to remain in contact to retain income, obtain necessary help, protect their legal position or maintain contact with their children. The ability to withdraw and recover may thus be limited by precisely the interests the person is trying to protect.

Years of exposure mean that each event must be assessed alongside the life lived between events. A decision that has not been adequately examined may continue to govern finances and family life while an appeal is being processed. At the same time, the next submission must be prepared. The waiting period may therefore be filled with continuing loss, work and the expectation of another loss of the ability to make a difference.

The report argues that an adequate response must encompass both support for the person under strain and changes to the conditions that sustain that strain. Projekt Paulus recommends specific examination of errors, responsibility for the process as a whole, predictable procedures, protection of family relationships and visible restoration of the ability to make a difference.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to explain and document why losing the ability to make a difference can harm people, how psychological, physical and family consequences may develop, and which conditions make years of compulsory contact with authorities particularly burdensome.

The report aims to make the connection between institutional case processes and human consequences visible. It connects original theories and empirical research with Ronnie Kristensen's Nature-Oriented Theory of Human Development and Ole Bakkestrøm's elaboration of the concept of losing the ability to make a difference.

It aims to provide citizens, professionals and responsible decision-makers with a basis for identifying strains, examining specific processes, and formulating documented criticism and demands for

correction, harm reduction and restoration. The evidence and its scope are addressed separately in the following sections.

3. Concepts, origins and level of evidence

3.1 What does losing the ability to make a difference mean?

In this report, making a difference means that relevant information and reasoned actions can have substantive significance for a process. This may take the form of a correction, a clarifying question, a revised assessment, a reasoned position or a practical action. The concept concerns the connection between the person's contribution and the system's processing of it. A particular desired outcome is not the yardstick.

In this analysis, loss of the ability to make a difference occurs when a previously available, or legitimately expected, opportunity to influence matters disappears or is blocked. An absence of effect may also occur where that opportunity was never genuinely established. A documented pattern might, for example, consist of decisive original material being submitted repeatedly but omitted from the reasons given, while the same disputed information continues to be used. [2]

Two matters must be investigated separately: the actual opportunity for correction and the person's experience of it. A person may lose the expectation of being able to influence a situation. An institution may also have actually designed a process in which relevant corrections do not get through. The first is a question for psychological investigation; the second requires examination of the documents.

3.2 Systemic powerlessness and institutional gaslighting

In Bakkestrøm and Kristensen's white paper, systemic powerlessness is the overarching concept for the condition that may develop through repeated attempts at contact, clarification and correction without genuine progress. Institutional distortion of reality denotes a skewed account of a case. Institutional gaslighting is the intensified mechanism in which distortion of reality is connected with an asymmetry of power, the undermining of credibility and a weakened opportunity for correction. [1]

This hierarchy of concepts is maintained. A specific investigation must identify the particular statements, their original basis, the repetitions and the specific corrections that were not addressed. It is possible to document an overall harmful effect without thereby having documented a shared intention among everyone involved.

3.3 Origins and theoretical connections

Psychologist Ronnie Starup Kristensen developed the Nature-Oriented Theory of Human Development, NMU. The joint white paper from June 2026 was written by Ole Bakkestrøm and Ronnie Starup Kristensen. Ole Bakkestrøm's separate article *Resonans og tab af virkning* is an educational adaptation of NMU and elaborates the connection between activity, response, resonance and making a difference. [1], [2]

This report was prepared in the name of Projekt Paulus by Ole Bakkestrøm as Project Manager. It further develops the connection between these concepts and research on prolonged strain. The concepts *between two losses of the ability to make a difference*, *continuing strain from consequences* and *responsibility without sufficient influence* are used here as descriptive analytical formulations. They are not established diagnoses or independently validated measurement instruments.

The historical theories are presented as contributions in their own right. No unbroken line of development from Frankl to NMU is claimed, and similarity between concepts does not establish that

the theories are identical. The sources are read together because they illuminate different elements of the same problem.

3.4 What the evidence can support

A distinction is maintained throughout between theory, experimental mechanisms, observed associations and Projekt Paulus' application to contact with authorities. Experimental sleep loss can support a causal inference about the effects of sleep loss. A register-based study can document an association, but cannot by itself establish why a particular person became ill. A theoretical concept can make a pattern intelligible without proving that the pattern exists in a specific case.

Taken together, the material provides strong grounds for treating prolonged loss of control and blocked correction as serious sources of strain. The material reviewed here contains no overall risk estimate for a Danish citizen exposed to this precise combination for a specified number of years. The conclusion therefore rests on an explicit chain of mechanisms and relevant studies, rather than on an invented overall effect measure.

4. From the original theories to losing the ability to make a difference

4.1 Viktor Frankl: dignity, meaning and responsibility

Frankl's conception of the human being maintains the person as a whole whose dignity is independent of social usefulness. The person is oriented towards meaning, values and responsibility. This provides a philosophical basis for taking a person's own purposes seriously, including when a system has the power to define the case. His *Ten Theses on the Person* is the direct source for these statements. [3]

In *Man's Search for Meaning*, Frankl describes existential frustration and emphasises that despair over meaning is not in itself mental illness. He also stresses that the cause of avoidable suffering should be removed, including when that cause is political. [4]

Projekt Paulus applies this as follows: when a person tries to protect a deeply meaningful relationship or correct a significant error, their will to meaning may remain intact. The strain may lie in meaningful effort being kept outside the process that determines the person's life. Frankl's possibility of adopting an inner stance does not remove the responsibility of external actors. His ideas offer a conception of the human being; they do not in themselves constitute medical evidence for particular courses of illness.

4.2 A. N. Leontjev: the human being as active in a world

Leontjev's activity theory analyses the psyche and personality in the connection between a person and their practical, social life. He distinguishes between the motives of activity, the goals of actions and the conditions under which actions are performed. Human activity is directed towards something in the world and takes place through social relationships. [5]

For the analysis of making a difference, this means that a person's situation cannot be understood from their intentions alone. The actual opportunities the surrounding world provides for those intentions must also be examined. A citizen may have goals, knowledge and relevant actions, while institutional conditions prevent those actions from reaching their object. This is the report's application of the theory, not a quotation or a distinct Leontjev diagnosis.

4.3 Albert Bandura: capability and outcome expectations

Bandura's original article on self-efficacy distinguishes between the expectation of being able to perform an action and the expectation that the action will lead to a particular result. This distinction is crucial. A person may be convinced of their ability to explain an error and at the same time have experienced that the explanation is not addressed. [6]

Projekt Paulus infers from this that instruction in communicating better addresses only part of the problem if the blocked link is the institution's reception of the communication. Restoration must also concern the actual connections between action and outcome: what evidence can trigger an investigation? Who can correct the error? When will the correction have practical significance?

4.4 Maier and Seligman: control and helplessness

Research on helplessness examines the significance of stressors that an organism cannot stop through its actions. Maier and Seligman's 2016 reassessment refines the original explanation: in the animal experiments reviewed, experience of control emerges as an active protective factor, while passivity following prolonged aversive exposure cannot simply be described as a learned expectation of uncontrollability. [7]

The institutional application concerns the importance of a real opportunity to act. It does not turn people into experimental animals or determine a particular person's neurobiology. It supports the proposition that restored control is more than encouragement: the person must be able to experience a demonstrable connection between their relevant action and a change in the process. At the same time, persistent activity does not rule out powerlessness in the sense used by Projekt Paulus.

4.5 Deci and Ryan: autonomy, competence and relatedness

Self-determination theory describes autonomy, competence and relatedness as basic psychological needs. Social contexts that support these needs are associated with better motivation and well-being; contexts that thwart them are associated with poorer functioning and well-being. Autonomy concerns the experience of being able to endorse one's actions, rather than merely formal independence. [8]

In an inescapable relationship with an authority, several needs may be affected simultaneously: the person is subjected to demands, cannot put their substantive competence to use, and may lose a sense of belonging through stigmatisation or weakened family contact. This simultaneous impact provides an analytical explanation for why the case may occupy far more of life than the administrative task might initially suggest.

4.6 Lazarus, Folkman and Hobfoll: significance, resources and loss

Lazarus and Folkman's theory of stress and coping emphasises a person's appraisal of what is at stake and of the opportunities to deal with it. A threat to contact with a child therefore has a different personal significance from a task with limited consequences. An appraisal of opportunities to act must also take the actual situation into account. [9]

Hobfoll's conservation of resources theory directs attention towards the threat of loss, actual loss and insufficient returns on invested resources. This makes it relevant to record the time, money, health, networks and roles that are used or lost during a process. [10]

Projekt Paulus applies these perspectives to a possible spiral of loss: a person devotes increasing resources to protecting an area of life; a lack of clarification causes further losses; those losses reduce their ability to deal with the next demand. Each link must be documented specifically.

4.7 Hartmut Rosa: resonance and the possibility of responding

Rosa describes resonance through being touched or addressed, the possibility of responding in one's own effective voice, transformation and a fundamental uncontrollability. Resonance therefore cannot be reduced to a particular desired decision or a technique that automatically produces agreement. [11]

In contact with authorities, Projekt Paulus applies this perspective to genuine openness to the citizen's relevant contribution changing the understanding of the situation. A process can be polite while remaining closed to such change. This connects Rosa's concept of resonance with NMU and Bakkestrøm's model of making a difference, while retaining their respective theoretical origins. [1], [2]

4.8 Fricker, Sweet and Smith/Freyd: knowledge, power and betrayal

Fricker's concept of epistemic injustice concerns harm to a person in their capacity as a knower. In her analysis, testimonial injustice arises when identity-based prejudice reduces the credibility accorded to a statement. Hermeneutical injustice concerns unequal opportunities to understand and communicate social experiences. [12]

Sweet examines gaslighting as a power relationship that can exploit social and institutional inequalities. Her empirical starting point is intimate partner violence. Projekt Paulus' application to chains of authorities therefore requires independent documentation of the chain's statements and corrections. [13]

Smith and Freyd describe institutional betrayal as harm caused by powerful institutions on which people depend for safety and well-being. This perspective illuminates the particular strain of having to seek help or protection from an institution that is itself part of the harmful process. [14]

4.9 Haslam: dehumanisation through objectification

Haslam's model includes a mechanistic form of dehumanisation in which people are understood as objects or automata. The model extends the concept to ordinary social contexts and does not confine it to extreme conflict. [15]

Projekt Paulus applies the concept to a practice in which the person's own knowledge, purposes and reasons lose their place, while the person continues to be described and controlled. Being treated in a dehumanising way does not mean that a person loses their humanity. The criticism concerns the institution's way of relating to the person. The specific practice must be identified; the concept cannot replace the evidence.

4.10 Ronnie Kristensen and Ole Bakkestrøm: from response to actual effect

In Kristensen's NMU, systemic powerlessness is described as a relationship between a person and the field in which they live and act. Rhythm, continuity, resonance and the bearing of responsibility are the theory's terms for conditions intended to support orientation, regulation and the ability to make a difference. Here, rhythm concerns coherence and predictability rather than merely pace. Organisational resonance concerns the system's ability to receive, process and respond to relevant feedback. [1]

Bakkestrøm's educational model elaborates this through the connection between activity, response and effect. The decisive observation is that a person may be active while the contact remains without corrective significance. The model shifts attention from the quantity of activity to its access to influencing the process. [2]

The overall connection to the earlier theories is precise: Frankl illuminates meaning and dignity; Leontjev, the external conditions of activity; Bandura, the difference between capability and expected outcome; research on control, the importance of real susceptibility to influence; and stress research, the

possible costs when strain continues. NMU and the model of making a difference bring these questions together around the relationship between person and system. Reading them together supports particular mechanisms and questions for investigation. It is not an overall empirical validation of NMU.

5. Why the compulsory relationship intensifies the strain

5.1 Limited ability to leave the relationship

A relationship with an authority may be legally imposed or practically inescapable. A formal choice to discontinue contact may entail losing a livelihood, treatment, necessary support or the opportunity to maintain one's family life. Compulsion is understood here through an analysis of the actual choices available; its specific legal form depends on the area of the case.

What is distinctive is that the strain of the relationship may coexist with the necessity of preserving it. The person must once again approach the organisation or chain of corrective bodies that has so far failed to change the situation. This can create a conflict between the need for protection and the need for distance. Smith and Freyd illuminate the dependency; research on administrative burden describes, among other things, the psychological costs of citizen–state contact. [14], [32]

5.2 Decision-making power, power over the record and future consequences

An authority's statements can have practical consequences without the citizen's agreement. A description may enter later assessments, be forwarded or be used as a premise for new demands. If the description is inaccurate or insufficiently examined, the strain may therefore extend beyond the person who originally wrote it.

This makes the source chain central. Five accounts by authorities are not five independent pieces of evidence if they all rely on the same original statement. Repetition can increase a statement's institutional reach without increasing its evidential value. A specific investigation must trace the statement back to the first document and compare it with contemporaneous primary sources. [1], [2]

5.3 Social evaluation under conditions of low control

Dickerson and Kemeny's meta-analysis included 208 laboratory studies. The combination of uncontrollability and social-evaluative threat was associated with the greatest changes in cortisol and ACTH and the longest recovery among the types of tasks studied. The results concern acute laboratory stress. [16]

The application to contact with authorities is a mechanism-based inference: a person whose credibility, parenting capacity or entitlement to help is being assessed may face a situation of both high personal significance and limited control over the basis for the assessment. The laboratory findings do not establish the magnitude of the effect in a public-authority case, but explain why the combination should be investigated separately.

5.4 The reaction may carry a new cost in the case

During a distressing process, the citizen may try to regulate their presentation while also having to explain complex matters. They may fear that anger, tears, exhaustion, silence or an imprecise formulation will be read as a lasting character trait. This adds the task of constantly monitoring their own demeanour.

If such a reaction is used to weaken a specific objection, the context must be examined: what did the original material show? When did the reaction arise? What strain preceded it? What does the reaction actually establish? The fact that a person is under pressure does not determine the truth value of the evidence they present.

5.5 Individual demands can become a combined overload

Moynihan, Herd and Harvey distinguish between the costs of learning about rules and systems, the costs of complying with requirements and the psychological costs surrounding the contact. This makes the citizen's total effort visible. [32]

Projekt Paulus therefore recommends assessing the burden across bodies. Each body may require a response, while the citizen alone bears the work of connecting the demands. Records should be kept of the hours spent on documentation, travel, meetings, repetitions, medical appointments and regaining an overview, as well as the family and work tasks displaced. The total burden cannot be inferred from one authority's calendar.

6. Years of exposure and life between two losses of the ability to make a difference

6.1 The consequences do not end with the meeting

A meeting with an authority may end at noon while its consequences continue around the clock. A lack of clarification can affect housing, income and family contact. A disputed description may continue to be used. A child continues to grow while the parent waits for a fresh examination.

Projekt Paulus calls this *continuing strain from consequences*: the harmful effect is sustained by the situation's continuing conditions, even during periods without direct contact. The term makes it possible to distinguish the absence of new communications from actual relief.

6.2 Past, present and future may impose strain simultaneously

Brosschot, Gerin and Thayer's perseverative cognition hypothesis describes how worry and rumination can prolong stress responses before and after an event. Ottaviani and colleagues' meta-analysis finds associations with, among other things, heart rate, blood pressure, cortisol and lower heart rate variability. [18], [19]

Over a process lasting years, a person may simultaneously be processing the last inadequate examination, living with its current consequences and preparing for the next. Their worry may concern specific deadlines and risks. What actually remains unresolved and threatened must be investigated before the thoughts are described solely as an individual problem.

1	2	3	4	5
Attempt at correction	No substantive examination	Consequences remain	New deadline or new demand	Another loss of the ability to make a difference

Between events: continuing losses, work on documents, anticipatory anxiety and limited recovery.

Figure 1. Projekt Paulus' explanatory model of the time between two losses of the ability to make a difference. The model synthesises mechanisms from research on stress and recovery. It is not a measurement of a particular person's stress level. [17], [18], [19], [40]

6.3 Repetition can reduce opportunities for recovery

McEwen's allostatic perspective describes the costs of repeated or insufficiently terminated physiological adaptation. The duration of strain and the body's ability to return are central. Altered patterns of regulation may be involved; chronic stress is not synonymous with a constantly elevated cortisol level. [17], [39]

Projekt Paulus infers that a new summons, deadline or decision may arrive before sleep, an overview of the situation, finances and everyday functioning have been restored. The next demand is then met with fewer resources. In this analysis, a period of years represents a possible accumulation of strain and loss, rather than simply many calendar days.

6.4 Uncertainty can become a continuing condition

Brosschot, Verkuil and Thayer's Generalized Unsafety Theory of Stress emphasises the importance of an absence of perceived safety for continued stress activation, even without an immediate event. This is a theoretical model, used here to formulate a question for investigation: which specific signs of safety, clarification and closure are missing from the process? [40]

A promise of a response without a credible timetable may leave the person on alert. A specific agreement on the next step that is honoured can, by contrast, create predictability even before the case has been decided. The administrative rhythm thus becomes relevant to planning everyday life and the possibility of rest.

6.5 Hope can require ever more work

When an outcome concerns children, health or the basis of one's existence, it can be difficult to abandon the attempt at correction. Each new level of appeal may trigger a fresh investment of time and hope. If it again carries forward the disputed premise without independent examination, both the loss and the work of trying again remain.

This is Projekt Paulus' application of the resource perspective. It explains why persistence and exhaustion can coexist, and why an assessment of strain must include the work invested in repeated, unsuccessful attempts at correction. [10]

7. Psychological and cognitive consequences

7.1 Persistent alarm and anticipatory anxiety

One possible consequence is intense attention to messages, deadlines and signs of new adverse consequences. The person may find it difficult to disengage mentally from the case. Research on perseverative cognition supports the proposition that this preoccupation may be associated with physiological activation extending beyond the event itself. [18], [19]

In a specific assessment, the object of the alarm must be described precisely: which right, relationship or condition of life is perceived to be threatened? Has the threat ended? Who can clarify it? General advice to think less about the case does not in itself restore the missing safety.

7.2 Exhaustion, low mood and a weakened orientation towards the future

When sustained effort does not make the situation manageable, a person may experience hopelessness, low energy and declining interest in activities. Research on control and the resource perspective illuminate different elements of this development. They do not justify concluding that everyone responds in the same way, but they make it professionally necessary to investigate whether the conditions for being able to influence one's life have narrowed. [7], [10]

The loss of meaningful content in life may be both a consequence of psychological strain and a concrete loss: the person no longer has the money, time, opportunity for contact or health for the activities that previously sustained life. These two matters must be assessed separately. Otherwise, material and relational losses risk disappearing into a description of the person's state of mind.

7.3 Impaired concentration and overview

Arnsten reviews how uncontrollable stress can impair prefrontal functions, including working memory and flexible regulation. The research reviewed includes both human and animal studies; findings about structural changes cannot simply be transferred to a particular citizen. [20]

The relevant consequence in a case process is that strain can make precisely the tasks demanded by the process more difficult: keeping many documents in mind, prioritising, answering accurately and switching between perspectives. If a decline in functioning becomes apparent during the process, the timeline must be examined. An assessment of the person should not skip over the strain that preceded it.

7.4 Self-doubt, loss of credibility and strain on identity

When a person's knowledge is persistently disregarded, they may begin to doubt their understanding or the possibility of communicating it at all. Fricker and Sweet illuminate harm to the person's position as knowledgeable and credible. [12], [13]

At the same time, the institutional harm may be objective: others read the person through a disputed description. The investigation must therefore encompass both the person's experience and the description's actual dissemination. Restoration may require correcting it and communicating the correction so that it also reaches later decisions.

7.5 Withdrawal or intensified activity

Powerlessness may manifest as reduced activity, but in Projekt Paulus' model it may also be accompanied by more documentation, frequent reminders and repeated explanations. The additional activity may be an attempt to maintain a necessary opportunity for correction. The behaviour must therefore be assessed in relation to its function and the process of which it forms part. [1], [2]

A circular explanation arises if repeated unanswered objections lead to repeated communications, after which the repetition alone is used as a reason not to investigate the objection. This is a possible documentary pattern that must be tested against the specific communications and replies.

7.6 Clinical assessment and serious risk

Symptoms such as sleep disturbance, anxiety, low mood, intrusive memories and declining functioning may make clinical assessment necessary. Diagnoses are determined according to their own criteria. PTSD and complex PTSD require, among other things, a qualifying extremely threatening or horrific event or series of events, together with specific symptom and functional criteria. The duration of contact with authorities does not determine the diagnosis. [33]

This precision does not diminish the seriousness of documented suffering. Declining functioning and risk require attention even when no particular diagnosis has been made. At the same time, clinical support must address any continuing strains, so that treatment is not expected to create safety that the person's actual living conditions continue to undermine.

8. Physical consequences and mutual reinforcement

8.1 From strain to physiological regulation

Psychological strain can affect autonomic and neuroendocrine processes and thereby multiple organ systems. O'Connor, Thayer and Vedhara's review describes both direct biological pathways and indirect pathways through changes in sleep and other health-related behaviours. McEwen's work explains how the systems that help the body through a stressor can also incur costs when activation is prolonged or insufficiently regulated. [17], [39]

This physiological link makes it professionally inadequate to describe persistent powerlessness as a purely administrative irritation. The relevant assessment must encompass duration, repetition, recovery, symptoms and functioning. At the same time, new or worsening physical symptoms require appropriate medical examination; an explanation in terms of strain cannot by itself determine their cause.

8.2 Sleep and emotional functioning

Kim and Dimsdale's review of 63 articles found that experimental psychosocial stress was relatively consistently associated with poorer sleep efficiency and more awakenings. Findings for naturally occurring stressors were more limited. [21]

Palmer and colleagues' 2024 meta-analysis included 154 experimental studies with 5,717 participants. Sleep reduction caused, among other things, less positive affect and more anxiety symptoms; findings for depressive symptoms and negative affect varied with the type of sleep loss. [22]

This supports a possible chain of reinforcement: strain can disturb sleep, and sleep loss can in turn make emotional functioning more difficult. The specific importance of this chain must be investigated

through sleep history, a description of functioning and appropriate clinical assessment. It explains why a later day devoted to the case may begin with fewer resources than the preceding one.

8.3 The cardiovascular system and prolonged strain

Ottaviani and colleagues' meta-analysis connects persistent worry and rumination with changes in cardiovascular and regulatory measures. Such measures are relevant mechanisms and do not in themselves constitute a diagnosis. [19]

Kivimäki and colleagues' analysis included 197,473 employed people from 13 European cohorts. Job strain, defined in terms of high demands and low control, was associated with an increased incidence of coronary heart disease. The study concerns work and is observational. It does not establish a particular risk estimate for contact with authorities. [25]

The defensible inference is that persistent demands under conditions of low control are relevant to health, and that possible cardiovascular consequences should form part of an overall assessment. It cannot be inferred that a particular heart problem in a particular citizen was caused by the authority solely because the citizen has been under strain.

8.4 Immune function and inflammation

Segerstrom and Miller's meta-analysis of more than 300 empirical articles found different immunological patterns in different forms of stress. Chronic stressors were associated with suppression of both cellular and humoral measures. This weighs against a single simple formulation that stress always affects the immune system in the same way. [23]

In two viral-exposure studies, Cohen and colleagues examined 276 and 79 adults respectively. Prolonged threatening stressors were associated with reduced sensitivity to glucocorticoid regulation and with factors relevant to the common cold and local inflammatory responses. Prior life stress was not randomised. [24]

The research findings support biologically plausible connections between prolonged strain and the risk of physical illness. They do not establish every disease or an unequivocal cause in an individual case. The specific question is whether documented strain may have contributed to or aggravated the health condition under examination.

8.5 Pain and impaired recovery

Finan, Goodin and Smith review prospective and experimental studies of sleep and pain. A recurring finding is that sleep problems can predict new or worsening pain, and that sleep disturbance can affect processes that contribute to pain regulation. [26]

This provides a specific pathway by which a sustained course of strain may aggravate an existing pain problem: poorer sleep, less recovery and greater difficulty managing everyday demands. It does not imply that the pain is imaginary or that an existing physical condition is caused solely by psychological factors. The underlying illness and the possible aggravating effect of the strain must be investigated at the same time.

8.6 Declining functioning can create new strains

When sleep, concentration or pain worsens, work, exercise, meals, social relationships and practical tasks can become more difficult. The loss of resources can then create new demands and less room for recovery. This is a synthesis of research on sleep, pain, stress and resources. [10], [20], [21], [22], [26], [39]

The assessment must therefore track functioning over time: what could the person do before? What could they do after particular events? Which opportunities were actually diminished? A comprehensive description must include both symptoms and the life displaced by those symptoms and by the continuing consequences of the authority's actions.

9. Family life, contact with children and irreplaceable time

9.1 A threatened relationship can impose strain at several levels

When a case affects contact with a child, a relationship, a caregiving role and a future are all at stake. The loss may concern everyday actions: comforting, following the child's development, helping, celebrating, being present and becoming known to the child through repeated contact. These losses may continue even while formal review remains open.

The child's and the parent's situations must be recorded separately. A child's needs and experiences cannot be inferred from the adult's strain, just as an adult's loss does not disappear from the analysis because the case also concerns a child. A specific investigation must identify which relationships and opportunities for contact are actually affected.

9.2 Pauline Boss: loss without clear closure

Boss' concept of ambiguous loss illuminates situations in which a person is absent in one way but still present in another, and grief lacks unequivocal closure. Her original work encompasses various forms of unresolved loss. [27]

Projekt Paulus applies this perspective to prolonged uncertainty about visits and the resumption of contact. The child may be alive and deeply present in the parent's thoughts, while the possibility of ordinary family life is restricted or unresolved. Hope, grief and preparation for the next review may thus coexist. This application must be tied to the circumstances of the particular family.

9.3 Relationships as protection against stress

Hostinar, Sullivan and Gunnar review research on social buffering: the capacity of close relationships to dampen stress responses across development. The work integrates human and animal studies and emphasises the importance of relational regulation. [28]

The institutional consequence is a twofold question for investigation. The process may add strain while narrowing opportunities to seek security in a meaningful relationship. It must be investigated specifically which contacts create a sense of safety for the child and the adult, and what consequences the changes have. A general assumption about the quality of the relationship cannot substitute for this investigation.

9.4 Direct research on mental health after the loss of care of a child

Wall-Wieler and colleagues' register-based cohort study compared 5,792 mothers whose child had been taken into public care with 1,143 mothers who had lost a child through death. The group that had lost care subsequently had higher adjusted rates of, among other things, recorded depression and anxiety, as well as use of psychiatric health services. [29]

The study documents a serious association in the groups examined. It is observational research and does not establish that the intervention itself alone caused the differences. Nor can it be used to rank grief or calculate the individual risk for a Danish father. Its significance is that the loss of care of a child and the subsequent situation are an important health concern that cannot be reduced to ordinary dissatisfaction.

9.5 Serious psychological risk must be actively investigated

In another cohort study, Wall-Wieler and colleagues found higher rates of suicide attempts and deaths by suicide among mothers with a child taken into care, compared both with biological sisters and with mothers receiving child protection services without that outcome. The authors recommended attention to mental health and suicidal behaviour. [30]

The study is not proof that a specific process involving an authority caused a particular event. It is a strong argument for taking psychological risk in such situations seriously and investigating it in time. Health support and protection against unnecessarily continued strain should be included in planning the process.

9.6 A family's time cannot be put on pause

When a process lasts for years, opportunities within relationships may be lost while the case is being dealt with. A child's age, schooling and attachment history continue to develop. A later decision may change future access to contact, but cannot automatically recreate the specific shared experiences that did not take place.

The European Court of Human Rights' Guide on Article 8 summarises case-law on the particular importance of prompt and careful handling in cases concerning children and family relationships. The passage of time can affect the relationship between child and parent. [36]

Projekt Paulus therefore demands that the possible harmful effects of time be assessed in their own right. A process should not be measured solely by whether a decision can eventually be made. It must also be examined which valuable opportunities disappear along the way, and which lawful, specific steps can protect them now.

10. Public case processing as a distinct source of strain

10.1 Research on reassessment of public benefits

Barr and colleagues examined developments in 149 English local areas during reassessments of entitlement to a disability-related benefit in 2010–2013. Greater reassessment activity was associated with more adverse trends in suicide, self-reported mental health problems and prescriptions for antidepressant medication after the adjustments applied. [31]

The study is ecological: it analyses developments in areas and does not directly link each reassessed individual to a particular health outcome. It therefore cannot be transferred into individual proof of

causation. Its contribution is that public assessment practices can be investigated as a possible health stressor, rather than placing all consequences outside case processing from the outset.

10.2 When meaningful life becomes conditional on resolution of the case

Years of uncertainty can make it difficult to plan work, education, housing, relationships and commitments. A person may postpone ordinary life choices to conserve resources for the next process or avoid weakening their legal position. A distinct loss of participation may thus arise that is not adequately described by a list of symptoms.

Projekt Paulus uses the perspectives of Frankl and resource research to make this displacement visible: the case may crowd out the activities and relationships that otherwise give life meaning and resilience. The specific assessment should include lost opportunities, actual expenses, choices forgone and the periods in which life has effectively been organised around an unresolved process involving an authority. [3], [4], [10]

10.3 Later decline in functioning must not conceal the process's contribution

When, after a long period, a person appears exhausted, mistrustful or less able to function, the sequence of causation is crucial. It must be investigated which difficulties existed at the beginning, which strains were added later, and which functions changed after particular events.

A documented decline in functioning may inform an assessment of the need for help. Without an independent basis, it cannot be projected backwards as proof that the person was the cause of the documented errors from the outset. Research on stress and sleep makes it necessary to keep this examination of causation open. [20], [21], [22]

11. Legal significance, responsibility and specific demands

This section sets out conditional arguments for application to documented processes. It reaches no conclusion that a particular authority or court has committed a particular violation. An authority's statements must be checked against the original material, and the conditions of the legal rules must be examined individually.

11.1 Substantive investigation of material information

Conclusion: if material corrections are not investigated, the establishment of the facts of the case may itself be inadequate. The evidence must consist of the authority's specific statement, the original document contradicting it, the dated objection and the authority's subsequent handling. The discrepancy must be described precisely: for example, that a dated document contradicts a factual premise that continues to be repeated.

The legal starting point is the requirement under the principle of official investigation that the facts of the case be adequately established. The requirements to give reasons in sections 22–24 of the Danish Public Administration Act may, within their scope of application, be relevant to the account of the legal basis, factual circumstances and main considerations. [37], [38]

If the authority omits the necessary investigation or gives insufficient reasons for its position on a decisive matter, the significance of the departure for the outcome must be assessed. The question of responsibility must be tied to specific duties and documented knowledge. The demand is for

independent examination, a reasoned position and consideration of reopening and amendment when the conditions for them are met.

11.2 Correction and further use of personal data

Conclusion: inaccurate personal data should not continue as an undisputed premise merely because they have already been entered in a record or shared. The evidence must show the specific information, its original basis, demonstrated inaccuracy or incompleteness, and later uses.

GDPR Article 5(1)(d) establishes the principle of accuracy; Article 16 concerns rectification and completion. Article 18(1)(a) concerns restriction where accuracy is contested, for the period enabling the controller to verify it. Article 19 concerns notification of recipients, subject to the exceptions specified. The scope of the rules and any limitations must be examined in the particular case. [35]

A professional assessment and its factual premises must be identified separately. The demand is for a reasoned decision on the specific rectification or completion, appropriate consideration of restriction, and necessary notifications to recipients. If inaccurate information has affected later decisions, those consequences must also be investigated. The controller must be identified.

11.3 Time, family life and prevention of continuing loss

Conclusion: the specific consequences of time for children and family relationships must be included in assessing the case process. The evidence must show periods without clarification, the actual extent of contact, the reasons for postponements and opportunities lost. The possible harm may lie in the period itself, even if a later decision changes the future.

Good administrative practice requires processing within a reasonable time and appropriate notification in the event of delay. Under the relevant case-law, Article 8's protection of family life entails requirements concerning procedures and authorities' efforts where the passage of time may harm family relationships. The child's specific best interests and the relevant legal framework governing the case must be examined. [34], [36]

If an authority fails to ensure necessary progress or allows a demonstrated loss within a relationship to continue without adequate assessment, the significance of the departure and the responsible actor's opportunities to act must be investigated. The demand is for a specific timetable, reasons for outstanding steps, timely review and consideration of lawful measures that can limit continuing loss.

11.4 Harm to health and assessment for compensation

Documented illness or decline in functioning and documented errors in the case are two necessary lines of inquiry. To advance a specific compensation claim, the relevant rule of liability, basis of liability, causal connection, foreseeability and loss must be examined. The general research in this report may support an explanation of mechanisms, but does not replace the individual evidence.

The specific material should include medical records from before, during and after the process, contemporaneous descriptions of symptoms, information on the duration of strains, the authority's knowledge, and documentation of financial and functional consequences. The question of aggravation of an existing condition must be investigated expressly. Already vulnerable health may make the actual impact of the strain greater and does not relieve the analysis of the duty to examine it.

12. Documentation model and chain of evidence

12.1 From general knowledge to a specific process

For each decisive point, Projekt Paulus recommends a chain comprising the following links: conclusion; the authority's or judgment's specific statement; original evidence; discrepancy or omission; relevant rule; act or omission; legal departure; significance for the outcome; responsibility; specific legal consequence or demand.

At the same time, evidence for a mechanism of strain is constructed as a timeline: the documented event, the continuing consequence for life, contemporaneous reactions, later clinical or functional findings, and the specific reasoning for the connection between them. Research is used to illuminate the connection; it does not add missing events to the timeline.

12.2 The material that should be collected

- Original decisions, case-record entries, statements and letters, with dates, authorship and any later versions.
- The citizen's objections and supporting documents compared with the replies in which they should have been addressed.
- A register of disputed information, its first source and every later repetition.
- A timeline of waiting periods, deadlines, meetings, repetitions and periods without clarification.
- Documentation of family contact, cancelled or missed visits, and relevant changes in the child's and parent's situations.
- Health and functioning information from before and during the process, including sleep, pain, work functioning and treatment needs.
- An account of expenses, time spent, loss of income and displaced everyday activities.
- Documentation of when the relevant actors became aware of errors, strain and the need for action.

12.3 What must remain open to investigation?

The following remain hypotheses until supported by specific material: that particular information has been recirculated without independent examination; that a reaction to the process has been used to discredit an attempt at correction; that a specific illness or aggravation can be attributed to the process; and that particular actors had knowledge and an opportunity to act at a given time.

Uncertainty must be located at the individual link. If, for example, the precise causal contribution to an illness cannot be established, this does not change the evidence that a particular original document was omitted or that a particular opportunity for contact was lost.

12.4 Checking against primary material

Every decisive factual claim must be traceable to an identified source. Several texts with the same origin must be marked as a single source chain. A distinction must be drawn between observed circumstances, the citizen's own information, professional interpretations and legal assessments. A summary must not be accorded greater certainty than the original material it reproduces.

This report concerns a general field of problems. Documented errors in a particular case must therefore be identified through the specific primary material and the investigation described above. They cannot be inferred from the general theories alone.

13. Projekt Paulus' demands for restoration

13.1 Stop the continuing source of strain

Demonstrated inaccurate premises, unaddressed material information and harmful stagnation must be met with concrete action, assigned responsibility and a verifiable timetable. Opportunities to limit continuing losses of health and relationships must be assessed within the relevant legislation.

13.2 Make correction visible and effective

The citizen should be able to see which objections have been examined, which material has been used and what is changing. Restoration must also encompass later assessments in which the documented error continues to matter.

13.3 Organise the contact to make recovery possible

Projekt Paulus recommends clear channels of contact, coordinated requirements, usable time indications and fewer unnecessary repetitions. Support with organising documents, representation and participation may be necessary. The proposals must be implemented within the legal framework of each case.

13.4 Protect meaningful life and family relationships along the way

Consequences for health, finances and family life must not disappear between the remits of different authorities. Where children are involved, contact, security, continuity and development must be investigated specifically and in time, while the opportunities can still be protected.

13.5 The strongest defensible arguments, in order of priority

- First: demonstrate the specific blockage of the ability to make a difference. Connect a relevant action and its original documentation to the investigation, correction or action that failed to occur.
- Next: document the compulsion or dependency. Show which important interests the person could not protect simply by leaving the relationship.
- Next: document the duration and life between events. Assess continuing consequences, repeated effort and lack of recovery.
- Next: document the human loss. Separate health, functioning, finances, family contact and lost opportunities, and connect each element with contemporaneous sources.
- Next: connect responsibility to knowledge and the opportunity to act. Identify who knew the circumstances, what duty they had, and what specifically was done or omitted.
- Finally: formulate an effective demand. Specify the correction, examination, progress, harm reduction or restoration that can change the situation.

Human dignity endures even when opportunities to act are narrowed. The institutional task is to give relevant information, reasoned objections and documented needs a genuine route to action. Restoration must be felt in the life affected by the process.

Ole Bakkestrøm
Project Manager, Projekt Paulus
17 October 2026
Ex officio et ex conscientia.

14. Sources and notes

The numbers correspond to the references in the text. Digital sources were consulted on 17 October 2026. DOIs and links make the originals identifiable; some publishers may require access to the full text. The source notes indicate what each source is used for.

[1] Bakkestrøm, O. & Kristensen, R. S. (2026). Hvidbog om systemisk afmagt og institutionel gaslighting. Psychological, legal and human-rights white paper. Projekt Paulus / Center for Naturnær Menneskelig Udvikling, June 2026, 59 pages.

Primary source for the shared concepts, origins and analytical model. The edition attached by the commissioning party was used; especially the foreword, pp. 2–3, the methodology section, Part II, pp. 13–19, and Parts III–IV. The white paper develops theory and analyses documents; it is not an overall empirical validation of NMU.

Open source / permanent identification

[2] Bakkestrøm, O. (undated). Resonans og tab af virkning. An educational article on resonance, losing the ability to make a difference and systemic powerlessness. 8 pages. The author's PDF copy, consulted on 17 October 2026.

Primary source for Bakkestrøm's educational elaboration of NMU. Pages 1–3 concern origins and the concept of making a difference; pp. 4–8 concern contact with authorities, the closing off of correction and restoration. The document does not state a publication date.

[3] Frankl, V. E. (1950; English translation 2021, revised 2026). Ten Theses about the Person. Reproduced by the Viktor Frankl Institute with a source reference to Der Wille zum Sinn, Hogrefe 2016.

Original text. Especially thesis 4 on dignity independent of usefulness and thesis 5 on meaning and responsibility. A philosophical conception of the human being; not used as empirical evidence of illness.

Open source / permanent identification

[4] Frankl, V. E. (1992). Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy. 4th edition. Boston: Beacon Press. Especially pp. 106–108 and 117–118. ISBN 0-8070-1426-5.

Original text in a digital reproduction of the identified Beacon edition. The sections Existential Frustration / Noogenic Neuroses and The Meaning of Suffering were checked. On existential suffering and removing the cause of avoidable suffering.

[5] Leont'ev, A. N. (1978). Activity, Consciousness, and Personality. Translated by Marie J. Hall. Prentice-Hall. Digital original text in the Leontjev archive.

Activity theory. Especially chapter 3 on the structure of activity and chapter 5 on activity and personality. The application to blocked correction by authorities is the report's own.

Open source / permanent identification

[6] Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. Psychological Review, 84(2), 191–215. DOI: 10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191.

Original theoretical article. Page 193 and Figure 1 distinguish between efficacy expectations and outcome expectations. Institutional opportunities for correction are treated here as a separate application of the distinction.

Open source / permanent identification

[7] Maier, S. F. & Seligman, M. E. P. (2016). Learned Helplessness at Fifty: Insights from Neuroscience. Psychological Review, 123(4), 349–367. DOI: 10.1037/rev0000033.

Reassessment of control and helplessness by the original developers of the theory, including a correction of the early learning explanation. A substantial part of the mechanistic basis consists of animal experiments.

Open source / permanent identification

[8] Deci, E. L. & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The What and Why of Goal Pursuits: Human Needs and the Self-Determination of Behavior. Psychological Inquiry, 11(4), 227–268. DOI: 10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01.

Original theoretical article on autonomy, competence and relatedness and their associations with motivation and well-being.

Open source / permanent identification

[9] Lazarus, R. S. & Folkman, S. (1984). Stress, Appraisal, and Coping. New York: Springer Publishing Company. ISBN 9780826141903.

Original major work on appraisal of what is at stake and the opportunities for managing demands. Used as a theory of the person–environment relationship.

Open source / permanent identification

[10] Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. American Psychologist, 44(3), 513–524. DOI: 10.1037/0003-066X.44.3.513.

Original theoretical article on actual and threatened resource losses and insufficient returns on resource investment. Used to analyse loss and effort throughout a process.

Open source / permanent identification

[11] Rosa, H. (2020). Beethoven, the Sailor, the Boy and the Nazi. A reply to my critics. Journal of Political Power, 13(3). DOI: 10.1080/2158379X.2020.1831057.

The theory's developer clarifies resonance as a relationship involving being touched, self-efficacy, transformation and uncontrollability. Used philosophically and sociologically.

Open source / permanent identification

[12] Fricker, M. (2007). Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing. Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198237907.001.0001.

Original major work on testimonial injustice and hermeneutical injustice. The concepts are used with due regard for Fricker's requirements of prejudice-based loss of credibility and structural interpretive inequality respectively.

Open source / permanent identification

[13] Sweet, P. L. (2019). The Sociology of Gaslighting. American Sociological Review, 84(5), 851–875. DOI: 10.1177/0003122419874843.

Original empirical and theoretical article based on intimate partner violence. Illuminates the use of structural and institutional inequality; does not in itself prove gaslighting in cases involving public authorities.

Open source / permanent identification

[14] Smith, C. P. & Freyd, J. J. (2014). Institutional betrayal. American Psychologist, 69(6). DOI: 10.1037/a0037564.

Review of theory and research by the developers of the concept, concerning institutions that harm people who depend on them for safety and well-being.

Open source / permanent identification

[15] Haslam, N. (2006). Dehumanization: An integrative review. Personality and Social Psychology Review, 10(3), 252–264. DOI: 10.1207/s15327957pspr1003_4.

Original integrative model, including mechanistic dehumanisation and objectification in ordinary social contexts.

Open source / permanent identification

[16] Dickerson, S. S. & Kemeny, M. E. (2004). Acute stressors and cortisol responses: A theoretical integration and synthesis of laboratory research. Psychological Bulletin, 130(3), 355–391. DOI: 10.1037/0033-2909.130.3.355.

Meta-analysis of 208 laboratory studies. On social-evaluative threat, uncontrollability and hormonal responses to acute stressors.

Open source / permanent identification

[17] McEwen, B. S. (1998). Protective and Damaging Effects of Stress Mediators. New England Journal of Medicine, 338, 171–179. DOI: 10.1056/NEJM199801153380307.

Central original theoretical contribution and review on allostatic load and the costs of repeated or insufficiently regulated stress activation.

Open source / permanent identification

[18] Brosschot, J. F., Gerin, W. & Thayer, J. F. (2006). The perseverative cognition hypothesis: A review of worry, prolonged stress-related physiological activation, and health. Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 60(2), 113–124. DOI: 10.1016/j.jpsychores.2005.06.074.

Original hypothesis and research review on worry and rumination as possible mechanisms of prolonged physiological activation before and after events.

Open source / permanent identification

[19] Ottaviani, C., Thayer, J. F., Verkuil, B., Lonigro, A., Medea, B., Couyoumdjian, A. & Brosschot, J. F. (2016). Physiological concomitants of perseverative cognition: A systematic review and meta-analysis. Psychological Bulletin, 142(3), 231–259. DOI: 10.1037/bul0000036.

Meta-analysis including both experimental and correlational studies of cardiovascular, autonomic and endocrine measures. Supports mechanisms; does not measure individual causes of illness.

Open source / permanent identification

[20] Arnsten, A. F. T. (2009). Stress signalling pathways that impair prefrontal cortex structure and function. Nature Reviews Neuroscience, 10(6), 410–422. DOI: 10.1038/nrn2648.

Research review on stress and prefrontal functions. Includes human and animal studies; structural findings cannot be used as a diagnosis of a specific person.

Open source / permanent identification

[21] Kim, E.-J. & Dimsdale, J. E. (2007). The effect of psychosocial stress on sleep: A review of polysomnographic evidence. Behavioral Sleep Medicine, 5(4), 256–278. DOI: 10.1080/15402000701557383.

Systematic review of 63 articles using objective sleep measures. Greater consistency for experimental stress than for several types of naturally occurring stressors.

Open source / permanent identification

[22] Palmer, C. A., Bower, J. L., Cho, K. W., Clementi, M. A., Lau, S., Oosterhoff, B. & Alfano, C. A. (2024). Sleep loss and emotion: A systematic review and meta-analysis of over 50 years of experimental research. Psychological Bulletin, 150(4), 440–463. DOI: 10.1037/bul0000410.

154 experimental studies with 5,717 participants. On sleep loss, positive affect, anxiety and other emotional outcomes; effects vary by outcome and sleep manipulation.

Open source / permanent identification

[23] Segerstrom, S. C. & Miller, G. E. (2004). Psychological stress and the human immune system: A meta-analytic study of 30 years of inquiry. Psychological Bulletin, 130(4), 601–630. DOI: 10.1037/0033-2909.130.4.601.

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Open source / permanent identification

[24] Cohen, S., Janicki-Deverts, D., Doyle, W. J., Miller, G. E., Frank, E., Rabin, B. S. & Turner, R. B. (2012). Chronic stress, glucocorticoid receptor resistance, inflammation, and disease risk. PNAS, 109(16), 5995–5999. DOI: 10.1073/pnas.1118355109.

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Open source / permanent identification

[25] Kivimäki, M. et al.; IPD-Work Consortium (2012). Job strain as a risk factor for coronary heart disease: A collaborative meta-analysis of individual participant data. The Lancet, 380(9852), 1491–1497. DOI: 10.1016/S0140-6736(12)60994-5.

197,473 employed people from 13 cohorts. Observational research on high work demands and low control. Not transferred into a risk estimate for contact with authorities.

Open source / permanent identification

[26] Finan, P. H., Goodin, B. R. & Smith, M. T. (2013). The association of sleep and pain: An update and a path forward. The Journal of Pain, 14(12), 1539–1552. DOI: 10.1016/j.jpain.2013.08.007.

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Open source / permanent identification

[27] Boss, P. (1999). Ambiguous Loss: Learning to Live with Unresolved Grief. Harvard University Press. DOI: 10.2307/j.ctvjhzrh4.

Original major work on unresolved or ambiguous loss. The application to prolonged uncertainty about family contact is explicitly identified as the report's analysis.

Open source / permanent identification

[28] Hostinar, C. E., Sullivan, R. M. & Gunnar, M. R. (2014). Psychobiological mechanisms underlying the social buffering of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenocortical axis: A review of animal models and human studies across development. Psychological Bulletin, 140(1), 256–282. DOI: 10.1037/a0032671.

Research review on the stress-buffering function of relationships across development. The significance of the particular relationship must be assessed separately.

Open source / permanent identification

[29] Wall-Wieler, E., Roos, L. L., Bolton, J., Brownell, M., Nickel, N. & Chateau, D. (2018; online 2017). Maternal Mental Health after Custody Loss and Death of a Child: A Retrospective Cohort Study Using Linkable Administrative Data. Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 63(5), 322–328. DOI: 10.1177/0706743717738494.

Register-based cohort from Manitoba: 5,792 mothers with a child taken into care and 1,143 who experienced the death of a child. Documents adjusted associations, not individual or unequivocal causation.

Open source / permanent identification

[30] Wall-Wieler, E., Roos, L. L., Brownell, M., Nickel, N., Chateau, D. & Singal, D. (2018; online 2017). Suicide Attempts and Completions among Mothers Whose Children Were Taken into Care by Child Protection Services: A Cohort Study Using Linkable Administrative Data. Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 63(3), 170–177. DOI: 10.1177/0706743717741058.

Register-based cohort with comparisons to sisters and mothers receiving other child protection services. Documents elevated observed risk and the need for healthcare attention.

Open source / permanent identification

[31] Barr, B., Taylor-Robinson, D., Stuckler, D., Loopstra, R., Reeves, A. & Whitehead, M. (2016). First, do no harm: Are disability assessments associated with adverse trends in mental health? A longitudinal ecological study. Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, 70(4), 339–345. DOI: 10.1136/jech-2015-206209.

149 English local areas, 2010–2013. Area-level study of reassessments and mental-health outcomes; does not establish outcomes for each individual reassessed person.

Open source / permanent identification

[32] Moynihan, D., Herd, P. & Harvey, H. (2015). Administrative Burden: Learning, Psychological, and Compliance Costs in Citizen-State Interactions. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 25(1), 43–69. DOI: 10.1093/jopart/muu009.

Central theoretical contribution on learning costs, compliance costs and psychological costs in contact with the state.

Open source / permanent identification

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Source of clinical classification and criteria. The sections on disorders specifically associated with stress, including 6B40 PTSD and 6B41 complex PTSD. Used for diagnostic precision, not as proof of a specific diagnosis or cause.

Open source / permanent identification

[34] Folketingets Ombudsmand [Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman] (2026). Myndighedsguiden, overview #11: Sagsbehandlingstid. Last updated 25 March 2026.

Legal guidance on reasonable processing times, notification and progress. Good administrative practice is distinguished from any specific statutory deadlines.

Open source / permanent identification

[35] European Parliament and Council (2016). Regulation (EU) 2016/679, GDPR. Especially Article 5(1)(d), Article 16, Article 18(1)(a) and Article 19. Official Danish text in EUR-Lex.

Primary legal source on accuracy, rectification, restriction and notification of recipients. Scope of application and any limitations must be examined in the particular case.

Open source / permanent identification

[36] European Court of Human Rights (2026). Guide on Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights: Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence. Updated 28 February 2026.

Official case-law guide, not a judgment in its own right. Especially Parts III.B and III.D.3 on procedure, the passage of time and family relationships; paragraphs 350 and 432. Refers, among other authorities, to Kuppinger v. Germany, 15 January 2015, § 137, and Scozzari and Giunta v. Italy, 13 July 2000, §§ 181 and 215.

Open source / permanent identification

[37] Folketingets Ombudsmand [Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman]. Myndighedsguiden, overview #8: Officialprincippet. Version consulted on 17 October 2026.

Legal guidance on responsibility for adequately establishing the facts of a case before a decision. Used as a normative source; does not prove that a particular case has been adequately investigated.

Open source / permanent identification

[38] Folketingets Ombudsmand [Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman]. Myndighedsguiden, overview #10: Begrundelse. Version consulted on 17 October 2026; includes sections 22–24 and 36 of the Danish Public Administration Act.

Legal guidance and reproduction of statutory provisions. Especially sections 5–9 on factual circumstances, main considerations and parties' arguments, and section 12 on deficiencies.

Open source / permanent identification

[39] O'Connor, D. B., Thayer, J. F. & Vedhara, K. (2021). Stress and Health: A Review of Psychobiological Processes. Annual Review of Psychology, 72, 663–688. DOI: 10.1146/annurev-psych-062520-122331.

Research review on autonomic and neuroendocrine pathways, allostatic load, health behaviour and clinical relevance.

Open source / permanent identification

[40] Brosschot, J. F., Verkuil, B. & Thayer, J. F. (2018). Generalized Unsafety Theory of Stress: Unsafe Environments and Conditions, and the Default Stress Response. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 15(3), 464. DOI: 10.3390/ijerph15030464.

Theoretical model of the absence of perceived safety and sustained stress activation. Used as an explanatory and investigative framework, not as a measurement of contact with authorities.

Open source / permanent identification