

CHILD SAFEGUARDING CASE IN OBERHAUSEN: INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS, SUSPENDED CONTACT AND UNANSWERED QUESTIONS ABOUT A CHILD'S SAFETY

Disputed relocation from Türkiye to Germany, recorded statements concerning alleged sexual abuse, a prosecutor's appeal against an acquittal and several criminal matters: an independent child safeguarding consultant calls for a comprehensive review.

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A cross-border child safeguarding case involving Germany and Türkiye raises serious questions about the handling of documented risk indicators, international parental responsibility and contact arrangements, and the duties of public authorities. At its centre is a six-year-old child whose family circumstances are the subject of several family and criminal proceedings.

The matters include the disputed relocation of the child to Germany, allegations against a maternal relative, criminal complaints concerning other individuals, and whether German authorities have sufficiently assessed potential risks. The father's in-person contact with the child was also excluded for several months.

Dennis Engelmann, an independent child safeguarding consultant, submitted a safeguarding notification to the Oberhausen Youth Welfare Office, filed an administrative and professional supervisory complaint and a criminal complaint, and informed political representatives. He calls for an independent assessment focused on the child, not on taking sides between the parents.

1. International custody proceedings and relocation to Germany

Divorce and custody proceedings were conducted in Türkiye. According to the documents reviewed, an interim custody arrangement favoured the mother, while the father had court-regulated contact rights. The child's place of residence was subsequently moved to Germany.

The father says he filed a criminal complaint against the mother over the relocation and was informed on 14 October 2026 that a criminal investigation was being conducted. The author has not independently examined a written confirmation from the authorities.

The key questions are which court orders and parental rights applied at the time of relocation and whether they were breached. The existence of an investigation does not establish that the mother unlawfully removed the child.

2. Contact restriction ended on 1 October - no in-person contact since

According to the father, a court barred his in-person contact with the child for several months. He states that this time-limited restriction expired on 1 October 2026, yet he still had not seen his daughter in person as of 14 October 2026.

The father links the sequence of events to his attempts to obtain protective measures following the child's statements about alleged abuse. Without the full judicial reasoning, it is not possible to determine whether those attempts influenced the contact decision.

It remains unclear on what legal or practical basis contact has continued to be interrupted after the stated expiry date, whether further orders exist, and what child-centred steps have been taken to review or re-establish contact. Neither parent's suitability can be conclusively judged from these circumstances alone.

3. Recorded child interview concerning alleged sexual abuse

On 12 August 2025, the then four-year-old child was interviewed in a recorded institutional setting in Türkiye. The multi-page transcript includes statements concerning alleged sexual touching by a maternal uncle. Dolls were also used during the interview.

The transcript contains initial denials and varying responses. Any professional assessment must therefore consider the complete interview, rather than treating isolated statements as proof.

Later in the interview, the child said of her mother's possible presence: "My mother was there." Asked whether her mother had seen the alleged touching, she answered: "She saw it." Earlier, the child had initially denied a question concerning her mother's presence. These statements require careful assessment; they do not prove either abuse or the mother's actual knowledge.

The father was not present during the recorded interview.

4. Psychiatric report records signs of distress

A psychiatric examination report dated 19 August 2025 describes, among other things, recurrent thoughts, irritability, difficulty sleeping alone and an acute stress reaction. These observations are relevant to the child's support and safeguarding needs, but do not by themselves establish their cause or prove a criminal offence.

5. Turkish prosecutor appeals acquittal

On 24 September 2025, Turkish prosecutors charged the maternal uncle. He was acquitted at first instance on 5 May 2026.

A certified German translation, issued on 13 October 2026, of the prosecution's appeal dated 14 May 2026 shows that prosecutors sought to have the acquittal overturned. Their reasoning refers to the child's statements, demonstrations using a doll and a forensic medical report. They also challenge the trial court's assessment of possible influence by the father.

The appeal states the prosecution's position; it is not a conviction or proof of the allegations. The subsequent procedural status has not yet been independently verified.

6. Other criminal matters - including charges against the father

The father has filed a complaint against the mother concerning possible breaches of care and protection duties. He also reports investigations relating to the relocation and a separate allegation of procedural fraud. The precise scope and status of these additional matters have not been conclusively verified from official documents.

According to the information available, the father has also been charged with an alleged offence involving the removal or withholding of a minor. This concerns custody or residence arrangements; it is not a charge of physical or sexual violence against the child. The charge does not establish guilt.

Complaints, investigations and criminal charges must be distinguished. The presumption of innocence applies to everyone concerned.

7. Oberhausen Youth Welfare Office: questions about the risk assessment

The child reportedly lives with her mother. In a decision dated 10 September 2026 (case no. 453 F 1246/26), the Oberhausen Family Court stated that current contact with the accused uncle was 'not apparent'. That wording does not establish that contact was ruled out through specific checks, nor does it establish that contact exists.

On 14 September 2026, Engelmann submitted a safeguarding notification to the Oberhausen Youth Welfare Office. He subsequently lodged a supervisory complaint and a criminal complaint seeking an independent examination of possible failures by individual officials.

Engelmann says he has not received a sufficiently detailed explanation of internal risk assessments or protective measures. A lack of substantive response does not prove that no internal action was taken. That is why examination of the records is essential.

8. Political representatives informed

Engelmann informed political contacts in Oberhausen and North Rhine-Westphalia and the state's child protection commissioner. The CDU group on Oberhausen City Council described additional political involvement as neither appropriate nor helpful and questioned the intention behind the approach.

The office of CDU state parliament member Jens Kamieth asked about forwarding information to child safeguarding spokesperson Charlotte Quik. The chair of the AfD district group in Alt-Oberhausen likewise sought permission to pass the documents to a colleague working on child protection. Engelmann agreed to both requests. Neither response establishes that a substantive review or protective measure has taken place.

9. Call for independent, child-centred safeguarding assessment

Engelmann calls for an independent, open-ended assessment of all risk indicators, a documented examination of any possible contact with the accused relative, review of the ongoing interruption of father-child contact and a transparent reconstruction of official safeguarding decisions.

He also calls for consideration of temporary neutral protective accommodation outside both parental households, but only if the legal requirements and an individual proportionality assessment justify it. This is expressly not a demand for automatic placement with the father.

“This is not about declaring one parent a hero and the other a perpetrator. It is about taking documented concerns seriously and independently assessing whether this child is adequately protected. While numerous proceedings examine the actions of adults, the child must not be overlooked.”

BACKGROUND / PRESS CONTACT

An anonymised case overview is available at
www.der-kinderschutzaktivist.de/aktuelle-faelle/kinderschutzfall-oberhausen/

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This publication distinguishes documented records from information reported by the father. The child remains anonymous.
All criminal allegations are subject to the presumption of innocence.