

Netzwerk  
Feuerwehrfrauen

**Female Firefighters in Germany**

# About me

- Battalion Chief with the Essen FD since January 2008
- Instructor at the state fire academy Northrhine Westphalia from 2003 to 2007
- Fire officer trainee from 2001 to 2003
- Master in safety and fire engineering
- Enrolled in the EFO program



# Germany



- Federal parliamentary republic with
  - 16 states
  - 82 million citizens (more than in Sweden)
  - 350.00 km<sup>2</sup> (smaller than Sweden)
  - 1.3 million fire fighters (of 2.7 million in Europe)
  - 25.000 fire departments

# The German Fire Service

- Because of the federalism fire protection falls under legislation of the states
- Due to the subsidiarity principle the communities are responsible to establish and maintain a functioning and adequate fire service
- Due to the federal structure there is no single “German Chief Fire Officer”, no single “German law on Fire Services” and no “National Fire Academy”

# Responsibilities of the federal government

- The federal government is responsible for defence and civil protection
- Equipment for civil protection provided by the federal government can be used by the communities
- On request the federal government supports the states in internal coordination
- Academy for Crisis Management Emergency Planning and Civil Protection

# Responsibilities of the states



- 16 states mean 16 fire services laws with common goals but also differences
- The states have the supervision of the communal and private fire departments
- The states provide state fire academies
- The states provide training and equipment for disaster management

# Responsibilities of the counties

- Establishing and maintaining dispatch centers
- Provision of training centers
- Provision of maintenance centers
- May differ from state to state



# Responsibilities of the communities

- By the fire service laws the communities have to provide a capable fire department for the local risk
- A response time of 8 minutes after 112 call for the first units with 1 engine and 1 aerial ladder (10 firefighters) in 90% of all incidents (fire) is a standard for most career and combined FDs

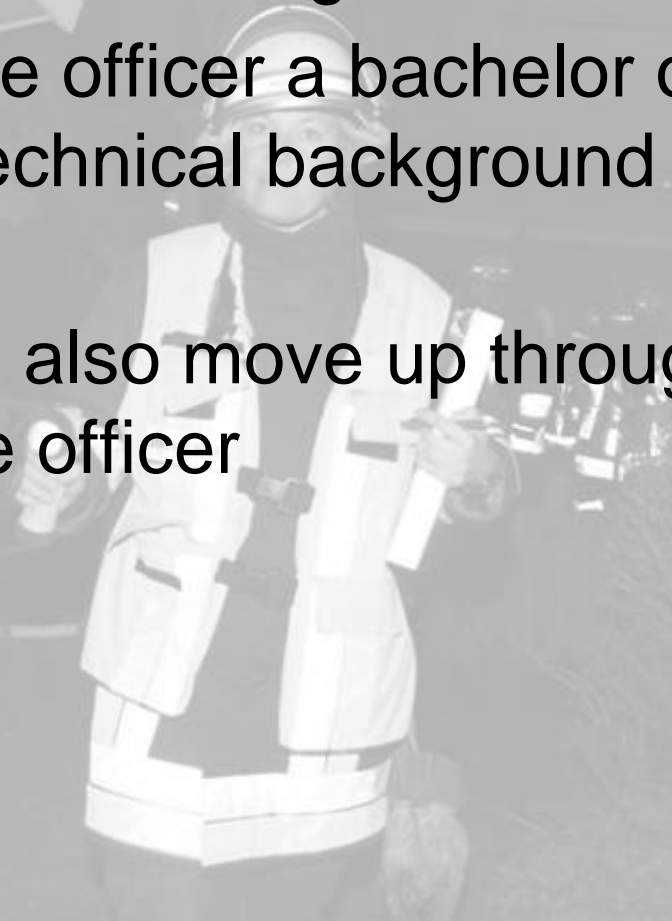
Foto: Mike Filzen

# Responsibilities of the communities

- The FDs have to do a risk analysis and identify target hazards (like hospitals, railway tracks, critical infrastructure)
- Based on this analysis the communities have to fund the local FD so it can handle the risks
- There are always many ways to realize these targets

# Career paths in the fire service

- A FD-useful profession or trade is a prerequisite to become a career fire fighter
- To become a fire officer a bachelor or master degree with a technical background is mandatory
- A firefighter can also move up through the ranks to become a fire officer



# Female Firefighters

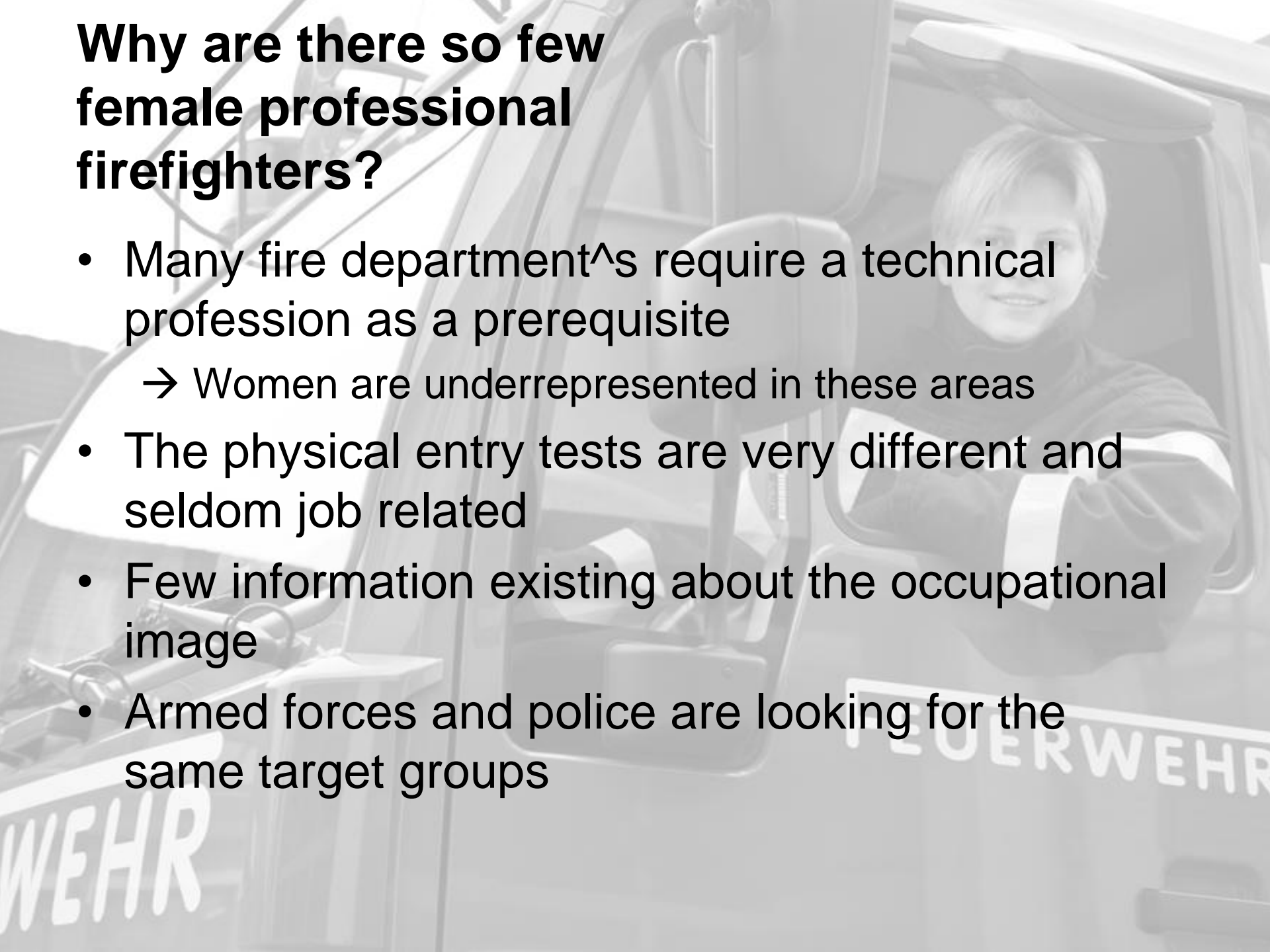
- 40.000 professional firefighters
- about 500 – 550 professional female firefighters  
→ ca. 1,4%
- Civil Service Levels
  - Firefighter → 83%
  - Junior officer → 12%
  - Senior officer → 5%
- 1.2 Million volunteer firefighters
- About 80.000 volunteer female firefighters →  
7,5 %

# Career paths in the fire service

- Basic firefighter training with EMT, engineer, basic HazMat training, and training on the job lasts between 18 and 24 months and is provided by the FDs
- Fire officer training takes 2 years and includes basic firefighter training and fire officer training, it is provided by the FDs and the state fire academies

# Why are there so few female professional firefighters?

- Many fire department<sup>s</sup> require a technical profession as a prerequisite
  - Women are underrepresented in these areas
- The physical entry tests are very different and seldom job related
- Few information existing about the occupational image
- Armed forces and police are looking for the same target groups



# Why are there so few female professional firefighters?

- Little girls and young women have no awareness of the job
- Not everyone is attracted to a 1 1/2 or 2 years additional training with apprentice's wages
- „Lifelong“ job as a firefighter
- Male dominated job
- Fear to become a virago
- Doubt of the compatibility of family and career

# The Netzwerk Feuerwehrfrauen e.V.

## Who we are

- Professional association
- Founded in 2006
- Registered in Dortmund
- 140 Members
- Consisting of professional and volunteer female firefighters

More information [www.feuerwehrfrauen.de](http://www.feuerwehrfrauen.de)



# **The Netzwerk Feuerwehrfrauen e.V.**

## **What we do**

- Connecting female firefighters
- Provision of information
- Consulting for interested women
- Consulting for fire departments
- Organization of training events and our annual conference
- Attendance of sporting events

# The Netzwerk Feuerwehrfrauen e.V.

## What we do

- Support of bachelor-, and master thesis
- Participation in workgroups
- Staying in touch with other networks
- Speeches and presentations

We Girls Can Do Anything™



# Questions?

**Barbie**  
**SAFETY TIPS**

- Have a working smoke detector on every floor of your home.
- Test smoke detectors every month; replace batteries once a year.

ROUTER







RETTUNGSDIENST  
FEUERWEHR

FEUERWEHR  
RETTUNGSDIENST



Netzwerk  
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NOTRUF  
FEUER **112**  
UNFALL  
Krankenwagen  
19 222

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2033



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