

Abdurrahim Özüdoğru

“Tülin Özüdoğru, daughter of Abdurrahim Özüdoğru, recounts:

Never! I never could have imagined that. When we learnt about the Holocaust in school, I was incredibly touched. I was deeply shaken by how people were murdered because a right-wing ideology declared them as inferior. But I never related to it personally. The fact that this ideology could one day affect me and my family – I never suspected it then. Ultimately, though, it affected us, too!

My father had been living in Germany for almost 30 years when he was murdered. He had spent more than half of his life here. He was a very cheerful, hardworking and open person. We had many German friends with whom we also celebrated Christmas. And we also invited them to celebrate Eid al-Adha with us. We drew no distinctions at all. I was born in Germany. True, I'm a German with foreign roots, but I'm German. I went to kindergarten and school here, and I took my matriculation exams here. I study here. Just like my father, I breathed the same air as everyone else around me, visited the same Christmas markets. I liked the same things, shared the same emotions. Sure, there were some issues, hostilities and discrimination in everyday life. These things happen, unfortunately. But I would never have believed that in a country as stable as Germany, one that is so culturally, technically and economically developed, that something like that could happen.

But it did happen. I was 17 years old when my father was murdered – when he was executed. I loved my father so much that I would stamp my feet angrily as a two-year-old whenever he came home late from work. I couldn't bear being apart from him, even for just a few hours. Now I've lost him forever. I miss him very much. On special occasions, weddings, birthdays – I always look for him. But he's not there. He was taken away from me at an age when you urgently need someone to show you the right path in life and have your back. But it was at precisely this point in my life that my world fell apart.”