A MOVEMENT BETWEEN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS AND THE PATHWAY TO VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM

GERMANY’S RADICAL RIGHT NARRATIVES AND COUNTER-NARRATIVES
The CARR-Hedayah Radical Right Counter Narratives Project is a year-long project between CARR and Hedayah that is funded by the EU STRIVE programme. It is designed to create one of the first comprehensive online toolkits for practitioners and civil society engaged in radical right extremist counter-narrative campaigns. It uses online research to map narratives in nine countries and regions (Australia, Canada, Germany, Hungary, New Zealand, Norway, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and the United States), proposes counter-narratives for these countries and regions, and advises on how to conduct such campaigns in an effective manner. This country report is one of such outputs.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Maximilian Kreter’s doctoral research focuses on the development of the role of the ideology of right-wing extremism in germanophone White Power music (“Rechtsrock”) from 1977 to 2017. He employs mixed methods content analysis to study song texts of White Power bands. He aims to identify changes and continuities in the narratives, the ideology and the narrative techniques of the germanophone White Power music scene. He has published books, articles and chapters and on White Power Music in [East-]Germany; violence against asylum seekers, social media and the extreme right; right-wing hate crimes in Saxony from 2011 to 2016; and extreme right-wing voting behavior in East-Germany from 2005 to 2011.

The views expressed in this practical report are the opinions of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Hedayah, the Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right or the European Union.
The radical right in Germany, like most of the radical right in general, has fundamentally transformed this century. From 1996 to 2011 the Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD) [National Democratic Party of Germany]1, defined as belonging to the old, traditional, neo-fascist type2 of right-wing parties, especially in East Germany with its sizeable support from the “groupuscular right”3 and autonomous Kameradschaften [or “free comradeships”] was the dominant actor within the radical right movement. In hindsight 2013 marked a turning point with the foundation of the radical right, euro-sceptic Alternative für Deutschland [AfD] [Alternative for Germany].4 The further ascent of the AfD was fueled by the reciprocal interaction with the anti-Islamic street movement Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident (PEGIDA) [Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident] in late 2014 and early 2015. While the AfD successively made it into the federal and then all state parliaments,5 PEGIDA acted as a radicalisation catalyst for public discourse and the coverage by the mainstream media in Germany and abroad. In turn, these developments greatly helped sow the seeds of hate amongst groupuscular right, violent radical right extremists, and even terrorists.6

Most infamously, the terrorist network of the Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund [NSU] [National Socialist Underground] remained undetected from 1998 until 2011, although most of the perpetrators, as well as instigators and networks, seem to have now been uncovered by the authorities. Since 2011 the German public has become much more aware of the terrorist threat from the right, even if some parts of the government insist upon the principle of equidistance from the extremes — a view rooted in the German constitution’s framing of “militant democracy”7 — which may be one of several reasons for the underestimation of radical right violence. By contrast, the trail of radical right terrorism in Germany stretches back from Hanau, via Halle, Kassel (Wolfgang), Berlin-Neukölln, Dresden, and Munich,8 through less visible decades to the very conclusion of World War II.9 Radical right extremism

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1 Here ‘radical right extremism’ is used to describe a broad plethora of protest movements, cell-based groups (“groupuscules”) and lone-actor terrorists that harbour violent nativist, authoritarian, and (sometimes) populist policy ideas (Middle 2007). This includes individuals and groups who actively expose violence and seek the overthrow of liberal democracy” (Fetter 2005: p. 14) than simply ‘a critique of the constitutional order without any anti-democratic behaviour or intentions’ (Fetter 2005: 22). The former are historically referred to as the extreme right rather than the radical right, and range from lone-actor terrorists through to a range of formally constituted neo-fascist and neo-Nazi political parties that inspire political violence.


3 The further ascent of the AfD was fueled by the reciprocal interaction with the anti-Islamic street movement Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident (PEGIDA) [Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident] and networks, seem to have now been uncovered by the authorities. Since 2011 the German public has become much more aware of the terrorist threat from the right, even if some parts of the government insist upon the principle of equidistance from the extremes — a view rooted in the German constitution’s framing of “militant democracy” — which may be one of several reasons for the underestimation of radical right violence. By contrast, the trail of radical right terrorism in Germany stretches back from Hanau, via Halle, Kassel (Wolfgang), Berlin-Neukölln, Dresden, and Munich, through less visible decades to the very conclusion of World War II. Radical right extremism

4 The ‘groupuscular right’ is defined: “as fully developed, highly specialized and largely autonomous groupings that simultaneously form the constituents of an amorphous, leaderless and centreless cellular network of political ideology, organization and activism that is termed there ‘the groupuscular right’” (Carter 2005: 22). Paul Jackson, ‘‘Where are the Nationalists? Nationalist and National Action in the 21st Century’, The National Socialist Underground and the History of Terror from the Far-Right in Germany (London: Routledge, 2019), p. 63-64.


6 For example, Hannes Heer, Der Massenrückstoß. ‘Vorläufe auf den Triebwerk der Nazizeit’ (Berlin: Westdeutscher Verlag 1985)


10 See Laura Brookes, The German Neo Right. An Introduction to the Groupuscule Right, Patterns of Populism 37 (1), 2003, pp. 27-30, 27; or as Tony Judt, “[...even if some parts of the government insist upon the principle of equidistance from the extremes] — combines the act of destruction of an enemy and the strategic aspect of advancing the group’s political agenda, which is in fact missing with low base crimes.” Daniel Kockshier, Right-Wing Terrorism in the 21st Century. The ‘National Socialist Underground’ and the History of Terror from the Far-Right in Germany (London: Routledge, 2017), p. 63-64.

has never vanished from post-war Germany, but was rarely detected and is too often neglected. The same remains true for contemporary radical right terrorists and networks, like the recently banned Combat 18 Deutschland, Revolution Chemnitz, Old School Society, or Freie Kameradschaft Dresden, to name but a few.\textsuperscript{11}

That said, it can be difficult to draw a clear line between radical right terrorism and radical right violence.\textsuperscript{12} Just as radical right terrorism saw a significant rise in recent years, Germany simultaneously had a large outburst of radical right violence, — particularly the use of vigilanism as a central modus operandi — in the wake of the so-called ‘refugee crisis.’ The number of attacks against ethnic minorities, local politicians, refugee aid volunteers, and journalists increased dramatically between 2015 and 2016, while numbers decreased slightly between 2017 and the end of 2019. But these are still at a much higher plateau than the beginning of the ‘refugee crisis.’\textsuperscript{13}

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The necessity of preventing and countering these different forms of violent radical right extremism has now become evident, even if politicians, as well as other authorities, for the most part, downplayed the expansion, specialisation, and continuation of corresponding CVE and democracy-promotion programmes. The latter attempts have seen an endless string of unconnected pilot projects since the early 1990s rather than a durable prevention infrastructure. Nonetheless, Germany is often considered a role model with regards to the quality, quantity, and diversity of its CVE programmes and approaches.\textsuperscript{14}

This country report focuses on parties, (sub-)movements, and groupuscules. The first part of this report surveys the activities of fourteen key groups of the radical right and their (core) narratives of Anti-Muslim Populism, Ethno-Nationalism, Anti-Globalism, Victimhood, and Neo-Nazism/Revisionism. Using case studies from the five years of May 2014 to May 2019, the second part offers guidance for counter-narratives that can be counterposed against the dominant narratives of the radical right. The following section offers examples of existing counter-narrative campaigns in Germany by (close-to-the-) state and non-state actors. The report closes with recommendations on how to conceptualise and conduct campaigns to counter (violent) radical right extremism in Germany.

\textsuperscript{11} See Cristina Ariza, “What do we know about the extreme right in Germany?,” CARR, 6 March 2020, online at: \url{https://www.radicalrightanalysis.com/2020/03/06/what-do-we-know-about-the-extreme-right-in-germany/}.


\textsuperscript{13} See Jan Schedler, ‘Rechtsterrorismus und rechte Gewalt: Versuch einer Abgrenzung,’ \textit{Wissen schafft Demokratie}, 6, 2019, 105-117, online at: \url{https://www.idz-jena.de/schriftenreihe/band-6-rechtsterrorismus/}.

\textsuperscript{14} See Bundeskriminalamt, ‘Straftaten,’ July 2019, online at: \url{https://www.bka.de/SharedDocs/Bilder/DE/Arbeitsbereiche/Deliktsbereiche/PMK/Straftaten1.jpg;jsessionid=28E5B99A19E115C2ECC47CE75972D7CC.live0601?__blob=normal&v=1}.

Although the AfD has recently taken the lead within the radical right movement due to successes in the polls, especially between 2016 and 2019, the ties to other groups and individuals within the movement persist, even though not always with the consent of the entire party.

(Sub-)Movements like PEGIDA and groupuscules like Revolution Chemnitz gained more significance and influence in the radical right movement in Germany. It is clear that radical right extremism — ranging from parties to movements to groupuscules — mobilises around a set of Anti-Muslim Populism, Ethno-Nationalism, Anti-Globalism, Victimhood, and Neo-Nazi/Neo ‘Revisionism’ narratives, not only in Germany but worldwide. Below is a list of extremist groups and organisations which represent the radical right in Germany, with an emphasis on developments of the last five years, broken down according to ideology, the corresponding narratives, type of organisation, and propensity to violence, as depicted in Figure 1. For each group, the report offers key data, a short description, and examples of key narratives. A summary of the key narratives with examples can be found in Table 1.
EXTREMIST NARRATIVE  |  DEFINITION  |  EXAMPLE
---|---|---
Anti-Establishment Sentiment  |  Extreme political skepticism of societal, economic, scientific, and political elites that shape public discourse.  |  “Political correctness belongs to the ash heap of history.” ([“Die politische Korrektheit gehört auf den Müllhaufen der Geschichte”] (AfD))
Anti-Globalism  |  Extreme opposition to cultural, economic, and political globalization; any form of international multilateralism; and elitist top-down processes.  |  “Fortress Europe, close the borders.” ([“Festung Europa, macht die Grenzen dicht.”] (IBD))
Anti-Immigration Sentiment  |  Views directed against open immigration policies, including demands of compulsory or voluntary repatriation of non-indigenous citizens.  |  “Wage war against asylum seekers and their supporters.” ([“Krieg gegen Asylanten und deren Unterstützer”] (OSS))
Anti-Muslim Populism  |  A spectrum ranging from relatively moderate anti-Muslim sentiments to extreme opposition/hatred towards the cultural, societal, and political influence of Muslims and the religion of Islam. These sentiments are sometimes coupled with anti-immigration sentiments against those immigrating from Muslim countries.  |  “Tolerance has nothing to do with Islam […] But violence, robbery, war, killing, decapitation, crucifying, all that has to do with Islam.” ([“Toleranz hat nichts mit dem Islam zu tun […] Denn Gewalt, Ausrauben, Krieg, Töten, Kopfabschneiden, Kreuzigen, alles hat mit dem Islam zu tun.”] (PEGIDA))
Anti-Semitism  |  Anti-Jewish prejudice, including some forms of anti-Zionism, and extending to the conspiracy theories of omnipresent ‘behind-the-curtain’ power and control exerted by Jewish people.  |  “After 75 years, we still have the same enemy. The enemy isn’t called Müller or Meier — No! — The enemy is called Rothschild and Goldman & Sachs.” ([“Wir haben auch noch heute denselben Feind wie vor 75 Jahren. Der Feind heißt nicht Müller oder Meier — Nein! Er heißt Rothschild und Goldman und Sachs.”] (The Right))

Table 1: Overview of Germany’s Radical Right Narratives

(1) Drawing on Robert Lane’s definition of ‘ideology’ (“The common man has a set of emotionally charged political beliefs, a critique of alternative proposals, and some modest programs of reform. These beliefs embrace social values and institutions; they are rationalizations of interests (sometimes not his own); and they serve as moral justifications for daily acts and beliefs.”) combined with Jean-François Lyotard’s understanding of ‘narrative’ (Imparting values and emotions in relation to a national and/or cultural entity, serving as a basis of legitimacy and often symbolic claims of this community). See Robert E. Lane, Political Ideologies. Why the American Common Man Believes What He Does (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe 1962), p. 15-16; Jean-François Lyotard, La condizione postmoderna. Rapport sur le savoir (Bologna: Il Mulino 1979).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chauvinism</th>
<th>Here defined as the belief in the supremacy of the in-group, predominantly defined according to ethnic, cultural, and gender criteria. Chauvinism is defined as naturally anticipated, given supremacy, and is often combined with Ethno-Nationalism, Anti-Immigration Sentiment, Misogyny, and Anti-Muslim Populism.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Beware, we do not call the police. We take care of unwanted guests by our- selves. One bullet is not enough. Old-school Society.” (“Achtung wir rufen nicht die Polizei um ungebetene Gäste ihnmen wir uns selbst. Eine Kugel nicht nicht. Oldschool Society”) (OSS)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethno-Nationalism</th>
<th>Defined as “the technical name for this view of things in which one’s own [eth- nical] group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it.”19</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Besides the protection of our national and European borders, a large-scale remigration project will be necessary.” (“Neben dem Schutz unserer nationalen und europäischen Aufgangsregionen, wird ein großangelegtes Remigrationsprojekt notwendig sein.”) (AfD)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Great Replacement</th>
<th>Forms of conspiracy theory advocating a master plan to replace the perceived ‘pure’ autochthon population with a multicultural society that serves the interests of elites in power.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>“Storm of asylum seekers, mass immi- gration, birth rate deficit, senescence, that’s what we all know, it happens with the active support of the ruling class and the devoted media.” (“Asylansturm, Massenwanderung, Geburtenverfall, Gehörntredyts, Vergezung — all das kennen wir, all das läuft ab unter aktiver Teilnahme durch die herberechende Klasse und die ihr treu ergebene Medienwelt.”) (One Percent)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Identitarianism</th>
<th>The perceived right of an ethnically and culturally defined in-group to be the prevailing force on a territorial entity that they define as ‘theirs’ (‘racism without Race’).</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Democracy requires a certain degree of homogeneity of the population in or- der to be able to form a common will. By fighting the multicultural project we fight for conditions that make true dem- ocracy (rule by the people) possible.” (“Demokratie [...] erfordert eine gewisse Ho- mogenität in der Bevölkerung, damit sie einen gemeinsamen Willen bilden kann. Indem wir gegen das multikulturelle Projekt kämpfen […] kämpfen wir auch für die Bedingung der Möglichkeit einer echten Demokratie.” (Volksherrschaft)) (IBD)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Neofascism</th>
<th>Adherence to the ideology of National Socialism after 1945, including the cel- ebration of high-ranking Nazis (rang- ing from Stauffenberg to Heß) and the celebration of Nazism.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“We’re Nazis until the bitter end.” (“Wir sind Nazis bis zum bitteren Ende.”) (Group Freital)</td>
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<tr>
<th>‘Revisionism’</th>
<th>The public revision of Nazism, includ- ing the Holocaust, in the fields of poli- tics, culture, and economics, particularly in comparison to the ‘decadent and putrefying’ democracies of Weimar, Bonn, Berlin, and ‘the West’ in general.</th>
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<tr>
<td>“We are the streets and we are the law, the 4th Reich is what we are fighting for.” (B&amp;I)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Ultra-Nationalism</th>
<th>Defined as “extreme devotion to or ad- vocacy of the interests of a nation, esp. regardless of the effect on any other na- tions.”20</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Those who do not love Germany should leave Germany.” (“Wer Deutschland nicht liebt, soll Deutschland verlassen.”) (PEGIDA)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Victimhood</th>
<th>A permanent perception of unjusti- fied, politically motivated victimisation by the political opposition, which is often instrumentalised to advance ‘un- derdog’ or ‘populist’ political agendas.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“End German collective guilt! We defend ourselves against moral self-destruction of our nation through one-sided histori- cal recriminations to the account of Ger- many.” (“Schuldabkommen. Wir wehren uns gegen die moralische Selbsterziehung unserer Nation durch einseitige geschichtliche Schuldzu- weisungen an Lasten Deutschtums.”) (NPD)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Vigilantism</th>
<th>Here, ‘Vigilantism’ is defined as a set of tactics involving direct action stunts and street patrols designed to intimi- date and ‘Other’ minority populations.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“With 40 men we roughed up a bunch of wogs on the banks of the River Elbe.” (“Mit einem 40 Mann Haufen am Elbufer Kanackengruppen weggeknallt.”) (FKD)</td>
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# EXTREME RADICAL RIGHT GROUPS IN GERMANY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Ideology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blood &amp; Honour (B&amp;H)</strong></td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Neo-Nazism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Combat 18 (Germany)</strong></td>
<td>Torsten Heise Robin Schmiemann Marco Gottschalk Stanley Röske Marco Eckert Lars Bergeest</td>
<td>c. 20-60 (2019)</td>
<td>Neo-Nazism Ethno-Nationalism Vigilantism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revolution Chemnitz</strong></td>
<td>Christian K.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Neo-Nazism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oldschool Society (OSS)</strong></td>
<td>Lewis H. Markus W.</td>
<td>c. 4-10</td>
<td>Neo-Nazism Anti-Immigration Sentiment Vigilantism Chauvinism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group Freital/Civil Defence Corps Freital</strong></td>
<td>Timo Schulz Patrick Festing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Neo-Nazism Anti-Immigration Sentiment Chauvinism Ultra-Nationalism Vigilantism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free Comradeship Dresden</strong></td>
<td>Benjamin Z.</td>
<td>c. 6-30</td>
<td>Neo-Nazism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B&H was founded in 1987 in the UK to promote neo-Nazism through ‘White Power’ music by bands like ‘Skrewdriver’ and ‘No Remorse’. Due to the infamy of the former band, B&H quickly became an international organisation. National divisions and regional sections extended across much of the whole world, above all in Europe, North America, and Oceania. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, B&H had become notorious in Scandinavia (especially Sweden and Denmark) and Germany. A German division was founded in 1994 but was banned in September 2000 by the Federal Minister of the Interior, along with youth organisation ‘White Youth’ (founded in 1997). The German division and its members, especially Jan Werner and Thomas Starke, became well known for their long-lasting support of the NSU, i.e. with money, infrastructure, and contacts in order to survive in the underground. Furthermore, B&H collected money at concerts “for the three” which was brought to the NSU by B&H members. Key features of this movement still include the promotion of White Power music through concerts, music production, and transnational distribution. After the ban, several groups continued as ‘Brotherhood 28’ or ‘Division 28’.

These underground organisations drew upon the infrastructure and labels of foreign divisions with close ties to German activists—especially in Belgium (Wallonia and Flanders), France, and Hungary. In addition to white power music, B&H is well known for its close association with its paramilitary wing, Combat 18. B&H is not as violent/militant as C18 but members did not hesitate to use violence against each other. For example, the confidant of the ‘White Power’ band ‘Landser’, Jean-René Bauer, had the B&H member and NSU confidant Thomas Starke beaten up after discovering that he talked to the police in the course of the ‘Landser’ trial. They also used violence to advance their political agenda. For example, Carmen Szczepanek—who is also known as informant ‘Piatto’ as a witness in the NSU trial—served four years in prison 1994-1998 for the politically motivated attempted murder of a Nigerian teacher that he committed alongside a group of other neo-Nazis. Serving as an informant and ‘valuable source’ he quickly became a day release prisoner. Finally, they were banned due to their “active and militant stance and action against the constitutional order.”

**Neo-Nazism:**

**Blood and Honour** [B&H]

**Motto inscribed on the travelling knives of the Hitler Youth from 1933 until 1938.**

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**BLOOD & HONOUR (B&H)**

**LEADER**

Unknown

**MEMBERSHIP**

Unknown

**IDEOLOGY**

Neo-Nazism

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**DESCRIPTION**

B&H was founded in 1987 in the UK to promote neo-Nazism through ‘White Power’ music by bands like ‘Skrewdriver’ and ‘No Remorse’. Due to the infamy of the former band, B&H quickly became an international organisation. National divisions and regional sections extended across much of the whole world, above all in Europe, North America, and Oceania. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, B&H had become notorious in Scandinavia (especially Sweden and Denmark) and Germany. A German division was founded in 1994 but was banned in September 2000 by the Federal Minister of the Interior, along with youth organisation ‘White Youth’ (founded in 1997). The German division and its members, especially Jan Werner and Thomas Starke, became well known for their long-lasting support of the NSU, i.e. with money, infrastructure, and contacts in order to survive in the underground. Furthermore, B&H collected money at concerts “for the three” which was brought to the NSU by B&H members. Key features of this movement still include the promotion of White Power music through concerts, music production, and transnational distribution. After the ban, several groups continued as ‘Brotherhood 28’ or ‘Division 28’. These underground organisations drew upon the infrastructure and labels of foreign divisions with close ties to German activists—especially in Belgium (Wallonia and Flanders), France, and Hungary. In addition to white power music, B&H is well known for its close association with its paramilitary wing, Combat 18. B&H is not as violent/militant as C18 but members did not hesitate to use violence against each other. For example, the confidant of the ‘White Power’ band ‘Landser’, Jean-René Bauer, had the B&H member and NSU confidant Thomas Starke beaten up after discovering that he talked to the police in the course of the ‘Landser’ trial. They also used violence to advance their political agenda. For example, Carmen Szczepanek—who is also known as informant ‘Piatto’ as a witness in the NSU trial—served four years in prison 1994-1998 for the politically motivated attempted murder of a Nigerian teacher that he committed alongside a group of other neo-Nazis. Serving as an informant and ‘valuable source’ he quickly became a day release prisoner. Finally, they were banned due to their “active and militant stance and action against the constitutional order.”

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**NARRATIVE EXAMPLES**

**Neo-Nazism:**

“Blood and Honour.” [B&H und Ehre]

Motto inscribed on the travelling knives of the Hitler Youth from 1933 until 1938.

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See Michael Weiss, ‘Subkultur, Kommerz und Terrorismus. Die Netzwerke von Blood & Honour und Hammerskins in Brandenburg.’ In: Gideon Botsch, Jan Raabe & Christoph Schulze (eds.), BLOOD & HONOUR

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20 ‘Revisionism’:

“We are the streets and we are the law, the 4th Reich is what we are fighting for.”

- B&H band ‘Race War’ from Germany with their Title ‘Hail Blood and Honour’ from their 2001 album ‘The White Race Will Prevail.’ 27

**Ethno-Nationalism:**

“The purpose of the Blood & Honour movement must be to attract and activate young Whites through White Power music and other White Pride cultural activities.”

- Max Hammer (Erik Blücher), Blood & Honour Field Manual.28

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See Max Hammer (Erik Blücher), Blood & Honour Field Manual.28
COMBAT 18 (GERMANY) (COMBAT 18 DEUTSCHLAND, C 18 DEUTSCHLAND)

LEADERS
Torsten Heise
Robin Schmiemann
Marco Gottschalk
Stanley Röske
Lars Bergest

MEMBERSHIP
c. 20-60 (2019)

IDEOLOGY

Neo-Nazism:
“We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children.”

Ethno-Nationalism:
“Fighting for better nations, we want our cities clean. This is the terrormachine, this is Combat 18.”

Vigilantism:
“Silent Brotherhood — whatever it takes — C18.”

DESCRIPTION
C18 was founded in the UK in 1992 and, like its umbrella organisation B&H, quickly expanded to other countries, resulting in up to 25 official divisions worldwide. One of the most active and influential of these is located in Germany. This German division consists of three known and verifiable regional sections, all led by the confidant of the movement’s current leader, Will Browning, Thorsten Heise, and his right-hand man Robin Schmiemann. The oldest section is led by Marco Gottschalk, singer of the C18 band ‘Oidoxie’ and leader of the ‘Oidoxie Streetfighting Crew.’ They are located around the city of Dortmund, one of the few local strongholds of the extreme radical right in West Germany. Stanley Röske is the leader of the second section (which includes the suspected murderer of CDU politician Walter Lübcke, who was closely linked to the Nordhessen Crew, a precursor of this section). This section is located around the city of Kassel. The third section builds on the remains of Combat-18 Pinneberg, a paramilitary group which existed from 2001-2003. The leaders of this section are purported to be Marco Eckert and Lars Bergest. C18 was involved in the reemerging concert business, band promotion (especially of C18 bands like ‘Oidoxie,’ ‘Tees,Orden,’ and ‘Erschließungskommando’) as well as networking and combat training. In January 2020 ‘Combat 18 Germany’ was banned by the German Federal Minister of the Interior but — much like B&H — it has continued with a similar name. Called the ‘Brothers of Honour,’ the group now wears branded clothes of other divisions to conceal their identities (for example, that of Combat 18 Sweden). Beyond the combat training and the resulting verdicts, the homes of several members were searched in light of the C18 Germany ban. The headquarters of Thorsten Heise was raided several times in different districts, the homes of several members were searched in light of the C18 Germany ban.

MEMBERSHIP

NARRATIVE EXAMPLES

Neo-Nazism:
“Struggle against state and capital. Free, social, national.”

- Self-description of RC on Facebook.

Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory:
“Time does not stand still, ‘Volkstod’ is imminent. Time for Revolution, get active with us and take action. Revolution Chemnitz.”

- Screenshot of picture posted on Facebook.

Vigilantism:
“Assault on the media dictatorship and its slaves […] and the NSU was intended to be made looking like a kindergarten preschool group in comparison to Revolution Chemnitz.”


REVOLUTION CHEMNITZ (REVOLUTION CHEMNITZ, RC)

LEADER
Christian K.

MEMBERSHIP
R0

IDEOLOGY

Neo-Nazism:

- Description of RC on Facebook.

Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory:

- Self-description of RC on Facebook.

Vigilantism:

- Assault on the media dictatorship and its slaves […] and the NSU was intended to be made looking like a kindergarten preschool group in comparison to Revolution Chemnitz.

- Screenshot of picture posted on Facebook.

DESCRIPTION

Revolution Chemnitz (RC) started as a Telegram chat group on 10 September 2018 in the aftermath of the radical right riots in Chemnitz in late August 2018. Participants aimed to ‘change Germany’s history [and claimed to] make the NSU look like kindergarten preschool group.’ Members have their roots in the local and regional radical right skinhead, hologgan, and Neo-Nazi scene, especially in the surroundings of Sturm 34. Sturm 34 is a banned organisation whose members were found guilty of a long list of crimes ranging from hate speech to assaults. Only four days after foundation, RC started a test run as a vigilante group. In Chemnitz, they attacked both Germans and foreigners ahead of a series of planned assaults on 03 October (German Unity Day, a public holiday). On 01 October the police arrested six out of eight members before they could carry out any assaults. All 6 were found guilty of membership in a terrorist organisation (129a) German Criminal Code). The leader, Christian K., was also found guilty of founding a terrorist organisation.

NARRATIVE EXAMPLES

Neo-Nazism:
“Struggle against state and capital. Free, social, national.”

- Self-description of RC on Facebook.

Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory:
“Time does not stand still, ‘Volkstod’ is imminent. Time for Revolution, get active with us and take action. Revolution Chemnitz.”

- Screenshot of picture posted on Facebook.

Vigilantism:
“Assault on the media dictatorship and its slaves […] and the NSU was intended to be made looking like a kindergarten preschool group in comparison to Revolution Chemnitz.”


- Screenshot of picture posted on Facebook.

Oldschool Society (OSS) was the first terrorist group in Germany detected (with members later convicted) after the prosecution of the NSU in November 2011. OSS was initially launched as a chat group in autumn 2014, but it soon expanded its activities to a public Facebook account with approximately 3,000 followers. They then met for an act of foundation and to “make further plans” in the Saxon city of Frohburg (between Chemnitz and Leipzig). The core group consisted of three men (Andreas H.; Markus W.; Olaf C.) and one woman (Denise C.) alongside six more loosely connected members. Contrary to their online presence, however, the first four defined themselves as a “privy council” which would execute an “order of power and discipline” in order to “wage war against asylum seekers and their supporters.”

In early May 2015, two members illegally bought fireworks, firecrackers, and bangers ahead of a planned meeting on 8 May again in Frohburg. On 6 May the police conducted a raid based on sufficient evidence that the group planned attacks on refugee hostels, mosques, churches, and sheltered housing schemes for disabled persons. The four core members were sentenced to 3 to 5 years in prison. They were found guilty of membership in a terrorist organisation (129a§ German Criminal Code) in March 2017. Three other members were also sentenced to minor penalties.

### OLD SCHOOL SOCIETY (OSS)

#### LEADERS
- Andreas H.
- Markus W.

#### MEMBERSHIP
- c. 4-10

#### NARRATIVE EXAMPLES

**Anti-Immigration Sentiment:**
“Wage war against asylum seekers and their supporters.” ["Krieg gegen Asylanten und deren Unterstützer."]

OSF Facebook page screenshot.

**Vigilantism:**
“Privy council [which would execute] order of power and discipline.” ["Geheimrat der Befehls- und Disziplinargewalt ausführt."] (The core group on their style of leadership within the group and possible role model for ‘Old School Society.’)

Verdict of OLG Munich.

**Chauvinism:**
“Beware, we do not call the police. We take care of unwanted guests by ourselves. One bullet is not enough. Oldschool Society.” ["Achtung wir rufen nicht die Polizei um ungewollte Gäste kümmer wir uns selbst. Eine Kugel reicht nicht. Oldschool Society."

OSF Facebook page screenshot.

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**IDEOLOGY**

- Anti-Immigration Sentiment
- Vigilantism
- Chauvinism

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Group Freital started on Facebook as a vigilante group in March 2015. The foundation took place during the so-called refugee crisis. The group initially called itself ‘Civil Defence Corps FTL/360’ (Bürgerwehr FTL/360). The leader of the group was Timo Schulz, who was a member of the alleged terrorist group The White Wolves Terror Crew (Weisse Wölfe Terrorismus, WWT). His co-leader was Patrick Festing, who had close ties to Dynamo Dresden’s radical right football firm, ‘First of the East’ (Erstes des Ostens). Group Freital encompassed another five men and one woman. The group made its first major public appearance during the racist riots of Heidenau in August 2015. Between July and November 2015 they launched several arson attacks against refugee accommodation, and also against cars and offices of politicians of The Left (Die Linke) party. One attack was also carried out alongside the Free Comradeship Dresden. All eight members were convicted of membership of a terrorist organisation (129a§ German Criminal Code), bomb attacks, and attempted murder.

### GROUP FREITAL/CIVIL DEFENCE CORPS FREITAL (GRUPPE FREITAL/ BÜRGERWEHR FREITAL)

#### LEADERS
- Timo Schulz
- Patrick Festing

#### MEMBERSHIP
- 8

#### NARRATIVE EXAMPLES

**Neo-Nazism:**
“We’re Nazis until the bitter end.” ["Wir sind Nazis bis zum bitteren Ende."]

Facebook comment by PW, member of Group Freital on 23 September 2015.

**Anti-Immigration Sentiment:**
“Please keep on fleeing! No housing available!” ["Bitte flüchten Sie weiter! Es gibt hier nicht zu Wohnen."]

Facebook comment by MS, member of Group Freital on 28 August 2015.

**Ultra-Nationalism:**
“Germany awakes! Loving your country is not a crime.” ["DEUTSCHLAND ERWACHT! HEIMATLIEBE IST KEIN VERBRECHEN."]

Facebook comment by MS, member of Group Freital on 28 August 2015.
Free Comradeship Dresden (Freie Kameradschaft Dresden, FKD) was founded in July 2015. The group’s main goal was to carry out attacks against refugees (and their supporters), the political left, the police, and other (perceived) political enemies. In contrast to Group Freital, the FKD embraced direct physical confrontation with perceived political enemies. It often resulted in street riots, raids on alternative housing projects, or attacks on the police. Between July 2015 and January 2016, FKD members were involved in five attacks on (perceived) enemies or riots, before FKD officially dissolved in late February 2016.60 The most notorious riot occurred in August 2015, when the FKD members took an active part in the racist riots of Heidenau. In January 2016, most members took part in the “Storm On Connewitz” (Connewitz is an alternative-leftist stronghold in the city of Leipzig), a raid on a neighbourhood with approximately 230 football hooligans and other violent perpetrators (215 were arrested).41 In August 2016 at least 3 former members were among 20 to 30 persons who took part in a “refugee hunt” during the Dresden City Festival. The final verdicts for the members ranged from 30 to 72 months, although they were not found guilty of foundation or membership of a terrorist organisation but rather that of a criminal organisation.62

*Neos of the Memorial Wreath, which the FKD placed on WWII soldiers’ graves on Remembrance Sunday 2015.*

**NARRATIVE EXAMPLES**

**Neo-Nazism/’Revisionism’**: “Their sacrifice, our mission, Free Comradeship Dresden.” (“Ihr Opfer, unser Auftrag, Freie Kameradschaft Dresden.”)

- Picture of the memorial wreath, which the FKD placed on WWII soldiers’ graves on Remembrance Sunday 2015.

*One FKD member calling another FKD member on 21 August 2016.*44

**Vigilantism**: “With 40 men we roughed up a bunch of wogs on the banks of the River Elbe.” (Context: The group members were looking for refugees and foreigners i.e. victims during the ‘Dresden City Fest’ to beat/rough them up [“Mit einem 40 Mann Haufen am Elbufer Kanackengruppen weggeklatscht.”])

- One FKD member calling another FKD member on 21 August 2016.

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61 Ibid.


63 See Landgericht Dresden, Urteil, Az. 3 KLs 373 Js 49/17, p. 152.

64 Ibid., p. 159.
Founded in 1964 to unite the electoral right, after several victories in the late 1960s (represented in seven out of eleven state parliaments, and 4.3% in the 1969 German Federal election) the party sank into societal and electoral insignificance until the mid-1990s when Udo Voigt took the lead in 1996. While the party kept a distance from the radical right subcultural and skinhead scene, Voigt started to invite skinheads, members of the groups council (especially free comradeships), and those from other former ‘unwanted’ groups to join the NPD in order to transform the party from an electoral formation into a movement party. He introduced a “four pillar strategy” which was about fighting for: 1. hearts and minds; 2. the streets; 3. parliament; and 4. the organised will. This approach allowed the party to mobilize supporters for election campaigns. In (re)turn they supported Comradeships (by supplying them with a robust legal framework for demonstrations by the so-called ‘Parteienprivileg’ [lit. party privilege] guaranteed by article 21, German Basic Law) and the subcultural scene (such as providing a platform for concerts). The NPD twice entered the state parliaments of Saxony and Mecklenburg-Hither Pomerania between 2004 and 2011. Since then, most political — meaning parliamentary and extra-parliamentary — strongholds were and still are located in East Germany. The NPD did not get more than 1.6% of the votes in a German Federal election after 1969.6 During times of limited electoral success, nearly a quarter of high-ranking party officials had a criminal record, ranging from verbal abuse over Holocaust denial and hate speech to aggravated assaults.6 The drift towards political insignificance, alongside infiltration by confidential informants, were major reasons for the failure of the two attempts to ban the party in 2003 and 2017.6 Today, the party still retains seats in some local parliaments despite being usurped electoral- ly by the less extreme AfD. The party focuses on the role of a movement party again, i.e. the NPD will not only strive for power by winning seats in parliaments but preferentially seek alliances with street movements like Pegida as well as the groups council.70

Neo-Nazism:
“Without any doubt Hitler was a great German statesman.”[‘Zweifellos handelt es sich bei Hitler um einen großen deutschen Staatsmann’.] - Udo Voigt, former party chairman.71

Ethno-Nationalism: “Germany for the Germans! What else?” [‘Deutschland den Deutschen! Was denn sonst?’]
- Ronny Zasowk, current party vice chairman.72

Anti-Semitism: “The entire financial edifice of this Jewish Republic will completely collapse with the next two years.” [‘Das gesamte Finanzgebäude dieser Judenrepublik wird in den nächsten zwei Jahren zusammenbrechen wird.’]
- Udo Pastörs, former party chairman at the 2009 Ash Wednesday NPD convention.73

Anti-Immigration Sentiment: “Travel home instead of entering [Germany].” [‘Heimreise statt Einreise.’]
- Frequently used campaign slogan of the NPD.74

Victimhood: “End German collective guilt! We defend ourselves against moral self-destruction of our nation through one sided historical recriminations to the account of Germany.” [‘Schuldkult beenden. Wir wehren uns gegen die moralische Selbstvernichtung unserer Nation durch einseitige geschichtliche Schuldzuweisungen an Lasten Deutschlands.’]
- NPD party programme 2010.75
The Third Path is a minor Neo-Nazi party founded in 2013 as a camouflage organisation for the banned ‘Free Network South’ (Freier Netz Süd). The local strongholds are nearly congruent to the ones of the ‘Free Network South’ in North Eastern Bavaria/Franconia, South West Saxony, and Western Rhine-Land-Palatinate. The Third Path participates in elections even though, according to the statements of their chairman, Klaus Armstroff, they are not interested in traditional party politics. Instead, they focus on movement and street politics such as martial arts training or rallies in their strongholds. For instance, the Third Path conducted a demonstration resembling the SA-tradition on 1 May 2019 in Plauen. They also built a transnational network which maintains regular distinct to the 25-point manifesto of the ‘National Socialist German Workers’ Party’ (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, NSDAP). High ranking members of this group have long criminal records and are deeply rooted in the extreme radical right movement. For example, Martin Wieße is a member of the terrorist organisation ‘Scherzgruppe’ from Munich, which planned a bomb attack on a Jewish Cultural Center in Munich, and Mark Erminger, a close supporter of the NSU (whose brother Andri was sentenced to 23 years in prison for direct support of the NSU) is also a former co-leader of the free tracts ‘White Brotherhood Erzgebirge’ (‘Weiße Bruderschaft Erzgebirge’). Matthias Fischer, a former leader of the ‘Free Network South’, served at least two years in prison for several crimes.

The Right received its initial impulse from two major influences in 2012. On one hand, it was founded as a collective movement for former members of the NDP (see above) and the ‘German Peoples’ Union’ (‘Deutsche Volksunion’, DUV), who were dissatisfied with the politics of an NDP/DUV merger in 2011. On the other hand, it served as a camouflage organisation, in this case for the banned ‘National Resistance Dortmund’ (‘Nationaler Widerstand Dort- mund’, NWDO). The well-known Neo-Nazi and movement entrepreneur Christian Worch became the first chairman and remained in office from 2012 to 2017. The party was divided by a party conference resolution asserting the party’s absolute and unconditional allegiance to the German ethnic community. As a consequence of this showdown, Worch resigned. He was replaced by the former NWDO activist Sascha Krolzig and Sven Skoda, a former high-ranking member of the ‘Action Committee Middle Rhein’ (‘Aktionsbüro Mittelrhein’). Both were (and still are) involved in street fights with perceived political enemies, propagandists, and other crimes (often in the wake of political demonstrations). Their penalties sum up to several years in prison.

To demonstrate a new political orientation towards Anti-Semitism and National Socialism the new chairman nominated the 90-year old notorious Holocaust denier Ursula Haverbeck-Wetzel as their frontrunner for the 2019 European Parliament elections. Despite this, The Right focuses more on street activism and demonstrations than on parliamentary politics.

The Right

**LEADERS**

- Sascha Krolzig
- Sven Skoda

**MEMBERSHIP**

- 600 (2018)

**IDEOLOGY**

- Anti-Semitism

**NARRATIVE EXAMPLES**

- Anti-Semitism: “After 75 years, we still have the same enemy. The enemy isn’t called Müller or Meier — No! — The enemy is called Rothschild and Goldman & Sachs.” [‘Wir haben auch noch heute denselben Feind wie vor 75 Jahren. Der Feind heißt nicht Müller oder Meier — Nein! Er heißt Rothschild und Goldman und Sachs.”]

**The Third Path**

**LEADER**

- Klaus Armstroff

**MEMBERSHIP**

- 530 (2018)

**IDEOLOGY**

- Neo-Nazism
- ‘Revisionism’
- Anti-Globalism

**NARRATIVE EXAMPLES**

- Neo-Nazism: “Creation of German Socialism […] German children for the country.” [Schaf-fung eines deutschen Sozialismus […] Deutsche Kinder braucht das Land.”]

**The Right**

**LEADERS**

- Sascha Krolzig
- Sven Skoda

**MEMBERSHIP**

- 600 (2018)

**IDEOLOGY**

- Anti-Semitism

**NARRATIVE EXAMPLES**

- Anti-Semitism: “After 75 years, we still have the same enemy. The enemy isn’t called Müller or Meier — No! — The enemy is called Rothschild and Goldman & Sachs.” [‘Wir haben auch noch heute denselben Feind wie vor 75 Jahren. Der Feind heißt nicht Müller oder Meier — Nein! Er heißt Rothschild und Goldman und Sachs.”]

**The Third Path**

**LEADER**

- Klaus Armstroff

**MEMBERSHIP**

- 530 (2018)

**IDEOLOGY**

- Neo-Nazism
- ‘Revisionism’
- Anti-Globalism

**NARRATIVE EXAMPLES**

- Neo-Nazism: “Creation of German Socialism […] German children for the country.” [Schaf-fung eines deutschen Sozialismus […] Deutsche Kinder braucht das Land.”]

- ‘Revisionism’:
  - “Germany is larger than the FRG.” [‘Deutschland ist größer als die BRD’]

- Anti-Globalism:
  - “No German Blood for foreign interests.” [‘Kein deutsches Blut für fremde Interessen.”]
Ethno-Nationalism: “70 years FRG are an expression of lacking state sovereignty and anti-popular/anti-people politics: Against the Brussels EU-monster; standing in for a Europe of Fatherlands!” “70 Jahre BRD sind aber nicht nur ein. Ausdruck fehlender staatlicher Souveränität und einer volksfeindlichen Politik […] Gegen das EU-Monster aus Brüssel, für ein Europa der Vaterländer!”

- Call for demonstration of ‘The Right’. 88


- Multiple political demonstrations for the two bohushat deniers and notorious Nazis Ursula Haverbeck-Witzel and Horst Mahler, organised by The Right. 89 Haverbeck-Witzel is a former NSDAP member and campaigned for National Socialism and denied the holocaust her whole life. Horst Mahler is a former lawyer and member of the radical left terrorist organisation Red Army Faction (Rote Armee Fraktion) who turned to the radical right and became a notorious bohushat denier.

‘Revisionism’/Neo-Nazism: “70 years FRG are an expression of lacking state sovereignty and anti-popular/Ethno-Nationalism: [DIE RECHTE]

THE RIGHT

IDEOLOGY

Ethno-Nationalism

‘Revisionism’/Neo-Nazism

NARRATIVE EXAMPLES (cont’d.)

PEGIDA was founded by Lutz Bachmann in October 2014 as a Facebook group, and primarily consisted of “his wife and some of their closest friends.” Most had not been politically active before. Their core motivation was to mobilise street protests against the perceived ‘Islamification’ of Germany or even ‘the West.’ On 20 October 2014, they lead a rally with approximately 350 participants. One year later PEGIDA had mobilised 15,000 to 25,000 people in Dresden. Despite a steep decline in the intervening years, PEGIDA still mobilises between 750 to 1,000 participants each Monday. In celebration of the 20th rally, approximately 4,000 people came to Dresden to listen to the AfD and The Wing politician Bjorn Höcke. By that time, PEGIDA had changed from a broad based street protest of politically (but not economically) marginalised middle-class support with some extremists among them, to a platform for radical right activism. 90

LEADER

Lutz Bachmann

MEMBERSHIP

Unknown (c. 750-1,000 demonstration participants each week in 2015; rising up to 25,000 in 2015.)

IDEOLOGY

Anti-Muslim Populism

Anti-Establishment

Victimhood

NARRATIVE EXAMPLES

PEGIDA and New Right-Wing Populism in Germany


Victimhood: “From stock data storage to abolition of cash money, one can feel that total control of the people is their final goal.” “Von Vorratsdatenspeicherung bis Abschaffung des Bargeldes, es ist immer mehr zu spüren, dass die totale Kontrolle der Menschen das Endziel ist.”

Lutz Bachmann, co-founding member of PEGIDA-L. 97

AMERICANIZATION

AGAINST THE ISLAMIZATION

OF THE OCCIDENT

(PATRIOTISCHE EUROPÄER GEGEN DIE ISLAMISIERUNG DES ABENDLANDES [PEGIDA])

LEADER

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IDEOLOGY

Anti-Muslim Populism

Anti-Establishment

Victimhood

NARRATIVE EXAMPLES
Ultra-Nationalism:
“The love for our fatherland is our incurable ‘disease.’” [“Die Vaterlandsliebe ist unsere unheilbare ‘Krankheit.’”]

- AfD banner at a PEGIDA rally.99

Those who do not love Germany should leave Germany.” [“Wer Deutschland nicht liebt, soll Deutschland verlassen.”]

- PEGIDA slogan at a rally on 16 March 2015.100

The Identitarian Movement Germany first appeared in 2012, initially inspired by the “Generation Identity” in France. The movement has gained some influence within both the French and later the Austrian radical right, partly due to the notoriety of its nominal leader, Martin Sellner who is a travelling activist, often present in France, Germany, and Austria to connect the activists in Europe and even beyond. The IBD remained a predominantly virtual phenomenon with approximately 600 members in 2018. The number of members and political influence has been diminishing since 2018, due to multiple reasons, but especially the lack of success and effect of their political action and campaigns, for example, the depoliticising of mes of their channels proved.101 In fact, even their spiritual rector, Gröz Kubitschek (founder of the Institute for State Policy, see below) declared that the movement has lost its power and function for the radical right in late 2019.102 The ideological core of the IBD is the ‘Volkstext’ (or Great Replacement conspiracy theory), based on the concept of ethnopluralism. Their main forms of action have been inspired by the ‘Sponti Movement/Generation of ‘68’.103 They transferred the techniques to the digital age, for example using apps instead of handbills or producing short videos instead of local concerts. The IBD can be credited with contributing to the transformation of the German radical right by increasing its attractiveness to younger and better educated people.104 This was achieved by replacing ethnocentrism with ethnopluralism, and by veiling blatant racism and Anti-Semitism with the Great Replacement narrative.105

IDENTITARIAN MOVEMENT GERMANY (ALSO KNOWN AS ‘GENERATION IDENTITY’)
(IDENTITÄRE BEWEGUNG DEUTSCHLAND (IBD))

LEADERS
Daniel Füß
Nils Altmieks
Philipp Stein
Philipp Thaler
Alexander Kleine

MEMBERSHIP
600 (2018)106

IDEOLOGY
Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory
Ethno-Nationalism

Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory:
“Stop the Great Replacement!” [“Stoppt den großen Austausch!”]

- Central motto of the Identitarian Movement (Germany).107

Ethno-Nationalism:
“Remigration — Integration failed.” [“Remigration — Die Integration ist gescheitert.”]

- Banner of the IBD at a ‘Kandel is everywhere’ [‘Kandel ist überall’] rally.108

See Bundesministerium des Innern, Für Bau und Heimat (eds.), ‘Verfassungsschutzbericht 2018,’ p. 82.


See Simon Murdoch, ‘Following the Deplatformed: Where are they now?’ Hope Not Hate, 2 January 2019, online at: https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/2019/01/02/following-the-deplatformed/


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One Percent was founded as a campaign project in 2015 — initially advertising itself as “Greenpeace for Germany” — to connect various actors from across the German radical right movement. Among the founding members were politicians of the AfD (such as Hans-Thomas Tillschneider), “Compact” magazine, as well as the Institute for State Policy and the prominent legal scholar, Karl Albrecht Schachtschneider. The group’s core goals are the “representation of German interests” and the “struggle against illegal mass immigration.” In reference to their name, One Percent aims to extend their political reach to just one percent of the German population. They are convinced that it only requires one percent of the population to change the system. The group’s main office is located in Oybin in Eastern Saxony. It serves as an interface between the New Right, the AfD, and radical right intellectuals. Yet One Percent also consorts with activists from the Neo-Nazi scene as well as offering refuge for members of the IBD, since One Percent has not been under state surveillance, unlike parts of the AfD and the IBD.

NARRATIVE EXAMPLES

**Antifa and Media against freedom of speech.** “Antifa und Medien: Vereint gegen Meinungsfreiheit.”

- The headline of a One Percent blog post.

**Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory:** “Storm of asylum seekers, mass immigration, birth rate deficit, senescence, that’s what we all know, it happens with the active support of the ruling class and the devoted media.” “Asylansturm, Massenzuwanderung, Geburtendefizit, Vergreisung — all das kennen wir, all das läuft ab unter aktiver Teilnahme durch die herrschende Klasse und die ihr treu ergebene Medienwelt.”

- Philipp Stein, in the IfS journal ‘Sezession.’

**Ultra-Nationalism:** “Platform of resistance for German interests.” “Widerstandsplattform für deutsche Interessen.”

- Self-description of One Percent.

**Victimhood:** “Antifa and Medien: Vereint gegen Meinungsfreiheit.” “Antifa und Medien: Vereint gegen Meinungsfreiheit.”

- The headline of a One Percent blog post.

IDEOLOGY (cont’d.)

- Anti-Globalism
- Identitarianism

IDENTITARIAN MOVEMENT GERMANY (ALSO KNOWN AS ‘GENERATION IDENTITY’) (IDENTITÄRE BEWEISUNGER DEUTSCHLAND (IBD))

- Membership: Unknown
- Ideology: Victimhood

One Percent is one of the main goals of the Identitarian Movement (Germany).
The Institute for State Policy was launched by Götz Kubitschek, Karl-Heinz Weißmann, Stefan Hanz, and another four German New Right activists in 2000. From the beginning until 2014 the IfS had close links to the national-conservative/radical right newspaper Junge Freiheit, one of the leading and longest-running radical right newspapers in Germany. The IfS’s main goal is the dissemination of extreme radical right ideology through publications and educational events — most prominently summer camps and winter academies — where radical right intellectuals, politicians, and activists gather to discuss strategies to obtain cultural and social hegemony. Although in the early days it was an elitist club since the early 2010s more allegedly moderate and more prominent speakers have been recruited to the IfS to address various audiences. Another pillar in the group’s strategy is the affiliated publishing company (Anataios Verlag) and its main publication, the journal Sezession: Printed Journal and Blog.

NARRATIVE EXAMPLES

Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory:
“Our generation faces the historical challenge to stop the Great Replacement.”
[“Den Großen Austausch zu stoppen ist die historische Herausforderung, vor die unsere Generation gestellt ist.”]
- Benedikt Kaiser, in the IfS journal ‘Sezession.’

Ultra-Nationalism:
“He has to fight, what destroys the state and castrates the nation. He has to save the state.”
[“Er muß bekämpfen, was den Staat zerstört und die Nation kastriert. Er muß den Staat retten.”]
-Götz Kubitschek in ‘Junge Freiheit,’ a New Right newspaper.
The AfD was founded in February 2013, originally as an ‘Anti-Euro’ party. The membership was composed of predominantly well-educated and well-situated older men with economically liberal and politically conservative political stances, including many CDU/CSU and FDP defectors. The first chairman was Bernd Lucke, an economics professor from Hamburg, who officiated from 2013 until 2017. Frauke Petry, an entrepreneur from Saxony, was the second leader who took over after the first split between the liberal-economic faction and national conservatives. The latter was led by the co-chairman, Jörg Meuthen, who is still in office. More than 2,000 members of the liberal-economic faction left the party as a direct consequence. This split caused a deep trench between those who are considered more moderate (Alternative Center (Alternative Mitte)) and those belonging to the more extreme, völkisch faction, (The Wing (Das Flügel)). The latter is led by Björn Höcke and Andreas Kalbitz, respectively the state chairmen in Thuringia and Brandenburg. These divides ultimately led to the resignation of Petry as party chair a day after the German Federal elections in 2017. Petry was followed by Alexander Gauland, the co-parliamentary party leader, alongside Alice Weidel. In 2019 Gauland became the first honorary chairman of the AfD. His successor was the Saxon MP Tino Chrupalla. Since the end of 2017, The Wing has been the dominant faction within the AfD, meaning that all high-ranking officials only require the consent of this faction for their election. Politically and ideologically, therefore, the party has evolved from an anti-Euro to a populist radical right party into a much more extreme party, with undeniable affiliations to organised Neo-Nazism. Andreas Kalbitz’ links to ‘Heimattreue Deutsche Jugend’ (‘German Youth Faithful to the Homeland’)

"Burkas, Kopftuchmänner und sonstige Taugenichts werden unserem Wohl - our wealth, nor our economic growth, nor our welfare state." ["Burkas, Kopftuchmänner und sonstige Taugenichts werden unserem Wohl -"

Anti-Muslim Populism:
"Burkas, headscarf girls, payed knifemen and other scapers will neither guarantee our wealth, nor our economic growth, nor our Welfare state."]

Anti-Muslim Populism:
Burkas, headscarf girls, payed knifemen and other scapers will neither guarantee our wealth, nor our economic growth, nor our Welfare state.

Anti-Establishment Sentiment:
"Political correctness belongs to the ash heap of history." ["Die politische Korrektheit gehört auf den Müllhaufen der Geschichte."]

Anti-Establishment Sentiment:
Political correctness belongs to the ash heap of history.

Victimhood:
"Formerly ideology — dictatorship of opinion today." ["Früher Gesinnungsdiktatur — Heute Meinungsdiktatur."]

Victimhood:
Formerly ideology — dictatorship of opinion today.

Ethno-Nationalism:
"Besides the protection of our national and European borders, a large-scale remigration project will be necessary." ["Neben dem Schutz unserer nationalen und europäischen Außenzonen, wird ein großangelegtes Remigrationsprojekt notwendig sein."]

Ethno-Nationalism:
Besides the protection of our national and European borders, a large-scale remigration project will be necessary.

- Alice Weidel, Parliamentary party co-leader of the AfD
- Björn Höcke, leader of The Wing, an (official) faction of the AfD and Thuringian party chairman.
The above overview reveals that most radical right groups identified here follow certain ideological patterns, with core features emerging in their overlapping narratives, while they adapted to current challenges (the ‘refugee crisis,’ digitalization, climate change) which are not part of their core agenda. This adaptability suggests that a particular ideological shift has occurred within the radical right in Germany. Like in other countries, it is marked by a shift from biological racism, with a more explicitly fascist expression, to a more modern approach that features much greater compatibility with the mainstream right, building on broader Anti-Muslim Populism and Anti-Immigration Sentiments. According to this general development particular movements and parties adopting a more moderate tone, even if this is often far from their unceaseful ideological views. In contrast to this development, however, it is obvious that fascist ideological roots (above all Nazism), despite officially pursuing a form of “Us versus Them” populism, are still notable at the fringes, especially amongst vigilante groups and terrorist cells.

Summing up, these narratives can be simplified respectively to the following broadened positions:

1. Anti-Muslim Populist Narrative: Social, cultural, and religious identities are under threat due to the presence of Muslims; elites are complicit and/or are engineering this development, leading to an inevitable “clash of civilizations: ‘The West’ versus Islam.”

2. Ethno-Nationalist Narrative: Ethnic and national identities are under threat by multiculturalism; elites are complicit and/or are engineering this development, including through a ‘Volkstod’ or Great Replacement of the white population.

3. Neo-Nazist and Nazi ‘Revisionist’ Narrative: Advocating extreme right ideological stances rooted in fascism and National Socialism, while simultaneously defending or minimizing the crimes of historical National Socialism, above all the Holocaust.

4. Anti-Globalist Narrative: Multilateral organisations, multinational companies, and a corresponding global(sed) group of elites enforce their plans directly against the needs and the will of the ‘the people.’

5. Victimhood Narrative: Elites make politics for minorities rather than for the (ethnically, culturally or nationally defined) majority. Adverse opinions are silenced or suppressed at the expense of freedom of speech and the (perceived) suspension of basic rights.

SUMMARY
Counter-narratives are developed to delegitimize, disrupt, and appeal to the radical right. Therefore, it is useful to identify the ‘entry points’ for radical right narratives to undermine their power and their threats to community cohesion. Drawing upon the examples provided in the above summary, core narratives can be divided into their orientation (i.e. who, what, where, how, and when), action (i.e. evaluation of orientation), and resolution (i.e. prescribed course of action).\(^{132}\) Whilst it might be unprofitable to contest the factual veracity of an orientation statement,\(^{133}\) both the action and resolution sections of the narrative have been more profitably contested. Accordingly, the five core counter-narratives proposed to be deployed against radical right narratives are as follows:\(^{134}\)

1. Anti-Muslim Populist Counter-Narrative: Acknowledge experiences that may have led to prejudices as starting points before highlighting the validity and value of German Basic Law. Stress the individual freedom and enshrined rights for all law-abiding citizens, regardless of their religion, and stress the positive contributions, both individual and collective, that Muslims have made to German society. Take a clear stance against extremism, in keeping with the principles of militant democracy in Germany.

2. Ethno-Nationalist Counter-Narrative: Acknowledge fears and grievances (taking the Realistic Group Conflict Theory/Ethnic Competition Theory perspective\(^{135}\)). Deconstruct this perceptive frame by stressing a realistic perspective of a zero-sum game or even net gain for citizens. Culturally separate the individual from the perceived collective stereotype, draw upon successful experiences of the country’s past, such as Polish and Italian immigration or Russian-German late repatriates amid other positive examples in German immigration history.

3. Neo-Nazi/’Revisionist’ Counter-Narrative: Refer to the successful re-education and accounting for the

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\(^{132}\) This is a simplified version of a similar schema, laid out in William Labov & Joshua Waletzky, ‘Narrative analysis: Oral versions of personal experiences,’ Journal of Narrative & Life History, 7(1-4), 1997, p. 3-38, online at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/jnlh.7.02nar.

\(^{133}\) That means: If someone says something that is factually more or less correct, but then decontextualizes, reframes and possibly instrumentalises these facts, it will be much more profitable to deconstruct the framing, uncover the instrumental character by revealing the political goals of the actor and the give the correct context to the audience so that they can form an own opinion.

\(^{134}\) In the German context the refugee crisis is a good example. The total numbers of refugees who came to Germany were quite high and the radical right saw framing this process as an invasion. But in comparison to countries like Turkey or Jordan the numbers per capita were much lower. Also, due to the dispensation mechanism in Germany, the workload and financial efforts were well-distributed between the regions. Meaning it was a challenge for the country, but it was not the crisis that the radical right tried to invoke for their palingenesis/rise to power to restore ‘law and order.’

\(^{135}\) In short, the RGCT/ECT describes a situation of competition between different (ethnic) groups to obtain limited goods for one’s own or the group, such as affordable housing, blue-collar jobs and social benefits. The detailed reaction schemes in different situations are best described by Leach et al. (2002). See Colin W. Leach, Nastia Snider, Avarti Iyer, ‘Poisoning the Conscience of the Fortunate: The Experience of Relative Advantage and Support for Social Equality.’ In Iain Walker & Heather J Smith (eds): Relative Deprivation: Specification, Development and Integration, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 136-164.
past ("Vergangenheitsbewältigung") in postwar Germany by connecting (relative) economic success and the establishment of a resilient democracy that offers more chances than any authoritarian form of ideocracy with different degrees of delimitation of freedom, i.e. "through governing," or "Durchgehen." Stress the illegitimacy of a prerogative state in contrast to a normative state and the rule of law in a liberal democracy. Illustrate the cultural dullness and the unsuccessful oligarchic structure of National Socialism. Emphasise that Neo-Nazism represents a selective nostalgia about historical fascism and the Third Reich, whereby single issues might not have been awful, though the overall picture makes clear that democracy offers more net gains for people legally, culturally, and economically.

4. Anti-Globalist Counter-Narrative: Stress the strength offered by multilateralism (such as NATO or the EU), as no one country is strong enough to openly compete with all others. Emphasise the limited but established democratic legitimacy of international organisations. Outline the economic, legal, and political benefits of cooperation, resulting, for example, from the impact of the Schengen Agreement.

5. Victimhood Counter-Narrative: Stress the advantages of checks and balances and democratic transparency in contrast to the tyranny of the majority. In Germany, it is still very important to discuss the role of accounting for the past ("Vergangenheitsbewältigung") to stress the value of democracy as such, but also Germany’s role today, i.e. a leading political and economic role that should not turn into domination. So, it is important to break the narrative of the radical right that Germany is still not a fully sovereign state that is suppressed by the former Allied Forces. This can be achieved by simultaneously discussing and stressing cases that is suppressed by the former Allied Forces. This can be achieved by simultaneously discussing and stressing cases that are important for the protection of (the protection of) minority rights and the rule of law.

The following selection of counter-narratives outlines the how the attempts to foster best practice came to fruition when challenging radical right narratives by presenting counter-narrative campaigns that: 1) disrupt radical right ideology; 2) undermine the credibility of the narrative (and the radical right ideology) with humor; 3) promote positive alternative to the narratives and the radical right ideology.141 This does not mean that intelligence services and police are not involved, but rather that they are two among the many players involved. Summing up, Germany has a national strategy called "Strategie der Bundesregierung zur Extremsprävention und Demokratieförderung."142 Due to the federal structure of the country with 16 states (Länder), the P/C VE landscape is highly fragmented but also offers a wide range of 1,642 different campaigns/programmes (1.051 i.e. 64% preventing/countering radical right extremism). The share of federal programmes amounts to 20%, whereas regional (state) and local programmes constitute 80% of the total number of campaigns/programmes. Evaluation of what works and what does not work is one of the most pressing issues in such a diverse, extensive, and competitive sphere.
FIGURE 3 Rudolf-Hess-Memorial March and EXIT-Germany campaign (The campaign banner with the slogan “If the Führer would know” (“Wenn das der Führer wüsste”))

cates as an organization and rarely as individuals (excepting one of the founders, Bernd Wagner), so that criticism and threats are addressed to the organization while for potential dropouts personal mentors are available, i.e. they use the advantage of asymmetric communication.141

A second innovative example is the “Right Against Right” (Rechts gegen Rechts) campaign by EXIT-Germany. Since 2001, the commemorative march for Hitler’s deputy, Rudolf Heß, has taken place in the Upper Franconian city of Wunsiedel where he was buried.142 The city of Wunsiedel has thus become a site of pilgrimage for neo-Nazis, even though they often face massive counter-demonstrations. EXIT-Germany designed a campaign against these marches with the idea of adapting the ‘charity run’ model. With every step made by the radical right participants of this commemorative march, they raised funds for the benefit of anti-fascist organisations and their activities. Radical right extremists attending the march were faced with the dilemma of marching and raising money against their cause, or not demonstrating to avoid the donations. The campaign started on 15 November 2014, and every meter raised raised 10 Euros summing up to 10,000 Euros for EXIT’s deradicalisation programme.143

Counter-march protesters updated marchers of how much they had raised throughout the march, posted ‘motivational’ banners such as “Final Spurt instead of Final Victory” [Endspurt statt Endspiel] or “March and donate” [Marschieren und spendieren]. The participants of this commemorative march remained calm and conducted their march.144 The campaign was designed to disrupt the Neo-Nazism/Revisionism/narrative by giving propaganda a price and mocking the participants of the march. This approach is partly controversial as it might foster radicalisation or at least stabilise political and social in-group bonds. The limitations of this approach have been outlined by Martin Becker, director of the “Bavarian Alliance for Tolerance” (“Bayrisches Bündnis für Toleranz”), who shows that this concept is hardly upscaleable to rallies such as PEGIDA.145 In sum, it is an effective method to raise awareness for the problem of this radical right march, but also more broadly for EXIT-Germany and their deradicalisation programme (which has been positively evaluated several times, for example under the supervision of the “Living Democracy” programme or the Freudenberg foundation).146

A final example from EXIT Germany follows the same pattern as the “Right against Right” campaign while transferring the charity run model online to counter hate speech.147 For this campaign, titled “Donate the Hate” (“Hass hilft”), EXIT Germany designed an app connected to various social media sites dealing with the topic of migrants and refugees in Germany. Every hate speech comment detected resulted in a personal “Thank you for your donation” comment, and one Euro raised for charities. These donations were earmarked beforehand by media companies, a football club (second division), and many individual donors. Once again, the target group — in this case hate-speech purveyors — became trapped in a paradox: either cease engaging in hate speech or raise one Euro for each new comment. Additionally, the campaign site lists the top 10 donor purveyors, using the data generated by hate speech comments.148 Criticism from scene and movement was very limited due to the mechanism of the campaign, other than the “Right against Right” campaign (see above). Even though it follows the same pattern, it is different in style and effect. Due to the broader approach of aiming at comments, it is designed to counter a variety of radical right narratives, not only the ones of a specific target group. Aside from that, it disrupts the radical right ideology but instead of mainly mocking the target group it primarily promotes positive alternatives by turning every hate speech comment into a donation to a refugee aid integration project as well as to its own deradicalisation programme.

The second organization is the Violence Prevention Network (VPN), founded in 2004.149 The charity predominantly addresses radical right and Islamist extremism in their projects and campaigns. One campaign conducted by the VPN is the “Online and Offline Deradicalisation Interventions through Social Media” (On/Off Derad), which addressed the two target groups (radical right and Islamist extremists mentioned above between 2016 and 2018. This project’s (“Youths’ Asks” “[Jugend fragt]”) target group were (not yet deeply engaged) radical right sympathising youngsters, as well as teenagers and those younger. “Youths’ Asks” “[Jugend fragt]” consisted of a three pillar strategy: 1) identify vulnerable groups and individuals; 2) correspond with them online and promote critical debate about their ideology, and 3) encourage a distancing process by working with the individuals and, later, offering them offline support to keep the distance from these groups. In short, the aim is to disrupt radical right ideology and offer alternative narratives. The concept was based on the AKT-programme designed for Facebook, helping to identify the appropriate target group, which means entering their on- and offline social environment instead of using/creating neutral spaces. VPN favoured an active rather than a passive approach. Given the rapidly changing communication patterns of online users, the project was decommissioned in early 2017 as it was no longer possible to pursue the charity’s goals without further fuelling the hate. The main reason was that the algorithms of Facebook trigger and push controversial content, detached from social responsibility, clashing with the main goals of a CVE organization and programme.150

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142 The campaign was successfully transferred to other cities with the same problem of continuous Neo-Nazi demonstration or commemorative events, as for example the city of Bad Neustadt in Lower Saxony where a commemorative march – announced annually until 2010 for the “Victims of the Allied torture camp Wincklerbad” [Opfer des alliierten Folterlagers im Wincklerbad] – took place. See Angela Henkel; Stefan Schönhammer; Bad Neustadt schwebt viele gegen rechts; Neusdonizier Blattbrief; 22. Juni 2012, online at: https://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2012-06/bad-neustadt-schwebt-viele-gegen-rechts?print=1.

143 In sum, it is an effective method to raise awareness for the problem of this radical right march, but also more broadly for EXIT-Germany and their deradicalisation programme (which has been positively evaluated several times, for example under the supervision of the “Living Democracy” programme or the Freudenberg foundation).

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146 Among those described here, other campaigns of EXIT-Germany can be found here: https://www.exit-deutschland.de/projekte/.

147 The campaign and has mainly funded via European Union support, private donors as well as through running programmes by German federal and state governments. VPN is a founding member of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) and co-chair of the Exit-Netz Working Group.


149 The detailed mechanisms are explained here: Malik Felle, Roger Stürmli, Digital Extension Challenges for the Open Society in Times of Social Media online at: https://m.fille.org/2015-10/27/digital-extension-challenges-

programme operators were trapped: it was not possible to post sufficiently controversial statements reaching out to the target group without fueling hate; and posting less controversial statements to avoid the fueling hate would have meant losing a considerable share of range. Another example concerns the role of former countering violent radical right extremism. The former Neo-Nazi and high-ranking member of the motorcycle gang ‘Schwarze Schwur MC’, Philip Schlaffer, disengaged from the scene. After his deradicalisation he received training and support (a one-year anti-violence and competency training carried out by VPN), before ultimately gaining qualifications as an anti-violence and deradicalisation coach. Today he works freelance with potential target groups in schools and clubs, where he continues to be accompanied by journalists and researchers who evaluate his activities. Just as importantly, he launched a YouTube channel ‘EX - Rechte Rotlicht Rocker - Philip Schlaffer’ where he discusses his former life (on his own or with guests, who are also usually former). This is usually accompanied by an open live chat. Schlaffer deconstructs myths about the alleged glory of such a life and openly talks about how attractive this life of life, even though it is not a counter-narrative campaign as such, but might serve as an entry point to disengagement. To state it clearly, projects like this will only have short-term effects in countering radical right extremism. Without subsequent caretaking the effect will most likely fall flat.

Another two campaigns are concerned with satire while addressing the radical right extremism from a practical point of view: The first is concerned with the NPD and radical right extremism in its entirety, especially that which links to free contradictions and the AfD, and the rising influence of the radical right in parliament, streets, policies, and local societies. The weekly satirical magazine ‘extra3’, produced by the public service broadcaster ‘Norddeutscher Rundfunk’ (NDR), addressed the NPD’s changing role after the party entered the state parliaments of Saxony and the Mecklenburg-Hither Pomerania. The ‘extra3’ production team established the publication ‘Latest National News’ ([Neue Nationale Nachrichten, or NNN], where activities — especially radical right interviews, pre-election parties, and contributions in parliamentary debates — were satirically reconceptualized. The feature starts with alternatively dubbied footage of a Hitler speech, taken from Leni Riefenstahl’s infamous propaganda film ‘Triumph of the Will’. An alternative dubbing first praises attempts by the various politicians to bring radical right extremism back to power, but then quickly turns upon documenting the ludicrousness of these attempts. The edited video shows how these attempts are doomed to fail due to inherent ideological contradictions or blatant incompetence by radical right activists. The single, short episodes always end with the same footage of Hitler, now blaming the current radical right actors for the aforementioned contradictions, resulting in a despondent realisation that the radical right movement will never return to power, punctuated with ridicule.

To take one example: One of the key election campaign topics for the NPD in state and federal elections has been ‘criminal foreigners’. This issue has remained at the top of the political agenda for the party and its voters. The production team of ‘extra3’ found Saier Babic among the ranks of the NPD, an ethnic Bosnian holding German citizenship and a considerable criminal record, while at the same time he held the role of deputy party chairman for Rhineland-Palatine. Similarly, and with a sardonic undertone, ‘extra3’ added that MP Bürger Läßon, transport expert of the NPD in Mecklenburg-Hither Pomerania, had recently been caught drunk in charge of a vehicle. Satirical clips by NNN like these then form part of a toolbox for teachers calling ‘With satire against right-wing extremism’ ([Mit Satire gegen Rechtsextremismus], which is supported by the German Federal Ministry of Civic Education (Bundesministerium für politische Bildung, BPP). The toolbox and the campaign as such are designed to primarily counter the Neo-Nazism/Nazi Revisionism, Ethno-Nationalism, and the Victimhood narratives which the NPD tried to establish during their time in the state parliaments in Saxony and Mecklenburg-Hither Pomerania. These counter-narratives mainly disrupt radical right ideology by mocking the party representatives and other actors in the clips, but always in order to encourage critical engagement with these politics, within the framework of the toolbox. Both the editors of the toolbox (German Federal Agency for Civic Education) and the filmmakers (public service broadcaster NDR) have a similar statutory mandate. It is their assignment “to contribute to the formation of individual and public opinion and thus contribute to a functioning democratic community” (NDR) and “to promote understanding of political facts to consolidate democratic awareness and to strengthen the readiness for political cooperation” (BPP). The last campaign ‘Hooligans against syntax’ [Hooligans gegen Satzbaus, #HoGeSatzba], was founded in October 2014 as a direct reaction to the ‘Hooligans Against Salafists’ [Hooligans gegen Salafisten, #HoGeSala] movement, directly referring to both the ideological core as well as to the acronym. In the words of the steering committee, they represent “the final solution to the Duden [German dictionary] question” ([Ende Lösung der Dudenfrage, a wordplay on the Nazi’s ‘final solution to the Jewish Question’]. This means that members of #HoGeSatzbau pick up misanthropic (predominantly racist and national) slogans, posted on various social media channels belonging to the AfD, PEGIDA, and other actors mentioned above, but invert the meaning of the message.


160 This took part in a one-year anti-violence and competency training carried out by VPN, but acts entirely independent and neither he nor his work/campaign has been endorsed by the organisation or its way.


162 See Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (ed.), ‘Was ist unser Auftrag?’, online at: https://www.bpb.de/die-bpb/52218/was-ist-unser-auftrag.

163 Regarding the risks of former: “The role of formers is often highlighted in terms of how their experiences give them credibility when speaking out against violence or extremism, which may mitigate the effects of their actions. This is often used as a way to ‘rehabilitate’ former members of extremist groups. However, it is important to be aware of the potential risks involved with former members.” (Christina May, ‘The Role of Formers in Countering Violent Extremism,’ ICT/Policy Brief 2014). 1-3, p. 1, online at: https://www.bpb.de/fileadmin/bpb/de/veranstaltungen/bildungs-und-kooperation/themenomar/veranstaltungen/themen/die-bpb/2014/07/016623/0012480.pdf.

164 See Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, ‘Mit Satzbaus gegen Rechtsextremismus’, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 5 April 2016, online at: https://www.bpb.de/fernsehen/sendungen/extra_3/rueckschau/NNN-Neueste-NationaleNachrichten,nnn134.html. The assignment and tasks of the public service broadcasters are outlined in the Internationale Broadcasting Agreement, an agreement between the 16 states to organise public service broadcasting.

165 See Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, ‘Was ist unsere Aufgabe?’, on the website of the German Research Association for Political Science (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2015). Some of the clips are also available here: https://www.bpb.de/mediendaten/xml consc/xml/11/130/180/11180/11180.xml. The assignments and tasks of the public service broadcaster are outlined in the Internationale Broadcasting Agreement, an agreement between the 16 states to organise public service broadcasting.

166 See Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, ‘Die kritische Auseinandersetzung’, online at: https://www.bpb.de/kritische-auseinandersetzung/2015-04-22/32295-saal Sốenberger, which offers the German Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community.


168 See Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, ‘Gegen die Rechtsextremisten’, online at: https://www.bpb.de/kritische-auseinandersetzung/2015-04-22/32295-saal


170 See BfV, ‘TTT – Führungskräfte gegen Rechtsextremismus’, Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, online at: https://www.bfvl.de/523044/TTT-der-BfV.php.

171 See Bundesführung für politische Bildung, ‘Was ist unsere Aufgabe?’, online at: https://www.bpb.de/kritische-auseinandersetzung/2015-04-22/32295-saal.
For example: 1. "Only because I'm a Nazi, I'm far from a patriot" (Nur weil ich Nazi bin, bin ich noch lange kein Patriot). "In your face — against violence" 2. (Auf die Fresse — gegen Gewalt). 173 174 175 Nowadays they partially extended their focus to other narratives but they keep the focus on the above mentioned ones. For example: 1. "Only because I'm a Nazi, I'm far from a patriot" (Nur weil ich Nazi bin, bin ich noch lange kein Patriot). "In your face — against violence" 2. (Auf die Fresse — gegen Gewalt). The answer is 42° (AfD: 'Welches Geschlecht tragen Sie heute?' Striegel (Green): 'The answer is 42°' (AfD: 'Welches Geschlecht tragen Sie heute?' Striegel (Grüne): 'Ich möchte Ihnen sagen, dass die Antwort auf all Ihre Fragen 42 ist'). In contrast to other organisations fighting against hate speech, #HoGeSatzbau is not funded by any governmental or close-to-the-state body, as the founders believe this would endanger their independence. As a consequence #HoGeSatzbau even terminated fruitful cooperation with the Amadeu Antonio Foundation. Now funded by merchandise sales and crowdfunding campaigns, #HoGeSatzbau's activities include poster guerrilla actions with slogans like 'All Saxons are racists… wenn man sich die Welt einfach macht.' The campaigns of #HoGeSatzbau are primarily designed to counter the Anti-Muslim Populism, Ethno-Nationalism, and Victimhood narratives, as these are the narratives that the HoGeSa movement tries to promote.173 The counter-narratives try to undermine the credibility of the radical right narratives with humor in order to promote positive alternatives and food for thought about how to overcome thinking in stereotypes (see Saxon example) or group-focused enmity.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report provides a brief overview of radical right extremist groups, narratives, counter-narratives, and the corresponding counter-narrative campaigns. The radical right in Germany has undergone multiple transformations since German Reunification but especially during the last 10 years. Moving from party politics and street-based activism to electoralism and vigilantism, it becomes clear that the radical right movement is much more united in its very diversity than in the past because the various groupings gather behind a common set of main narratives (see above). These are compatible with actors in the movement ranging from the AfD to PEGIDA and the IBD to C18. Even though these groups are not necessarily comparable regarding their approach, degree of violence, and mainstreamness, they can agree on the minimum common denominator. For example, the supporters of PEGIDA and the AfD in the wake of the 'refugee crisis' have used some of these narratives. In particular, the Anti-Muslim Populism and Victimhood narratives are accepted and partly adopted by wider parts of the population, evincing their support for the narrative and the groups/parties online and offline. In response to such polarized societal situations and challenging circumstances, practitioners were advised to develop creative and innovative methods, i.e. counter-narratives which serve the direct purpose of de-escalation by targeting the ideological specificities of single groups but that also unfold their effect in and to a wider public, online and offline. Counter-narratives work best when they disrupt and delegitimize the simplified views on which the radical right extremist narratives are often based upon. Regarding the choice of the type of counter-narrative, practitioners should make a careful choice regarding the counter-narrative itself and even especially consider the kind of counter-narrative. A recent study of the Federal Criminal Police Office has shown that approaches and campaigns that are personalized and are precisely tailored to the target groups’ habits and offer alternative narratives to various grievances work best. But it is also important to use counternarratives that address a broader public and raise attention and awareness in the public that certain narratives are opposed to the constitutionally and electorially confirmed democratic consensus, i.e. to show alternatives as well as ways out. This report finds that informal campaigns using a mixture of humor, disruption of radical right ideology, and alternative narratives that focus online and offline equally but are also situation-dependent are the best ways to prevent and counter violent extremism on an argumentative basis. Moreover, it is desirable, if not an absolute necessity, to enable researchers to evaluate programmes on the basis of qualitative and quantitative data that have to be provided by the project coordinator/campaign managers. Another important point that should be considered for future projects is that programmes should not exclusively and separately target the radical right but might focus upon a wider public. For example, groups that offer and/or share platforms with the radical right. Proactive approaches in education targeting the mainstream and not only at-risk groups (ranging from primary to tertiary prevention), which is currently the case in the tripartite German Federal programme "L"
ing Democracy!” Demokratie leben, with the pillars “Support Democracy” Demokratie fördern, “Shape Diversity” Vielfalt gestalten, and “Prevent Extremism” Extremismusprävention. It would be desirable to foster campaigns targeting the mainstream population so that narratives like Anti-Muslim Populism, Ethno-Nationalism, Anti-Globalism, and Victimhood are prevented from gaining traction in society. In order to counter the radical right extremist narratives on a broader basis and to reach a larger target audience, the following points should be considered:

1. Expand and sustain long-term work in challenging non-constitutional and rigid conceptions of Islam; support liberal, secular communities; highlight positive contributions to society.

2. Strong emphasis upon the German Basic Law that stresses the universality of human rights in sharp contrast to particularistic citizenship based on ethnic-national criteria. Pointing at the German history of migration, especially after WWII, and how the refugees from Eastern Prussia became fellow citizens.

3. Stress the political and economic advantages of globalization; do no skip the disadvantages but address them in open dialogue.

4. Foster honest dialogue on grievances that are not given enough attention, but are of central importance to particular groups from the local to the federal level; draw red lines where democratic discourse and unjustified self-victimization grow out of proportion.

By expanding and sustaining radical right extremist counter-narratives — using best practice based on multiple forms of evaluation — Germany will be able to further sensitize its citizens (without overcharging them) and push back radical right ideology into the cordon sanitaire and contain not only radical right violent extremism, but hopefully other forms as well.

177 The “Neo-Nazism respectively Nazi Revisionism” narrative is almost exclusively limited to the radical right and not very likely to become popular in the mainstream, even though exceptions confirm the rule.