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# PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN GERMANY: COHERENCE AND COOPERATION IN A DECENTRALIZED SYSTEM

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# Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| AFD | Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany) |
| BAG RELEX | Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft religiös begründeter Extremismus (Islamist deradicalisation) |
| BAMF | Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) |
| BFTD | Bündnis für Demokratie und Toleranz (Alliance for Democracy and Tolerance) |
| BFV | Bundesamtes für Verfassungsschutz (Federal Domestic Intelligence Service) |
| BMFSFJ | Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth) |
| BMI | Bundesministerium des Innern für Bau und Heimat (Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Community) |
| BPJM | Bundesprüfstelle für jugendgefährdende Medien (Federal Review Board for Media Harmful to Minors) |
| BPB | Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (The Federal Agency for Civic Education) |
| CDU | Christlich Demokratische Union (Christian Democratic Union) |
| DBH | Fachverband für Soziale Arbeit, Strafrecht und Kriminalpolitik (Expat association for Social Work, Criminal Law and Criminal Policy) |
| DFK | Deutsches Forum für Kriminalprävention (German Forum for Crime Prevention) |
| GASIM | Gemeinsames Analyse- und Strategiezentrum illegale (Migration Joint Analysis and Strategy Centre Illegal Migration) |
| GDR | German Democratic Republic |
| GETZ | Gemeinsame Extremismus- und Terrorismusabwehrzentrum (Joint Extremism and Terrorism Prevention Centre) |
| GIZ | Gemeinsames Internetzentrum (Joint Internet Centre) |
| GTAZ | Gemeinsamen Terrorismusabwehrzentrums (Joint Counter-Terrorism Centre) |
| IEP | Institute for Economics and Peace |
| IMA | Interministerielle Arbeitsgruppe zur Demokratieförderung und Extremismusprävention (Interministerial work groups for promoting democracy and preventing extremism) |
| IMK | Innenminister und -senatoren Konferenz (Conference of Ministers and Senators of the Interior) |
| KIA | Koordinierte Internetauswertung (Coordinated Internet Analysis) |
| KRIMZ | Kriminologische Zentralstelle (Centre for Criminology) |
| NPD | Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (National Democratic Party of Germany) |
| NPP | Nationales Präventionsprogramm gegen islamistischen Extremismus (National Prevention Programme against Islamist Extremism) |
| NZK | Nationales Zentrum für Kriminalprävention (National Centre for Crime Prevention) |
| PROPK | Polizeiliche Kriminalprävention im Bundeskriminalamt (Programme for Police Crime Prevention) |
| PVE | Preventing Violent Extremism |

# 1. Introduction

The revival of extremism and violent extremism in the developed world requires a re-examination of the safeguards intended to guarantee peace through democratic law and order. While social and political changes in Germany might increase the likelihood of violent extremism, to what extent have preventive strategies been developed and put in place to reduce risk?

The SIPRI Insight on Peace and Security, 'Preventing violent extremism and crime in the Nordic countries: Similarities, synergies and ambiguities' highlighted the lack of consensus in Nordic countries over how to define and understand extremist crimes, including hate crime, as the boundaries between different categories are becoming blurred.[1] This paper examines how the German government addresses crimes motivated by violent extremism.

Violent extremism has been criminalized in international, supranational, national and state laws, but overlapping forms of crime were revealed by the mass impact of terrorist attacks in the United States in September 2001. Violent religious extremism has increased sharply in Europe, and cultural factors that mobilize people to violence have increasingly come into focus.[2] There is a risk of a complex action–reaction cycle that also draws in secular political extremes. There is also a perception that some crimes previously considered extremist have become 'normalized' through their treatment in the media.

After briefly introducing violent extremism, crime and their relationship, the focus of this paper will be on actions taken in Germany to prevent violent extremist crimes, rather than responses. The domestic political and legal context and how it is changing is briefly introduced, and official data on crime is presented to indicate the scale and trends of violent extremism. The competent institutions with an appropriate mandate are described, including the Federal Government of Germany and its state governments. A subsequent section analyses the documents that establish strategies for Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) to identify common elements, synergies and ambiguities. The programmes and projects carried out at federal and state levels are discussed, but it is not possible to look at programmes developed and implemented by cities and municipalities. The number of such programmes is too great. Some conclusions, possible recommendations and food for thought are presented.

Academic assessments tend to value specific and detailed classifications, and criminal law requires precise language describing offences. However, policy documents may be written without full information about a potential danger and responses have to be flexible. Officials must aim to be specific and detailed enough to clarify when legal, intelligence and law enforcement branches need to act against whom in what situations but a degree of ambiguity may be inevitable, and even deliberate. It is not the authors' aim to criticize such ambiguities, but to highlight them and their use.

## Definitions and their utility

The definition of extremism, the point at which it becomes violent and the point at which it becomes criminal are not fully agreed and have changed over time.[3] Crimes

[1] Kotajoki, J., *Preventing Violent Extremism and Crime in the Nordic Countries: Similarities, Synergies and Ambiguities*, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute: Stockholm, SIPRI Insights on Peace and Security, no. 3 (2018), pp. 3–6.

[2] Meleagrou-Hitchens, A. and Brun, H., *A Neo-Nationalist Network: The English Defence League and Europe's Counter-Jihad Movement*, The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence, 2013.

[3] Howlett, M., Ramesh, M., Pearl, A., *Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems* (Oxford University Press: Canada, 2009).

also come in a variety of different types and levels of severity and therefore prevention strategies are also likely to include diverse methods.

Extremism means thinking and behaving outside the norm accepted by society, and at times in the past the dominant paradigm of society was itself extreme. If a set of views becomes accepted by the population or policymakers over an extended period, countermeasures will not be part of the policy agenda or will not pass into the policy cycle.

Differentiating extremism in terms of violence depends on how violence is defined. If violence is defined as causing harm then a speech act can be violent, while if it is defined in relation to injury or destruction then it is limited to physical acts. The banalization of certain forms of violence may lead to their decriminalization or a lack of enforcement. Physical violence is criminalized everywhere in Europe, but hate speech introduces a certain ambiguity into defining violent extremism.

Extremist violence is often explained in relation to the motivations of the perpetrator who is acting 'in the name of', 'for the cultivation and expansion of' or 'in defence of' an idea. However, hate crimes are often explained from the perspective of the faith, sexual orientation, political beliefs or physical characteristics of the victim.[4] Hate crime, including hate speech, increasingly seems to be accepted as a separate category from violent extremism, including in official circles.[5]

Extremism can be a strategic and operational plan to mobilize and organize in ways that shift the centre of gravity of society in ways that normalize behaviour that would have been considered extreme in the past. Peter Neumann shows that extremism 'can be used to refer to political ideologies that oppose a society's core values and principles [or to] the methods through which political actors attempt to realize their aims'[6] that affect the other's human rights. Neumann differentiates the use of violence by extremists from 'traditional' criminal violence based on intent. Extremists believe that their actions are legitimate, even if they are not legal, when juxtaposed to a political or legal system that is itself illegitimate.[7] This also helps differentiate violence that is strategic from spontaneous and emotional acts.

The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR) has shown that members of extremist groups often have a 'traditional' criminal past,[8] and identified prison as a connection between the different criminal types.[9] The interconnections between traditional crime and extremist violence appear to be somewhat fluid, and the actions of violent extremist and criminal groups overlap and possibly feed pragmatic cooperation related to resources and logistics.

[4] Garland, J., Funnell, C., 'Defining hate crime internationally', eds J. Schweppe and M. A. Walters, *The Globalization of Hate: Internationalizing Hate Crime?* (Oxford Scholarship Online: Oxford, 2016), in Kotajoki (note 1); and 'Hate crime laws: A practical guide', Warsaw, Poland: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2009, p. 16. in Chakraborti, N., 'Re-thinking hate crime: Fresh challenges for policy and practice', *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, Vol. 30(10), (2015), pp. 1738–54.

[5] Brax, D., 'Hate crime concepts and their moral foundations', eds Schweppe and Walters, *The Globalization of Hate: Internationalizing Hate Crime?* (Oxford Scholarship Online: Oxford, 2016) in Kotajoki (note 1).

[6] Neumann, P. R., *Prisons and Terrorism Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries*, International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence, 2010.

[7] Neumann (note 6)

[8] Basra, R., Neumann, P. and Brunner C. 'Criminal pasts, terrorist futures: European Jihadists and the new crime–terror nexus', International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence, 2016.

[9] Neumann (note 6).

# 2. The German political and legal context

German society is currently undergoing important changes that are creating the context in which violent extremism and hate crime must be understood and addressed. Furthermore, political changes in Germany and across Europe mean that the discussion of extremism is also changing.

Of the roughly 82 million people that currently live in Germany, around 13 per cent can be classified as foreigners.[10] The religious division among those that identify with a faith is broadly as follows: 31 per cent Roman Catholic; 30 per cent Evangelical; 4.26 per cent Muslim; 0.24 per cent Jewish, the remainder being protestant free churches and Christian orthodox communities.[11]

Christianity in Germany has been in progressive decline, and between 1990 and 2008 the number of people identifying themselves as Christian decreased by 9 million people.[12] Recent data on church membership shows that the numbers leaving the church annually have continued to increase.[13] The Muslim community in Germany is estimated to have grown from 2.5 million people in 1990,[14] to roughly five million by the end of 2016.[15] This means that on average the Muslim community increased by a little less than 100 thousand people per year over the period.

Apart from changes in the balance between religions, there has been a polarization between groups that have a strong faith in God and those that have none.[16] There is a similar polarization in politics, where centrist parties are losing support while groups at the left and right margin are making gains.

Germany has a high participation in federal elections, but at state level the picture is more mixed and the states of Brandenburg and Saxony have recently recorded turnout in elections of less than 50 per cent.[17] Germany recently witnessed the formation of a new right-wing party, the Alternative for Germany (AFD) in the space between the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) to its left and the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) to its right. The CDU is strongly represented at federal and state level. The NPD was present in the state parliament of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, but it suffered electoral losses in 2016 and currently has no representation anywhere.[18] The AFD is now represented in all 16 state parliaments and the Federal Parliament, achieving roughly 12 per cent support in polling.[19]

## Statistics measuring crime and extremism

The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) compiles indexes based on empirical data to try and measure trends in peace and terrorism. Data for Germany in the Global Peace

[10] 'Anzahl der Ausländer in Deutschland (gemäß Ausländerzentralregister) von 1990 bis 2017 (in 1.000) [Amount of foreigners in Germany (according to the Central Register of Foreigners) from 1990 to 2017 (in 1000)]', Statista, 2018.

[11] 'Informationen über Deutschland [Information about Germany]', Goethe Institute, [n.d.].

[12] Eicken, J., Schmitz-Veltin, A., 'Die Entwicklung der Kirchenmitglieder in Deutschland [The development of churches' members in Germany]', Statistical Federal Office, 2010.

[13] 'Anzahl der Katholiken in Deutschland von 1950 bis 2017 (in Millionen) [Amount of Catholics in Germany from 1950 until 2017 (in millions)]', Statista, 2018; and 'Statistiken zu Religionen in Deutschland [Statistics on religions in Germany]', Statista, 2018.

[14] 'Die Zahl der Muslime in europäischen Ländern [The number of Muslims in European countries]', T-Online, (2015).

[15] Röther, C., 'Zahl der Muslime in Deutschland [Number of Muslims in Germany]' Deutschlandfunk, 2018

[16] Kamann, M., 'Deutsche verlieren ihren Glauben an Gott [Germans lose their belief in God]', Die Welt, 2014

[17] 'Wahlbeteiligung bei den jeweils letzten Landtagswahlen in Deutschland nach Bundesländern (Stand: Oktober 2018) [Voting Participation at each last State Elections in Germany after States (Updated: Oct. 2018)]', Statista.

[18] Titz, C., 'NPD in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: Wähler verloren, Geld futsch [Having lost voters, money gone]', Spiegel Online, 2016.

[19] Nier, H., 'Die AFD in den Landtagen [The AFD in the state parliaments]', Statista, 2018; and Bureau of the Federal Returning Officer, Press release, no. 34/17, 12 Oct. 2017.

**Table 1.** Distribution of crimes linked to violent extremism in Germany by category

|  |  | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Right Wing violent crimes |  | 19 467 | 19 409 |
| Of which |  |  |  |
|  | Propaganda offences |  | 12 000 |
|  | Damage to property |  | 1000 |
|  | Mayhem |  | 900 |
|  | Attempted murder | 4 | 6 |
|  | Arson | 42 | 11 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Left-wing violent crimes |  | 6393 | 4622 |
| Of which | Damage to property | 3190 | 2219 |
|  | Trespass | 784 | 90 |
|  | Mayhem | 499 | 363 |
|  | Arson | 145 | 108 |
|  | Resisting a law enforcement officer | 135 | 376 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Religious extremist violent crimes |  | 907 | 453 |
| Of which |  |  |  |
|  | Membership in a terrorist organisation | 310 | 144 |
|  | Preparation of a violent act | 112 | 63 |
|  | Coercion and threatening behaviour | 70 | 49 |
|  | Mayhem | 53 | 37 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Foreign ideology violent crime |  | 1187 | 1928 |
| Of which | Violation of law of assembly | 115 | 134 |
|  | Violation of law of association | 459 | 841 |
|  | Mayhem | 150 | 214 |
|  | Damage to property | 112 | 211 |
|  | Membership and support of a foreign terrorist organization | 71 | 55 |

*Source*: Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Community, Politisch Motivierte Kriminalität im Jahr 2017 [Politically Motivated Crime in the year 2017]; Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Community, Politisch Motivierte Kriminalität im Jahr 2018 [Politically Motivated Crime in the year 2018].

Index drew attention to 'political divisions . . . notably in relation to rising nationalism' in 2018.[20] Data for 2015 included Germany as one of a group of European states that each recorded the highest rate of deaths from terrorism in a single year since 2000.[21]

The IEP also publishes a Global Terrorism Index, which recorded 33 terrorist-related deaths on German soil in 2014–17, a sharp increase in attacks against refugees, and identified Germany as a significant location for attacks against religious targets,

[20] 'Global Peace Index 2018', Institute for Economics and Peace, 2018, p. 14.
[21] 'Global Terrorism Index 2016', Institute for Economics and Peace, 2016, pp. 11–12, 17.

which 'have nearly doubled every year since 2014'.[22] The IEP indexes suggest that the behaviour of extremists has become more violent in 2000–17, though a 96 per cent reduction in fatal terrorist attacks was recorded for 2018.[23]

Police and intelligence data provide insights into how crime rates may relate to membership in non-violent and violent radical organizations.

Statistics published by the Federal Criminal Police indicate that the total number of violent crimes decreased slightly from 193 542 in 2016 to 188 946 in 2017.[24] Data from the federal domestic intelligence service (BFV) can help place this overall positive development in the context of extremism and violent extremism.[25]

Between 2014–17 the number of members in right-wing extremist groups increased from 21 000 to 24 000, and in each year roughly half of the members were linked to violence. Most groups that do not recognize the Federal Republic of Germany or its government as legitimate—e.g. Identity Movement Germany (Identitäre Bewegung Deutschland) and [Third] Reich Citizens (Reichsbürger)—are small, with fewer than 500 members.

Over the same 2014–17 period membership in left-wing extremist groups also increased, from 27 200 to 29 500 members, and in 2018 it rose substantially to 32 000 members. The number of individuals linked to violence also increased from 7600 in 2014 to 9000 in 2017 and 2018. Violence mostly occurs at demonstrations, orchestrated by the so-called Black Block. Controlling a major international event, such as a summit meeting, now stretches the combined capacity of German security organizations to their limit.

Regarding Islamist extremism, in the same period 2014–18 members in identified groups increased from 12 600 to 26 560 with the largest increase in 2016. Specific numbers of individuals linked to violence are not provided.

Foreign extremist organizations are also active in Germany, their membership in the period 2014–18 appears stable at between 29–30 000 individuals with a slight decrease from 2017 to 2018. This category, which excludes Islamist extremist groups, includes the left-wing Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and the right-wing Ülkücü Movement (the Grey Wolves) that account for roughly two-thirds of the total taken together.[26]

Altogether, the reports of the domestic intelligence service suggest that the number of people designated as extremists has grown from around 90 000 in 2014 to around 113 000 in 2018.

The number of individuals linked to violence and terrorism also appears to have increased over the five-year period, though the total numbers are more difficult to identify and the violence covers a spectrum from attempted murder and the planting of explosives to bodily harm and property damage.[27]

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[22] 'Global Terrorism Index 2017', Institute for Economics and Peace, (note 25), p. 57.

[23] 'Global Terrorism Index 2018', Institute for Economics and Peace, 2018, pp. 8, 45, 61.

[24] Bundeskriminalamt, 'Bericht zur Polizeilichen Kriminalstatistik 2017 [Report on the police criminal statistic 2017]', p.11.

[25] Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, 'Verfassungsschutzbericht 2016 [Protection of the Constitution Report 2016]', 2017, pp. 40, 103, 160, 217; Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, 'Verfassungsschutzbericht 2017 [Protection of the Constitution Report 2017]', 2018, pp. 51, 103, 173, 222, 218–219; and Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, 'Verfassungsschutzbericht 2018 [Protection of the Constitution Report 2018]', 2019, pp. 50, 110, 178, 235.

[26] Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, 'Nationalist Turks', 2019.

[27] The Hamburg G20 Summit required the mobilisation of 31 000 police and damage during the event amounted to €12 million. According to police estimates, 5–6000 violent offenders were present among the (much higher) number of protesters at the demonstration. '12 Millionen Euro Schaden durch G20-Krawalle' [12 million Euro damage during G20 riots]', Die Zeit Online, 2017; and 'Ein Jahr danach: G20-Gipfel mitten in Hamburg [One year after: G20 Summit in the middle of Hamburg]', Norddeutscher Rundfunk (NDR), 6 July 2018.

Data on politically motivated crime in Germany between 2008–17 indicates that right-wing violent crimes are consistently the highest category, but that the number carried out by left-wing extremists has grown over the period.[28]

After 2017 two new categories link crimes with religious and political motives conceptually for the first time: Politically Motivated Crime: Foreign Ideology and Politically Motivated Crime: Religious Ideology. For 2017 crimes linked to foreign ideology are recorded at 1617, and 1102 for religious ideology. Regarding violent crimes 233 linked to foreign ideology were recorded in 2017, and 92 linked to religious ideology.

## The German Constitution and political structures

The Federal Republic of Germany is a parliamentary democracy, where most power lies with the parties in the parliament (Bundestag). The most important office of the government is the office of the Chancellor, comparable with the office of a prime minister. Sixteen relatively autonomous regional governments, so-called Bundesländer, each with a similar structure limit the scope of federal power. Regional parliaments are empowered on the federal level through the second chamber of parliament (Bundesrat) made up of regional representatives, but the limits to regional autonomy are defined by the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany. Certain matters are managed solely by the federal government such as foreign affairs, defence and the social welfare system, but the regional governments act with autonomy on domestic security and education, which makes them key actors in preventing and combating crime and violent extremism.

## German security institutions

Many governmental bodies have been reformed or renamed recently, and some new ones have been introduced. This paper will give a short overview of each, but will only examine them in more detail if they are mentioned in a relevant strategy paper. The bodies under the Federal Ministry of Defence mostly fall outside the scope of law enforcement, and will not generally be elaborated on.

The German security structure is complicated, highly sophisticated and the different parts are increasingly interconnected horizontally. The federal level has the following services:

- Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz) in charge of domestic intelligence and subordinate to the Federal Ministry of the Interior.

- Federal Intelligence Service (Bundesnachrichtendienst) in charge of foreign intelligence and subordinate to the Chancellery.

- Federal Office for the Military Counterintelligence (Bundesamt für den Militärischer(-n) Abschirmdienst) in charge of military intelligence and subordinate to the Federal Ministry of Defence.

- Federal Office for Security in Information Technology (Bundesamt für Sicherheit in der Informationstechnik) focused on cyberspace, including hardware, software and information security and subordinate to the Federal Ministry of the Interior.

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[28] Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Community, 'Politisch Motivierte Kriminalität im Jahr 2017 [Politically motivated crime in the year 2017]'; Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Community, 'Politisch Motivierte Kriminalität im Jahr 2018 [Politically motivated crime in the year 2018]'; and Federal Agency for Civic Education, 'Straf- und Gewalttaten von rechts: Was sagen die offiziellen Statistiken? [Criminal and violent acts from the right: What do the official statistics say?]', 2018.

- Strategic Reconnaissance Command (Kommando Strategische Aufklärung) is 'the information provider for the early detection of crises and for the support of missions' and part of Cyber- and Information Space Forces.[29]

The federal government has police forces that are subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior:

- Federal Police (Bundespolizei)

- Federal Criminal Police Office (Bundeskriminalamt)

The Federal Ministry of Finance also has security offices:

- Customs Office (Zoll)

- Customs Criminal Office (Zollkriminalamt)

Each of the 16 states has its own police force and a domestic intelligence service, subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior of the given State:

- State (Riot) Police (Landesbereitschaftspolizei, Bereitschaftspolizei or Polizeiamt)

- State Criminal Police Department (Landeskriminalamt)

- States may have specialized police forces for water, technology and cyber, and other specialized services.

- State Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz)

Joint institutions draw resources from federal and state bodies:

- Joint Counter-Terrorism Centre (Gemeinsamen Terrorismusab-wehrzentrums, GTAZ) on Islamist terrorism

- Joint Extremism and Terrorism Prevention Centre (Gemeinsame Extremismus- und Terrorismusabwehrzentrum, GETZ) on politically motivated terrorism

- Joint Internet Centre (Gemeinsames Internetzentrum, GIZ)

- Joint Analysis and Strategy Centre Illegal Migration (Gemeinsames Analyse- und Strategiezentrum illegale Migration, GASIM)

- Coordinated Internet Analysis (Koordinierte Internetauswertung (KIA (-R/-L/-A))) with specialization on right-wing, left-wing and foreigner extremism

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[29] 'Über uns [About us]', Bundeswehr: Kommando Cyber und Informationsraum (CIR), Kommando Strategische Aufklärung, 2018.

# 3. Strategies for crime prevention and preventing violent extremism

## Extremism and the Basic Law

Balancing the protection of free speech and legitimate political debate with the need to combat violent extremism has been a central issue in German political life for many years. Radical worldviews exist legally on German territory within limits established in the constitution, which were guided by recent history in the transition from fascism in the western part of Germany, and from communism in the eastern part of Germany to democracy. In defining where physical and verbal violence become illegitimate, Article 2(1) of the Basic Law makes actions legitimate provided that an individual 'does not violate the rights of others or offend against the constitutional order or the moral law'.

Articles 1 to 5 of the Basic Law indicate that non-violent extremism is compatible with the German constitution. However, 'creating, being member of, recruiting members for or supporting a criminal organization, of which the purpose or occupation is focused on the commission of crimes' is a violation of the constitution.[30] Similarly, terrorist organizations or criminal groups that 'enact or of which the purpose is murdering, killing, genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, crimes against personal freedom (extortion, kidnapping or hostage taking), damaging, hurting or threatening a person, people, government or international organization physically or mentally, one's property or the environment, to damage the aforementioned seriously' are inconsistent with the constitution.[31]

The Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution distinguishes between extremism and radicalism on the basis that extremism includes an additional factor of eliminating 'the democratic constitutional state [and] the associated fundamental principles of our constitutional order'.[32]

## Government strategies

The top-line strategic document outlining the approach taken to preventing violent extremism in Germany is the Strategy of the Federal Government on Extremism Prevention and Promotion of Democracy published in 2016.[33] The document defines promoting democratisation as one of two main concepts for tackling extremism. The strategy emphasizes: 'structures and methods which strengthen democratic thinking and acting, promoting a democratic political culture on the basis of the values bound constitution and stimulating corresponding educational processes and forms of engagement'.[34]

The strategy defines Preventing Extremism to 'include measures which prevent and counteract rejection of the order of values of the Basic Law and the Democratic Constitutional State, and also serve the security of the citizens in this context . . . Measures directed towards people and groups, their environment and their network as well as possible offenders to prevent the consolidation of problematic attitude

[30] 'Strafgesetzbuch: § 129 Bildung kriminellen Vereinigungen [Criminal Code: § 129 Creation of a criminal organisation]', 2019.

[31] 'Strafgesetzbuch: § 129a Bildung terroristischen Vereinigungen (note 30).

[32] Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, 'Extremismus/Radikalismus [Extremism/Radicalism]', 2019.

[33] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, 'Strategie der Bundesregierung zur Extremismusprävention und Demokratieförderung [Strategy of the Federal Government on Extremism Prevention and Promotion of Democracy]', 2016.

[34] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 11.

patterns and to interrupt attitudinal transition towards (violent) action. Additionally, prevention includes measures that prevent reoccurrence of manifested phenomena as well as the repetition of violent and other criminal offences.'[35]

The strategy compares the many forms of extremism to identify a differentiated approach and effective measures that target specific groups.[36] The main forms of extremism identified in the strategic paper are: Right and Left-wing Extremism, Islamist Radicalisation, Hate against Islam, Muslims, Homo- and Transsexuals, Anti-Semitism and Anti-Roma.

There is no single nationwide German strategic paper on crime prevention comparable to the one in relation to violent extremism, but the Federal Ministry of the Interior has published an article on crime prevention, which does explain a strategy.[37]

The document highlights three dimensions: Primary (prevent the environment from becoming fertile ground for crime); Secondary (diminish the opportunities for crime) and Tertiary (offer offenders (educational) measures to prevent a repetition of crime).[38] The document highlights the role of bodies that will be discussed in more detail below: especially the Programme for Police Crime Prevention (PROPK) and the German Forum for Crime Prevention (DFK) in nationwide crime prevention.

The definitions of crime prevention are consistent with those in the Federal strategy on preventing extremism in terms of the target individuals and organizations. Government organizations that focus on crime prevention also focus on violent extremism, and do not differentiate when it comes to, for example, the role of social workers or support to inclusion and reintegration programmes.

## The National Prevention Programme against Islamist Extremism (NPP)

The National Prevention Programme against Islamist Extremism (Nationales Präventionsprogramm gegen islamistischen Extremismus, NPP) is directly connected to the efforts outlined in the Strategy on Extremism Prevention and Promotion of Democracy. The NPP explicitly mentions the role to be played by the National Centre for Crime Prevention (Nationales Zentrum für Kriminalprävention, NZK) (discussed further below)].[39]

Islamist Extremism is within the focus of the NZK, but politically motivated extremism is not, which perhaps reflects a current political imperative to address one form of extremism. However, the NPP follows the same overall concept to reduce risks as the wider Federal Strategy on political extremism.

The document was published by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) and the Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Community (BMI) and the BMI has stated on its website that 'Islamist-motivated international terrorism is now and will for the foreseeable future remain the greatest threat to the security of the Federal Republic of Germany and the West, and one of the greatest challenges for the security authorities'.[40] There is a certain discrepancy between the strategy paper from 2016, which has a stronger focus on right-wing extremism, and the recent online statement of the BMI.

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[35] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33).
[36] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33).
[37] 'Kriminalprävention [Crime Prevention]', Protokoll Inland der Bundesregierung, 2018.
[38] Protokoll Inland der Bundesregierung (note 37).
[39] Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Community, 'Nationales Präventionsprogramm gegen islamistischen Extremismus [National Prevention Programme against Islamist Extremism]', 2017.
[40] Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Community, 'Counter-terrorism', 2019.

**Programme activity at federal level**

There were already federal programmes to prevent extremist violence prior to 2015.[41] The German government began promoting programmes and measures to prevent extremism after 1992.[42] The government began including the promotion of democracy in its action plan against extremism in 2001, and the special parliamentary committee established to examine the National Socialist Underground (Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund) recommended increased resources to fight right-wing extremism.[43] Federal programmes introduced in 2007 were succeeded by Promoting Tolerance–Strengthening Competences (Toleranz Fördern – Kompetenz Stärken) in 2011 and in 2015 by the Live Democracy! For a diverse, non-violent and democratic society programme (Demokratie leben! Für ein vielfältiges, gewaltfreies und demokratisches Miteinander, hereafter Live Democracy!).

By the end of 2014, 170 Local Action Plans had been initiated, each defining 'a strategy for tolerance and diversity . . . and to support civil society engagement through the promotion of individual projects', 50 pilot projects had been funded to test methods and approaches in prevention work with children and adolescents and 16 state-wide counselling networks had been established to assist in right-wing extreme cases.[44] Live Democracy! has continued to offer such support and 'many of the municipalities have continued this work . . . in the frame of 'Partnerships for Democracy''.[45] Moreover, the pilot projects and counselling centres created in former programmes are being expanded in the current programme.

The Live Democracy! programme used to explicitly refer to 'Right-wing Extremism, Violence and Hate', but does not isolate right-wing extremism as a priority today. The government has perhaps realized that a focus on one form of extremism may not reflect the current reality.

*Consolidation and structure of federal programmes*

The current federal strategy paper highlights two main programmes: Live Democracy! under the umbrella of the BMFSFJ and Cohesion through Participation (Zusammenhalt durch Teilhabe) under the authority of the BMI.

Live Democracy! is divided into two main pillars: (I) Sustainable Structures, and (II) Pilot Projects. The first pillar is divided into three groups, that mirror government authority levels: (1) Federal support to non-governmental groups; (2) State level support (delivered through 16 Federal State Democracy Centres); and (3) support to municipalities (that are responsible for Partnerships for Democracy).[46]

The Pilot Projects include initiatives across politically and religiously motivated extremism, and they emphasize civic engagement and diversity at the workplace; strengthening democracy in the education sector; living together in a diverse society; strengthening civic engagement on the web (with a focus against online hate speech); and prevention and deradicalization in prison and probation services. These pilot projects are expected to incubate different approaches to see which are effective.

The federal government has many sectoral initiatives. There are initiatives aimed at federal, state and municipal authority employees, fire fighters, the police, the military,

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[41] Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, 'Bericht der Bundesregierung über Arbeit und Wirksamkeit der Bundesprogramme zur „Extremismusprävention [Report of the Federal Government on work and effectiveness of the Federal Programmes for Preventing Extremism]', 2017, p. 4.

[42] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 7.

[43] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33).

[44] Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, 'Abgeschlossene Programme und Initiativen [Completed programmes and initiatives]', Demokratie leben, 2019

[45] Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (note 44).

[46] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 14.

an independent Federal Anti-Discrimination Office, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (intelligence) and prisons. Separate initiatives address schools and universities, public and religious communities and the media (including online platforms).[47]

The Cohesion through participation programme has existed since 2010 and is executed by the Federal Centre for Political Education (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung).[48] The programme is split into modules: Programme Module 1A is looking at building and expanding competence to strengthen democratic practice in social clubs and associations, while Programme Module 1B centres on strengthening democratic participation in the community through already qualified and involved associations and social clubs.[49] Programme Module 2 is aimed at social workers and consists of pilot projects that test methods to strengthen participation and engagement.[50]

There were 218 local Partnerships for Democracy throughout Germany in 2016. Centres of Democracy had been established in all 16 states and 104 Pilot Projects had been initiated. Roughly 55 working associations and social clubs were engaged at state level; roughly 750 Democracy Trainers had been educated and at federal level almost 700 Care Advisors on preventing extremism and promoting democracy had been trained. The federal government announced collaboration with almost 700 civil society organizations in the field.[51] By 2019 the number of active Partnerships for Democracy was said to have expanded to roughly 250.[52] Over 80 centres were established where individuals can receive professional help by phone or in person.[53]

Under the Cohesion through Participation, 75 projects of 3-year duration were identified in Programme Modules 1A and 1B in the current funding phase 2017–19, while 18 projects are promoted under Programme Module 2.[54] International exchanges are encouraged.[55]

*Resources for existing programmes*

There has been a steady increase in the development and integration of German efforts to prevent extremism and strengthen democracy, which is also reflected in resource allocation. The scale of the effort reflects the size of Germany, its population and demography, the magnitude of the identified problem, as well as the political system in which education and domestic security matters are decided by each state and the federal government cannot compel compliance. The federal government can provide states with incentives to follow a national strategy, and the main incentive is financing.

The federal programme Live Democracy! is now the largest in terms of annual budget. The budget increased from €40.5 million in 2015, to €50.5 million in 2016, €104.5 million in 2017, and €120.5 million in 2018.[56] In 2019 the budget was planned

[47] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 13.

[48] 'Zusammenhalt durch Teilhabe', Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, (2018).

[49] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 15.

[50] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 15.

[51] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 8.

[52] Beratungsstelle Rechtsextremismusprävention: 'Demokratie leben!', 'Lokale Aktionsplan im Landkreis Northeim [Local Action Plan in the Municipality Northeim]', 2019.

[53] Federal Agency for Civic Education, 'Bundesweite Übersicht der Anlaufstellen [Nationwide overview of contact points]', 2019.

[54] 'Hintergründe des Programms [Background of the programme]', Zusammenhalt durch Teilhabe [Cohesion through Participation], 2019.

[55] '"Demokratie leben!" in den USA: International handeln gegen Rassismus- und Antisemitismus ["Live Democracy!" in the USA: International action against Racism and Antisemitism]', Demokratie Leben!, 2017.

[56] Partnerschaft für Demokratie Trier [Partnership for Democracy Trier], 2015; Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, 'Bundestag stimmt Haushalt 2016 zu [Federal Parliament agrees on budget 2016]'; 'Über Demokratie Leben! [About Live Democracy!]', Partnerschaft für Demokratie Stadt Hattingen, 2017; and Marke, V., 'Das Bundesprogramm Demokratie leben! und seine Modellprojekte [The Federal Programme "Live Democracy!" and its pilot projects]', Deutscher PARITÄTISCHER Wohlfahrtsverband LV Berlin, 2018.

to decrease, to €115.5 million.[57] The programme Cohesion through Participation has had an annual budget of €12 million between 2010–19.[58] The Federal Government introduced the National Prevention Programme against Islamist Extremism with a total budget of €400 million between 2017–20.

Preventing extremism has also become a priority on the agenda of the Federal Government, BMFSFJ and BMI, and that is reflected in the internal resource allocation. The BMI has included actions to prevent extremism within its focus on crime prevention, and the federal security offices and agencies of BMI have budgets set aside for deradicalization.

### Programme activity under the National Action Plan: Coherence and coordination

The Bundesländer (states) are sovereign when it comes to domestic education and security issues and are 'responsible for police prevention, law-enforcement, questions on youth and social work and education'.[59] There are 16 education systems, 16 law enforcement strategies and operational structures and 16 social cohesion methodologies. The overarching federal umbrella sets certain standards but allows for large differences among the states in implementation. There are many joint efforts (discussed later) to enable cooperation at operational level. This structure makes German PVE highly complex at both the strategic and operational level.

The federal strategy divides criminality from extremism, and when references are made to crime it is almost always as part of the formal name of a governmental organization rather than on a point of substance. At one point the federal strategy highlights that preventing extremism is one focus of the Police Crime Prevention Programme of the States and the Federation (Programm Polizeiliche Kriminalprävention der Länder und des Bundes) (examined further below).[60] Links between crime prevention, preventing extremism and promoting democracy are generally not explicit even though young people are given special focus and schools are identified as a key environment.

Different approaches connect two or more states in Germany directly and under federal institutions such as the Conference of Ministers and Senators of the Interior (Innenminister und -senatoren Konferenz, IMK) and the Bundesrat, composed of state representatives from the 16 parliaments. Some key parameters can illustrate the scope, reach and depth of PVE strategies.

The Federal Strategy emphasizes the need for coordination, and promises to bring together all vital stakeholders. The approach is embedded in the 2017 National Action Plan of the Federal Republic of Germany on Countering Racism, Hate against Foreigners, Anti-Semitism and Related Intolerance (Nationaler Aktionsplan der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zur Bekämpfung von Rassismus, Fremdenfeindlichkeit, Antisemitismus und darauf bezogene Intoleranz], which now also includes the issue of sexual orientation.[61]

The National Action Plan is under the leadership of the BMI and BMFSFJ, and the Interministerial work groups for promoting democracy and preventing extremism (Interministerielle Arbeitsgruppe zur Demokratieförderung und

[57] 'Über „Demokratie leben!" [About "Live Democracy!"]', Demokratie leben!, 2019.

[58] 'Hintergründe des Programms [Background of the programme]', Zusammenhalt durch Teilhabe [Cohesion through Participation], 2019.

[59] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33).

[60] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 16.

[61] Federal Government of Germany, 'Nationalen Aktionsplan der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zur Bekämpfung von Rassismus, Fremdenfeindlichkeit, Antisemitismus und darauf bezogene Intoleranz [National Action Plan of the Federal Government of Germany on Countering Racism, Hate against Foreigners, Anti-Semitism and therein related intolerance]', 2018, p. 8.

Extremismusprävention, IMA) is tasked with identifying synergies across fields of action and topics.[62] Workplaces are now included as a risk environment.[63]

Common elements across the key documents include the importance of reflecting on history and collective memory—most vividly Fascist and Communist dictatorships, but also including colonialism.[64] The German Federal and State Governments are aware that Anti-Semitism, Anti-Roma and violence focused on sexual orientation exist across the spectrum of politically and religiously motivated violent extremism. Hate crimes on social media have led to new police laws in the Free State of Bavaria that permit the collection of private information online, which has promoted new discussion of the balance between online freedom of speech and combating violent extremism.

Federal programmes include radicalisation contact points managed by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF, under the authority of the BMI). This is a nationwide hotline where people that do not wish to talk to the police can report possible cases of Islamist extremism. The prevention programme Youth Social Work in schools (Jugendsozialarbeit an Schulen) (under the BMFSFJ) has a focus on religious radicalisation, and is one of the programmes used to integrate schools into the federal prevention programme. One programme underlined in the national action plan is Act Democratically (Demokratisch Handeln), a competition among schools to promote democracy and tolerance.[65]

A large number of projects, initiatives and programmes are funded by Live Democracy!, the best known are: ufuq.de (focused on Islamist deradicalisation); the Violence Prevention Network (focused on ideologically motivated violent extremists with an emphasis on right-wing and Islamist deradicalisation); and Islamist Deradicalisation (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft religiös begründeter Extremismus, BAG RELEX). The Federal Agency for Civic Education (BPB) has sponsored publications that analyse music and the websites of right-wing groups to assist prevention measures implemented in schools.[66]

Many organizations, initiatives, programmes and projects have joined to provide printed texts and media packages. The state and federal police have created the media package 'Join the conversation! Competent against Islamophobia, Islamism and Jihadist Internet propaganda Mitreden!' (Kompetent gegen Islamfeindlichkeit, Islamismus und dschihadistische Internetpropaganda) together with the Hamburg University of Applied Sciences and ufuq.de as a resource for youth groups and schools.[67] The police have taken advice on how to make themselves accessible to young people, including through the website aktion-tu-was.de that facilitates communication with the police and informs about civil courage, violence and crime, and police contact points.

From March 2018 more than 170 full-time positions were funded in 15 states to offer individual support, assist groups and organize events in schools in partnership with organizations involved in political education and radicalization prevention.[68] Municipalities, cities and schools can engage with politicians under the federal

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[62] Federal Government of Germany (note 61); and Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Community & Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, p. 7.

[63] Federal Government of Germany (note 61), p. 30.

[64] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note33). p. 20; Federal Government of Germany (note 61) p. 11.

[65] 'Demokratisch Handeln [Act Democratically]', 2019, Demokratisch Handeln.

[66] Polizeiliche Kriminalprävention der Länder und des Bundes, Präventionsangebote [Prevention Offers], 2019.

[67] 'Neues Medienpaket "Mitreden! Kompetent gegen Islamfeindlichkeit, Islamismus und dschihadistische Internetpropaganda" erschienen [New Media Package "Join the conversation! Competent against Islamophobia, Islamism and Jihadist Internet propaganda"]', 2014.

[68] Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, 'Jugendliche gegen Vorurteile und Extremismus stärken [Strengthening youth against prejudices and extremism]', 2018.

programme 'Sport and Politics united against right-wing extremism' (Sport und Politik verein(t) gegen Rechtsextremismus).[69] The Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs is also financing measures to promote social competence and social cohesion as well as citizen engagement or citizen dialogue that aim to prevent violent extremism and crime.

Federal ministries try to extend their reach by including states, municipalities, the private sector and civil organizations as well as diverse federal bodies in ways that offer a large surface for engagement, cooperation and absorption of funds. To increase the reach of programmes the government established the Alliance for Democracy and Tolerance (Bündnis für Demokratie und Toleranz (BFTD), a sub organization of BPB with regional offices to raise awareness of the issue and opportunities for engagement.[70] The Police for You (Polizei für Dich) and the Diversity Media Library (Vielfalt Mediathek) consolidate documents and information on PVE, helping spread products, knowledge and expertise.[71]

Germany hosts the largest gathering on crime and violence prevention in Europe, the Congress on Crime Prevention, as a clearing house where municipalities, police, health system, youth aid, justice, church, school, clubs and associations, political and scientific institutions can come together.[72] Sponsored by the BMFSFJ and the Federal ministry of Justice, the Congress is hosted by a state government. The Congress is organized based on inputs from the police, the victim assistance group White Ring (Weisser Ring), German Forum for Crime Prevention (Stiftung Deutsches Forum für Kriminalprävention (DFK), the German probation service (Deutsche Bewährungshilfe, DBH) and the Expat Association for Social Work, Criminal Law and Criminal Policy (Fachverband für Soziale Arbeit, Strafrecht und Kriminalpolitik).

The DFK was founded in 2001 as a joint initiative at federal and state level to promote all aspects of crime prevention by connecting governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as cultural, religious, economic and social actors.[73] The DFK aims to gather all crime prevention actors to facilitate promotion, networking and cooperation, communication, knowledge transfer and public inclusion.[74] DFK is the umbrella for the previously mentioned NZK, which conducts research on crime prevention, including violent extremism, and promotes knowledge transfer between research and practice.[75]

The issue of language accessibility is beginning to be addressed. The contact points and hotline managed by the BAMF can work in German, English, French, Arabic, Turkish, Russian, Uzbek, and Persian.[76] However, the websites of Live Democracy! (under the BMFSFJ), the Federal Agency for Civic Education (BPB under BMI), the BMI and the BMFSFJ are only available in German, simplified German, English and Sign language.[77] The federal programme Cohesion through Participation (under the BMI) is only available in German.[78] Federal ministries and their subordinate federal offices fail to include non-German and non-English speaking people most of the time.

[69] Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Community, 'Sport und Politik verein(t) gegen Rechtsextremismus [Sport and Politics united against Right Wing Extremism]', 2018.

[70] 'Über uns [About us]', Bündnis für Demokratie und Toleranz, 2019.

[71] 'Vielfalt Mediathek [Diversity Media Library]', Vielfalt Mediathek, 2019.

[72] Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, 'Radikalisierung durch nachhaltige Präventionsarbeit verhindern [Preventing radicalisation through sustainable prevention work]', 2018.

[73] Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Community, 'Aktuelle Herausforderungen für die Kriminalprävention [Current challenges for the crime prevention]', 2015.

[74] 'Das DFK auf einen Blick [The DFK at one glance]', German Forum for Crime Prevention, 2019.

[75] 'Arbeitsschwerpunkte [Working priorities]', German Forum for Crime Prevention, 2019.

[76] Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Beratungsstelle Radikalisierung [Counseling Contact Point Radicalisation], 2019.

[77] Demokratie Leben! [Live Democracy!], 2019.

[78] Zusammenhalt durch Teilhabe [Cohesion through Participation], 2019.

*An evolving approach to balancing nationwide efforts*

The states in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR)—part of Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt and Thuringia— initially received special attention with the Cohesion through Participation programme, but today the programme is nationwide.

The programme was designed to promote democratic participation and combat extremism 'especially in the countryside or weak structural regions, in which extremist tendencies unfold their effect as well as in light of comparatively weak presence of democratic parties and institutions in the plural democratic debates in the public'.[79] The approach was to sensitize communities to anti-democratic attitudes, provide consultation in cases with an extremist background and develop prevention strategies. From 2017–19 an additional priority was added, using pilot projects to address intercultural issues.[80]

The efforts of Cohesion through Participation are steered, supported and partly implemented by the BPB, which aims to promote understanding for political issues, consolidate democratic awareness and strengthen voluntary cooperation.[81] A willingness to cooperate is particularly important as this decides if an individual is open to change and likely to avoid falling deeper into extremism by means of private contact, and the likelihood that the individual will make use of the available PVE tools.[82]

Many projects have a wide scope and reach, with a primary focus on building and further developing democratic structures rather than isolating PVE. Non-governmental organizations such as Exit-Deutschland, with a focus on right-wing extremism, have demonstrated that they can be as successful as governmental programmes, such as the initiatives of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, but they lack the scale of official programmes.[83] Exit-Deutschland highlights that there are more NGO projects in the former GDR than governmental ones, while federal and state government projects outnumber NGOs in Western Germany.[84] However, the results from NGO programmes are often anecdotal, and there is little transparency regarding the number of users.[85]

## Joint police and intelligence institutions to promote coherence

The federal government has introduced several joint institutions linking governmental security organs with a specific focus.

The Joint Counter-Terrorism Centre (GTAZ) was founded in 2001 with a focus on Islamist extremism. The Joint Extremism and Terrorism Centre (GETZ) against politically motivated crime was created in 2012 after terror attacks by the National Socialist Underground (NSU). Together these joint institutions link as many as 40 separate organs: Federal Police (BP), Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA), Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BFV), Federal (Foreign) Intelligence Service (BND), Federal Office for the Military Counterintelligence (BAMAD), Customs Criminal Office, 16 State Offices for the Protection of the Constitution

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[79] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 15.
[80] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), pp. 15–16.
[81] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 16.
[82] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 16.
[83] 'Nur noch wenige Rechtsextreme nutzen staatliches Aussteigerprogramm [Only few right wing extremists use governmental exit-programmes]', Exit-Deutschland.
[84] Exit-Deutschland (note 83).
[85] Wagner, B., 'Der Weg zurück: Deradikalisierung in Deutschland: Der Sektor der ideologisch-politischer Radikalität und Deradikalisierung als gesellschaftliches Erfordernis der Demokratie [The way back: Deradicalisation in German: The sector of ideological-political radicalism and deradicalisation as social requirement of democracy]', Journal Exit-Deutschland, 2017, p. 25.

and 16 State Criminal Police Offices, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and Representatives of the Federal Attorney General.[86] Platforms are designed to facilitate communication and information exchange among governmental security organs using working groups such as the GTAZ De-radicalisation working group (Deradikalisierung) focused on preventing Islamist extremism since 2009.[87] The GETZ uses working groups in the same manner.[88]

Civil organizations may be invited to participate in working groups and on specialized platforms such as the symposium provided by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution. Internet centres (GIZ and KIA) focus on protecting young people from the harmful effects of social media Federal Review Board for Media Harmful to Minors (Bundesprüfstelle für jugendgefährdende Medien, BPJM), as well as the work of the BPB to strengthen democracy and improve education about politics. Some states, such as Bavaria, have developed their own specialized units with the same focus.

The Police Crime Prevention Programme (PROPK) of the States and the Federation (Programm Polizeiliche Kriminalprävention der Länder und des Bundes) 'decides on all fundamental questions of police crime prevention with trans-state significance' in Germany.[89] PROPK acts across state borders based on consensus among all states and the federal government to coordinate efforts to prevent crimes such as violent extremism. Importantly, the organizational structure of PROPK is headed by the Conference of Ministers of the Interior but includes representatives of federal and state security organs. It is a similar structure to the GTAZ and GETZ mentioned above, but with a specific focus on educating the public on crime and crime prevention.[90]

Projects conducted in any state are available to any other state that wants to use the results. For example, the North Rhine Westphalian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution (domestic state intelligence) published an educational comic book called Andi, that helps explain right-wing extremism to children and youth in a simple and understandable way. This has been expanded to cover topics such as 'Nationalism' and 'Violence' and made available as a free App.[91] The Schleswig-Holstein State Office for Crime Prevention has produced a brochure 'Right-wing proverbs in the (school) classroom' (Rechte Sprüche in der Klasse) to support teachers and educators.[92]

PROPK can bring together federal and state bodies with non-governmental actors, the private sector and the media.[93] For example, the PROPK, Leibniz University, Mosaiq (a marketing company), the German College of the Police, and the Hochschule der Medien (College of Media) and associate partners the Federal Criminal Police and the State Criminal Police of Lower Saxony conducted the research project 'Preventive Digital Security Communication' (Präventive digitale Sicherheitskommunikation) under the framework of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research to analyse PVE methodologies online.[94] The resulting project 'Civil Heroes' (Zivile Helden) tests crime prevention through online social networks.[95]

[86] Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, Gemeinsames Terrorismusabwehrzentrum [Joint Counter Terrorism Centre], 2018.

[87] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 17.

[88] Federal Criminal Police, Gemeinsames Extremismus und Terrorismusabwehrzentrum (GETZ) [Joint Extremism and Terrorism Centre], 2019.

[89] 'Gremienstruktur [Committee Structure]', Programm Polizeiliche Kriminalprävention der Länder und des Bundes, 2019.

[90] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 16–17.

[91] Präventionsangebot [Prevention Offers], Programm Polizeiliche Kriminalprävention, 2019.

[92] Programm Polizeiliche Kriminalprävention (note 91).

[93] Protokoll Inland der Bundesregierung, Kriminalprävention [Crime Prevention], 2018

[94] 'PräDiSiKo', Polizeiliche Kriminalprävention der Länder und des Bundes, 2019.

[95] Federal Ministry of Education and Research, 'PRÄDISIKO: Präventive digitale Sicherheitskommunikation: Ein innovativer Ansatz für Kriminalprävention in sozialen Online-Medien [PRÄDISIKO: Preventative digital Security Communication: An innovative approach to crime prevention in online social media]', 2016.

The website of the Police for You initiative, polizeifürdich.de, includes a specific focus on helping children and youth learn about a broad spectrum of crimes. The website also helps individuals to find assistance in the form of print and digital media, or via police and non-police hotlines, websites and regional offices.

Initiatives like Civil Heroes have a youth-orientation and promote interactive engagement for crime prevention, including crimes related to political and religious extremism. The methodology is interactive, including video stories where the audience can shape outcomes, and aims to promote civil courage among youth around themes including anti-discrimination and anti-cyber bullying. In future, a PVE profile will be incorporated.

The IMK, PROPK and federal security organs have a practical understanding of crime prevention and PVE. The various IMK, PROPK programmes treat violent extremism in all its forms as part of crime prevention and are trying to engage young people and other vulnerable groups, but the effectiveness of these programmes has yet to be tested.

The Federal Ministry for Education and Research has initiated research to elaborate Interdisciplinary Security Strategies for Police, Housing Companies and Municipalities (Transdisziplinäre Sicherheitsstrategien für Polizei, Wohnungsunternehmen und Kommunen, TRANSIT) coordinated by the State Criminal Police of Lower Saxony.[96] Changes in the physical environment to help people feel more secure (including influencing their perception) have subsequently been implemented in Braunschweig, Emden and Lueneburg. Projects that apply a common strategy across several cities will allow more complex analysis from which general conclusions can be drawn, and highlight shared efforts across federal, state and municipal level. The police and criminal police provide key connections between the three levels.

The federal government and all 16 states are members of the Centre for Criminology (Kriminologische Zentralstelle e.V., KRIMZ), which conducts research on questions of criminology including extremist crime, radicalisation and prevention.[97] The work of the Centre is overseen by the Ministries and Senates of Justice of the States and the Federation. The Ministries of Justice see crime and extremism as parts of the same phenomenon, whereas the BMI and BMFSFJ tend to treat the two subjects as different, albeit interlinked.

Various networking bodies such as the Round Table of the Carriers of Political Educational Work (Runde Tisch der Träger politischer Bildungsarbeit) bring together non-governmental and government bodies to discuss the nexus of extremism and crime given the current policy relevance of violent extremism. The government is investing to enhance its knowledge on preventive approaches to anti-Semitism, racism, Islamophobia, Anti-Roma and hate based on sexual orientation to supplement initiatives that focus on political extremism and Islamist extremism.[98]

Each state has its own strategy, and often related actions, developed through the 16 Federal State Democracy Centres and State Prevention Councils, Networks, Commissions or Coordination Offices on Crime Prevention. The 16 Federal State Democracy Centres coordinate and assist in developing state, municipal partners and local NGOs that act as PVE contact points.[99]

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[96] Federal Ministry for Education and Research, 'Urbane Sicherheit - TRANSIT: Kriminalprävention für ein sicheres Wohnumfeld: Transdisziplinäre Sicherheitsstrategien für Polizei, Wohnungsunternehmen und Kommunen [Urban Security - TRANSIT: Crime Prevention for a secure housing environment: Transdisciplinary Security Strategies for Police, Housing Companies and Municipalities]', 2015.

[97] Centre for Criminology, 2019.

[98] Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (note 33), p. 19.

[99] 'Landes-Demokratiezentren [Federal State Democracy Centres]', Live Democracy, 2019.

State Agencies for Civic Education that focus on political education sometimes take the position of the State Democracy Centre, for example in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern where a subordinate body, Consultancy Network Democracy and Tolerance (Beratungsnetzwerk Demokratie und Toleranz) is coordinating prevention consultancy organizations. Twelve federal states have a State Prevention Council or an equivalent on Crime Prevention.[100] Another, Thuringia, is developing one and Baden-Württemberg has an institution against extremism with a similar function.[101]

These bodies approach crime prevention as an inclusive social and societal task and acknowledge that this can only be achieved with the support and engagement of the population. Schleswig-Holstein, Hessen and then Mecklenburg-Vorpommern were the first to establish an institution for crime prevention in the 1990s, the State Council for Criminal Prevention (Landesrat für Kriminalitätsvorbeugung).[102]

Bavaria relies on its State Criminal Police, police and domestic intelligence service for crime prevention, including coordination. In Bavaria the Information Office against Extremism recruits from the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution and the police.[103] A well-developed State Coordination Office Bavaria against Right-wing Extremism (Landeskoordinierungsstelle Bayern gegen Rechtsextremismus), only focuses on right-wing extremism. It seems that Bavaria has a more centralized structure for crime prevention, as well as a less diversified focus in non-governmental organizations.

Hamburg has a limited online presence, and its state police homepage provides little information on state efforts in crime prevention—most information relates to federal initiatives.[104] The state seems to manage crime prevention centrally, using the Federal State Centre of Democracy and the Department of Labour, Social Affairs, Family and Integration and its sub-units: Hamburg against Right-Wing Extremism (Hamburg gegen Rechtsextremismus), Consultancy Network Prevention and De-radicalisation (Beratungsnetzwerk Prävention und Deradikalisierung) and Acting against Youth Violence (Handeln gegen Jugendgewalt).

In summary, activities at state level reflect local problems and priorities. In Hesse and Saxony PVE has a special focus on left-wing extremism, while hate crime is highlighted in Bremen, Rhineland Palatinate and Thuringia.

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[100] Senate Department of the Interior and Sport of the State of Berlin, 'Geschäftsführertreffen der Landespräventionsräte [Meeting of the Executive Director of the State Prevention Councils]', 2016.

[101] 'Regierung will Landespräventionsrat gründen [Government [of Thuringia] wants to establish a State Prevention Council]', T-Online, 2018; and 'Gemeinsam gegen Extremismus [United against extremism]', Konex, 2019.

[102] State Council for Crime Prevention Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 'Der Landesrat [The State Council]'.

[103] Bavarian Ministry of the Interior, for Sport and Integration, 'Prävention und Sicherheit [Prevention and Security]', 2019; 'Über die Bayerische Informationsstelle Gegen Extremismus (BIGE) [About the Bavarian Information Office against Extremism (BIGE)]', 2019; and Bavarian Information Office against Extremism.

[104] Polizei Hamburg. State of Hamburg, 'Kriminalprävention [Crime Prevention]', 2019.

# 4. Conclusions

Germany has developed and expanded an increasingly tight network among its political, security and social institutions to prevent violent extremism. This integrated approach is new, an invention of the 21st century. State and federal policies have been linked more closely since the early 2000s, when the historical focus in Germany on right-wing extremism was broadened to treat Islamist extremism as an equal priority.

The emphasis currently placed on politically motivated crimes focuses on sensitising people to the negative effects of extremism, raising awareness through training, political education and promoting democracy.

The strategic approach is different at federal and state level. At the federal level the strategic documents on PVE place the main emphasis on promoting democracy, and the focus has been on right-wing and Islamist extremism as well as hate crime. At state level, the main emphasis has been on general crime prevention, with preventing extremism as one component. The federal and state level have both expanded the scope of hate crimes to include those motivated by sexual orientation.

The federal strategy and the national action plan have promoted an inclusive approach, and at working level federal and state bodies are more aligned than the autonomy of the states might lead one to expect. Without detracting from the autonomy of the states, different bodies are pulling in the same direction.

While governmental organizations are well connected, the federal strategy documents could encourage states to separate violent extremism from other crimes when engaging in federal frameworks. Most states prefer to follow a general approach, viewing extremism as one part of overall crime whether in law, politics or at operational level. However, their initiatives tend to highlight different forms of extremism. For example, Baden-Württemberg focuses mostly on Islamist extremism, while Bavaria emphasizes right-wing extremism. All states now have school, youth and work environment programmes and media packages for crime prevention that include PVE, discrimination and hate crime and to encourage tolerance and civil courage.

The very large number of initiatives indicate how seriously the federal government and state governments take PVE, but also make achieving coordination and cohesion a challenge. Programmes and platforms either focus on a specific form of extremism or they have differentiated subsections and working groups devoted to one kind or category of crime and extremism.

The joint application of tools to prevent extremism and crime is already a normal practice at local level. Police forces coordinate crime prevention efforts horizontally through PROPK, and police units are often included in State Prevention Council initiatives. Horizontal collaboration among state police forces has partly been driven by staff reductions, but the federal level seems to have increased its influence on state police forces. This may partly reflect the impact of free movement of people inside the European Union, and the development of more law enforcement tools at EU level.

As well as increasing coordination among official institutions, the government has diversified its partners to include foundations, non-governmental organizations, diaspora and expatriate communities and social centres through funding and promoting their work. Government financial support to non-governmental projects has become an essential part of the overall effort, and as a result the volume of prevention initiatives is now substantial.

Crime statistics suggest that the total number of violent extremist crimes in Germany is falling in all categories. However, membership in extremist organizations continues to increase and their acts are becoming more violent. Prevention methodologies and efforts have not yet established a decisive grip on radicalisation. The emphasis on

preventing extremism more generally needs to be supplemented with a more targeted approach to violent extremism, with a stronger focus on identified groups.

To build on local successes in crime prevention and to avoid 'stove-piped' policy frameworks, civil servants and security forces should be educated about the relationship between crime prevention and PVE.

The expanding multitude of actors risks creating a 'bureaucratic monster', but at the moment there is not enough information about which strategies and actions are most effective—which makes it difficult to consolidate or discontinue initiatives. Research and assessment at local and municipal level will increase understanding of the impact of initiatives. Over time the government should shift its focus from developing structures to tailored prevention strategies implemented in identified regions of concern.

Reflecting German history, political extremism has been a focus of initiatives at school, but governments are widening their programmes to strengthen civil courage and cohesion. Initiatives using, for example, sport were designed to prevent right-wing violent extremism, but left-wing and Islamist extremism should be brought into these frameworks.

Background social changes could require a change in approach to PVE. Membership in extremist political and Islamist groups is increasing, but participation in Christian churches is decreasing rapidly. However, the Christian churches have been, and remain, an important partner in PVE initiatives. A shift from traditional institutions to more modern organizations may be justified.