



EMMELO

European Men, Masculinity and
Extremist Leadership Online

SIX COUNTRY PROFILE REPORTS ON EXTREMIST MOVEMENTS ACROSS EUROPE

Authors

Ekaterina Yahyaoui Krivenko, Maëlle Noir, Sandrine Rui, Friz M. Trzeciak, Andrea D. Bührmann, Violetta Zentai, Felix Butzlaff, Mary-Ann Ciosk, Mary McGill, Jozef Michal Mintal, Tomáš Beňuška, Joanna Lindström, Nazar Akrami



Funded by
the European Union



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Disclaimer:

This deliverable is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

To be cited as:

Krivenko, E., Y., et al. 2026. Six Country Profile Reports on Extremist Movements Across Europe. EMMELO Horizon Europe project. Doi: 10.5281/zenodo.19564101

Doi:

10.5281/zenodo.19564101

Authors:

Ekaterina Yahyaoui Krivenko, Maëlle Noir, Sandrine Rui, Friz M. Trzeciak, Andrea D. Bührmann, Violetta Zentai, Felix Butzlaff, Mary-Ann Ciosk, Mary McGill, Jozef Michal Mintal, Tomáš Beňuška, Joanna Lindström, Nazar Akrami



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Project acronym:

EMMELO

Project title:

European Men, Masculinity, and Extremist Leadership Online

Grant agreement No: 101177204

**Project funded by the European Commission
within the Horizon Europe Programme**

Start date of project: 1 May 2025

Duration: 36 months

Deliverable No. D2.1

Six Country Profile Reports on Extremist Movements Across Europe



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Due date of deliverable	31/03/2026
Submission date	30/03/2026
File Name	D2.1 EMMELO Country Profiles
Organisation Responsible of Deliverable	ISD
Author name(s)	Ekaterina Yahyaoui Krivenko and all authors of individual reports
Revision number	01
Status	Final
Dissemination Level	PU

Revision History			
Version	Date	Modified by	Comments

Disclaimer

The sole responsibility for the content of this publication lies with the authors. It does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Commission. The European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

Copyright

This document may not be copied, reproduced, or modified in whole or in part for any purpose without written permission from the EMMELO Consortium. In addition, an acknowledgement of the authors of the document and all applicable portions of the copyright notice must be clearly referenced.

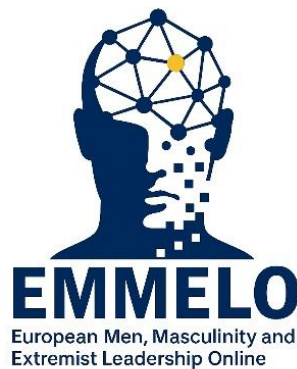


This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Deliverable D2.1

Six Country Profile Reports on Extremist Movements Across Europe



30/03/2026



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



SUMMARY

This report provides a state-of-the-art overview of current trends in far-right ideologies and masculinities online across six country contexts: France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Slovakia, and Sweden. It is complemented by interview data offering expert insights into the contemporary landscape of online extremism and anti-gender politics.

The growing prevalence of far-right ideologies is frequently cultivated within online social media environments, where misogynistic narratives and constructions of hegemonic masculinity are mobilised to engage young men, particularly those navigating identity-related challenges. Importantly, such anti-democratic attitudes are not confined to digital spaces but are increasingly permeating offline social and political contexts.

The findings highlight several key implications for policy and prevention at the national and European level. Central among these is the need to strengthen democratic frameworks through the provision of targeted support structures and preventative educational initiatives that promote inclusive and constructive forms of male identity and belonging. The report further emphasises the importance of sustained investment in research, mentoring, and intervention programmes, alongside the promotion of global digital citizenship. This should be underpinned by enhanced international collaboration with technology companies to improve the regulation of online spaces and mitigate the spread of extremist content.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Table of Contents

Summary	4
Introduction	6
FRANCE	8
GERMANY	26
HUNGARY	57
IRELAND	84
SLOVAKIA.....	103
SWEDEN.....	127
Endnotes	144



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



INTRODUCTION

EMMELO: European Men, Masculinity, and Extremist Leadership Online examines masculinity as a tool used in extremist movements online across Europe and the threats it presents to democracy and the fundamental rights and principles of the EU. How men engage with these gender narratives has significant implications for how European men perceive democracy and the EU.

EMMELO maps far-right movements in six countries across Europe: Ireland, Sweden, France, Hungary, Germany, and Slovakia. The consortium consists of a diverse mix of representatives from academic institutions, civil society organisations, and research centres, with interdisciplinary backgrounds in journalism, sociology, human rights law, gender studies, psychology, and media studies. The participating institutions include Matej Bel University, University of Galway, Université de Bordeaux, Central European University, Uppsala University, European Alternatives, University of Göttingen, and the Institute for Strategic Dialogue.

The aim of the EMMELO project is to develop gender-sensitive tools and recommendations, raise awareness, shape policy, and enable practitioners and citizens to become informed about masculinity's role within modern European extremist movements. To achieve this aim, EMMELO's project tasks include analysing media and social platforms, conducting interviews with civil society actors, and using data scraping and gender-based analysis to map extremist communities and build national profiles for EMMELO's Gender and Online Extremism (GOE) Digital Observatory.

The present deliverable is the Six Country Profile Reports on Extremist Movements across Europe. Each country profile provides sociohistorical context to situate contemporary developments within broader political and cultural trajectories. Interviews were conducted in each country with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), educational institutions, civil society organisations, international progressive political foundations, academia, and diverse professional backgrounds at local, regional, and national levels, including government representatives, journalists, think tanks, and activist organisations. It should be noted that interviewees were provided the option to maintain anonymity at the point of publication due to concerns around safeguarding, and when interviewees have chosen to remain anonymous they are referred to by the number they were interviewed in (e.g. interviewee #1). Finally, the reports put forward evidence-based recommendations to address the role of gender, and specifically masculinity, in extremist movements, to inform policy and future research.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



France

Maëlle Noir, Centre Emile-Durkheim, University of Bordeaux

Sandrine Rui, Centre Emile-Durkheim, University of Bordeaux



FRANCE

Country Context and Extremism Landscape

France is currently experiencing an unprecedented political crisis in the Fifth Republic. The 2024 legislative elections confirmed the ‘tripolarisation of the parliamentary arena’¹ with a central bloc [the presidential *Renaissance* party and its allies], a left-wing bloc [*La France Insoumise (LFI)*, *Parti Socialiste*, *Parti Communiste* and the ecologists], and a far-right bloc [*Rassemblement National (RN)* supported by the *Union des Droites pour la République*]. None of them hold an absolute majority. However, political instability could benefit the RN: October 2025 polls credit its candidate to lead in the first round of the 2027 presidential election.²

The RN has become a central player in French political life. Since the breakthrough of the *Front National* in 1984, and the rise of its leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, to the second round of the 2002 presidential election, the party has gradually gained traction since 2011 when his daughter, Marine Le Pen, embarked on a ‘normalisation’ strategy. Renamed *Rassemblement National* (2018), and now chaired by Jordan Bardella, it has successfully established itself at the local, national and European levels. The RN dominates a far-right political offering that has diversified: alongside smaller parties (e.g. *Debout la France!*; *UPR*; *Les Patriotes*; *La Ligue du Sud...*), and more recent formations such as *Reconquête!*, founded by Éric Zemmour in 2022.

Issues currently debated in French society, beyond global crises (ecological, geopolitical and others), are shaped by a difficult socio-economic context and by distrust in democratic institutions, the welfare state and migration policies. Societal transformations explain that political attitudes are linked to a ‘tripartite division of values’ with a social-ecological and cosmopolitan group (26%), a conservative, identity-based and authoritarian group (30%), and a moderate, ambivalent group (44%).³ The new electoral order is now less determined by class-based voting and the cross-class appeal of the RN is a fact⁴ ⁵ The radical-right gender gap has also disappeared.⁶



In this context, far-right themes are increasingly appealing: defence of nationalism; rejection of immigration (perceived as a threat to identity, security, women); rejection of democracy (criticism of pluralism, power of judges); criticism of progress (including minority rights); authoritarianism (valorisation of strong leaders, order and security), traditionalism (defence of French values and identity, secularism); and anti-egalitarianism (national belonging and marginalisation of gender, class or race in equality discourses).⁷ Across the far-right spectrum, these themes are promoted differently.⁸ ⁹ Whereas the *Reconquête!* party is clearly liberal in economic terms, the RN encompasses a social perspective and claims to address 'all forms of vulnerabilities'.¹⁰ Regarding their framing of 'wokeism' as a scapegoat, far-right stakeholders also differ according to their degree of conservatism or 'identity liberalism'.¹¹ The rights of women and minority groups are defended as part of a 'Western' identity defined in opposition to Islam, erecting these actors as defenders of secularism.¹² They position themselves along a spectrum that spans explicit radical anti-feminism to the instrumental use of feminist rhetoric via femonationalist strategies, weaponising feminist tools and concepts to advance far-right agendas.¹³

The far-right's metapolitical project, consisting of preparing for political power by imposing an ideological framework,¹⁴ leads to a key 'cultural battle'.¹⁵ It is supported through the reconfiguration of the media-cultural sphere, driven by powerful economic actors who are committed to a 'reactionary crusade', such as the industrialist Vincent Bolloré or the entrepreneur Pierre-Edouard Stérin. The latter developed a political agenda called *the Péricle's project* (French version of the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025).

Far-right stakeholders have quickly invested in digital spaces and technologies¹⁶ according to a strategy of 'digital Gramscianism'.¹⁷ Feeling marginalised by the media, they found the Internet to be an opportunity to bypass all intermediaries in pursuit of their goal of 're-information', particularly in the 2010s. In 2016, 16 of the 30 most visited French websites were classified as far-right¹⁸. From pioneering blogs and websites such as *Fdesouche.fr* and *TV Libertés*, etc., to the recent emergence of influencers (Papacito, Le Raptor dissident, etc.), the French 'fachosphere' appears to be 'an interconnected ecosystem'¹⁹ with a high degree



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



of flexibility, since actors circumvent restrictions introduced in the 2020s by migrating to more confidential spaces such as Telegram and Signal.

Historical and Current Extremist Activity

The dynamics of French far-right extremism have long been documented by researchers.²⁰ Journalists and anti-fascist activists have endeavoured to map this reality.²¹ This effort is necessary due to the unstable nature of the extremist environment and the rebranding of groups after dissolution by public authorities (e.g. *l'Œuvre française*, dissolved in 2013 became *Génération Identitaire*, dissolved in 2021, and re-emerged as *Argos* in 2022). Mapping is also necessary because these organisations are characterised by their local anchoring (e.g. *La Bastide Bordelaise*; *Lyon Populaire*, etc.), sometimes linked to football supporters' clubs or student unionism (formerly *Groupe Union Defense*, now *La Cocarde*).

Some of these groups derived from post-WWII movements (those nostalgic for the Pétain regime, opposed to decolonisation, antisemites and anti-Marxists). A new generation is rooted in the New Right of the 1960s and 1970s (*G.R.E.C.E*, *Œuvre française*). This movement is composed of royalists (*Action Française*), neo-Nazis and revolutionary nationalists (*Egalité & Réconciliation*, *Parti de la France*, etc.), fundamentalist Catholics (formerly *Civitas*), identitarians and 'confusionnistes'.²² 'Confusionism' (coming from 'confusion') refers to far-right strategies of 'interference and hybridisation between the postures and themes of the far-right, the classical right, 'Macronism', the moderate 'republican' left or the 'radical-left', a key trend in the French far-right's metapolitical project.²³ Others, including the most radical far-right, aspire to a 'total revolution' and to legitimise violence as a means to put an end to political liberalism.²⁴

Nationalist and anti-feminist figures such as Eric Zemmour and Alain Soral contributed to spreading the idea of the 'feminisation of society',²⁵ documented by scholars only from the mid-2010s.²⁶ A French manosphere is emerging, presenting varying degrees of radicalism and violence, a misogynistic and anti-feminist counterculture promoting traditional gender roles and masculinist norms.²⁷



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Several events mark the evolution of French extremist activity, most of them taking the form of intense protests and campaigns around the legislation such as the civil partnership bill (1998-1999), *La Manif pour tous* (2012-2013) (Brustier, 2014), the *ABCD de l'égalité*, the unsuccessful launch of an educational programme by the Ministry of Education in 2013,²⁸ as well as the Yellow Vest movement in some aspects (2018-2019).

Besides these, the wave of Islamist terrorist attacks in Paris in 2015 and the subsequent attacks in the country drew attention to the phenomena of radicalisation. They also reactivated debates around secularism, communitarianism and insecurity, giving far-right stakeholders the opportunity to position themselves as a safeguard against Muslim fundamentalism. The resurgence of conspiracy theory movements (particularly anti-vaccination) during Covid-19 boosted online extremist activities leading to an increase in cyberbullying, and alarming data on young people's mental health.²⁹

The first commission of inquiry into the psychological effects of TikTok on minors took place in 2025, with French masculinist influencers called to testify. That same year, several prosecutions raised public awareness around the issue: a teenager who allegedly was radicalised online and identified with the incel movement was charged with planning to kill one or more women;³⁰ a live-streamed death on Kick exposed the intersections of violence, masculinity and ableism;³¹ a 20-year-old man was arrested for his interactions with the 764 network originating on Discord.³²

Key Actors and Ideologies

The French context presents a wide variety of far-right and masculinists stakeholders including websites (some of them promoting anti-feminist and explicitly masculinist ideologies, self-describing as '*hoministes*', coming from the word '*homme*', meaning 'man' in French), more or less structured organisations and groups (promoting ideologies revolving around royalism, neo-Nazism, ethno-nationalism or revolutionary nationalism, fundamentalist Catholicism and Identitarianism), as well as artists and media platforms (supporting the



'cultural battle'³³ by normalising and disseminating far-right's themes through entertainment and lifestyle content, often in the form of debates and podcasts). Some online gaming communities³⁴ and sports communities³⁵ constitute other major actors exploiting themes of masculinities, virility, and identity in participatory spaces. Several Individual influencers including political commentators, reality TV personalities, fitness, lifestyle and business influencers, etc., play a key role in spreading masculinist ideologies, more or less explicitly [ranging from Incels to Men Going their Own Way (MGTOW) and Pick Up Artists (PUAs)].³⁶ Notably, several masculinist influencers also offer advice on cryptocurrencies, promoted to avoid paying maintenance to ex-spouses.³⁷ Also noteworthy is the recent conversion of the RN to cryptocurrencies.³⁸ With regard to the 'Manosphere', some actors seem to fully adhere to the masculinist movement. Amongst explicitly masculinist ideologies are movements such as Incels, MGTOW or forums for sharing intimate content without consent such as Leakimedia. Importantly, female content creators and organised collectives also mobilise 'women' identities to advance ethno-nationalist, anti-gender and anti-immigration agendas, often reframing traditional gender roles as forms of empowerment.³⁹ As such, current works increasingly highlight the intersections between identity and nationalist discourses, with gender now constituting 'a gateway to the far-right'.⁴⁰

Masculinity in National Context

French gender norms have continually evolved in response to political, social and economic transformations, shifting from ideals of virility rooted in self-control and chivalry to royal 'absolute virility', the 'controlled virility' associated with compulsory military service, and the nineteenth-century 'triumph of masculinity'.⁴¹ The World Wars reactivated a war-like conception of masculinities⁴² while developing new forms of 'fascist virility', i.e. white but also heteronormative.⁴³ Such norms have been increasingly challenged by feminist movements which would be responsible for a supposed 'crisis of masculinity'.⁴⁴ Beyond a simple reactive backlash phenomenon,⁴⁵ masculinist stakeholders have thus been promoting norms of masculinities, resulting in greater polarisation. For example, (young) women have become more sensitive to feminism while (young) men are increasingly attracted to masculinist



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



discourse.⁴⁶ According to surveys, three quarters of men believe that men should protect women; 42% think women should have few sexual partners; 53% believe men should know how to fight, and 46% think men should not show emotions.⁴⁷

Such polarisation of gender norms provides fertile ground for extremist movements,⁴⁸ which capitalise on men's identity-related insecurities through alarmist narratives about the 'disappearance of virile values' and the perceived weakness of today's men.⁴⁹ Many actors use the narrative of the 'feminisation of society' as a key explanation for 'national decline', caused by feminist movements' redistribution of gender roles, LGBTQIA+ rights promoted by the 'LGBT lobby' and the 'Islamisation of society'.⁵⁰ Masculinities depicted as positive and desirable by extremist movements are deemed to be necessary to restore a natural order dominated by white men.⁵¹

Mobilisation Trends

One of the foundational moments for mobilisation was the creation of movements for the rights of fathers in France, which paved the way for the still-active masculinist rhetoric promoted by various associations such as *SOS Papa* and the *Groupe d'Etudes sur les sexismes* ('Study Group on Sexisms'). The latter of these was created in 2008 and claims to be 'feminist, hominist and pro-equal rights'.⁵² These movements constitute a transnational vehicle for the dissemination of anti-feminist ideologies.⁵³

The 2012 *Manif pour Tous* protests constituted an unprecedented platform for expression, coalition-building and normalisation of extremist discourse⁵⁴ while bringing new female leaders through a 'regeneration of the identitarian radical-right'.⁵⁵ These movements are inherently part of transnational dynamics and could be considered among the catalysts for the Europe-wide anti-LGBTQIA+ rights movement.⁵⁶ Some are members of transnational networks and platforms such as the World Congress of Families and Tradition, Family and Property, which gather ultra-conservative actors to coordinate campaigns against abortion, sex education, LGBTQIA+ rights and gender equality at the European and international levels.⁵⁷



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Anti-feminist mobilisations have multiplied since the #MeToo movement; this involves a strategy of exhaustion and cyber surveillance through raiding feminist accounts, trolling, doxxing and the use of bots.⁵⁸ Several waves of cyberbullying against female activists, politicians and social media figures have been instigated by far-right groups.⁵⁹ Offline too, femonationalist movements have increasingly been infiltrating feminist gatherings and demonstrations,⁶⁰ especially after the French feminist movement took a majority stance against the genocide in Gaza.⁶¹

Interview Findings

We interviewed six stakeholders from diverse professional sectors, operating at various levels of intervention practice (local, regional, national, and transnational) and addressing the topic from complementary lenses, including deradicalisation, feminism, far-right extremism and online violence. Participants were recruited through existing professional networks and following a snowball sampling method. To protect participants' privacy, all interviewee names have been anonymised.

Interviewee #	Details
1	Journalist specialising in the most radical segment of the far-right spectrum and contributor to a national progressive media outlet and newsletter on the topic.
2	Practitioner in a pioneer local deradicalisation centre founded in 2015, post Islamist terrorist attacks whose focus extended to other forms of extremism.
3	Practitioner from an online platform hosting a reporting mechanism for illicit online content which recently obtained the 'trusted flagger' status under the EU's Digital Services Act.
4	Coordinator of a regional feminist association's communication strategy, one of the oldest in the country focusing on gender-based violence education, and sexual and reproductive justice.
5	Director of one of the main national feminist and anti-racist organisations tackling gender-based cyberviolence.



6

Research and advocacy officer overseeing the strategy of a transnational feminist organisation.

Shifts in Extremist Strategy and Leadership

According to interviewees, the recruitment, communication and organisation strategies of extremist groups have undergone significant changes with the widespread use of digital technology, particularly social media, and especially since Covid-19 (interviewees #2, #3, and #5). Young people are the main targets as leaders of these extremist movements tend to exploit feelings of exclusion, including those experienced during adolescence (interviewee #2), fostering belonging around common values *'to form a pack'* (interviewee #5). The objective is to build a virtual community, a process reminiscent of dynamics of control observed in sectarian organisations (interviewee #2). This phenomenon is further facilitated by the use of online pseudonymity (interviewee #5), encouraging violent behaviour (interviewees #3 and #5).

Recruitment can also be consolidated through *'rites of passage'* framing, involving in the most extreme cases, animal abuse, self-harm or even physical and sexual violence, often inflicted on young girls (interviewee #5).

This is the case with the 764 network, a violent and nihilistic extremist network founded by American Bradley Cadenhead, with which the 20-year-old man arrested in Normandy in August 2025 was associated.⁶² These initiation rituals contribute to strengthening the sense of community belonging, while also forming part of a *'gamification logic'* that promotes forms of addiction, psychological control and distancing from reality (interviewee #5).

Communication revolves around seemingly depoliticised 'proxy' themes centred on lifestyle (ie. seduction, personal development, sports, cryptocurrencies, financial investments, meat consumption, etc.), making such discourses difficult to detect by platforms' moderation mechanisms (interviewees #4 and #5). The objective is to institute an ideology in a subtle and gradual manner, *'under the surface, in a very insidious way'* (interviewee #5). This



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



ideology is often based on relatively simple, accessible discourse that can be easily disseminated through short formats such as reels or stories posted on video-centric platforms including TikTok or Instagram (interviewee #1).

Experts interviewed also highlighted the growing use of emotion-based communication strategies, seeking to provoke a reaction from the public through deliberately *'divisive'*, *'outrageous'*, *'provocative'*, or even openly *'violent'* statements, often using *'irony or humour'*, generating more engagement⁶³ (interviewees #1 and #6). Finally, extremist communication has been transformed by the proliferation of immersive technologies such as deepfakes and 'nudify' apps, which young people in particular have mastered (interviewee #3).

In this ecosystem, there are different levels of organisation depending on the types of actors and movements (interviewees #1 and #4). Some spaces are characterised by internal hierarchies and peer validation systems while others, particularly those involving influencers, are more diffuse (interviewee #3). Nevertheless, this remains a coordinated and interconnected movement, driven by a new generation of actors who have fully mastered digital codes and fully realised the central role of digital technology in ideological organisation (interviewee #1). This is particularly the case for militant figures or movements, whether they come from the far-right (interviewee #1) or from certain fringes of radical feminism, such as TERF (trans-exclusionary radical feminists) (interviewees #4 and #6).

Another organisational tactic that is now commonplace is the strategy of *'featuring'*, which consists of an already influential personality legitimising and raising the profile of new figures by associating them with their media visibility (interviewee #1). This is the case, for example, with the influencer *Le Raptor* collaborating with *Papacito* in podcasts, or Cyril Hanouna inviting Thaïs d'Escufon to appear on his show.

The constant back-and-forth movement along the online/offline continuum is a key element in leadership legitimisation strategies (interviewees #3 and #5). Several communities organise in-person training sessions, particularly in the



form of survivalist camps (interviewee #3), playing a decisive role in strengthening group cohesion and loyalty to leaders. This hierarchical dimension is central to leadership and is manifested both through rites of passage and through a more or less explicit hierarchy of statuses and roles within the communities (interviewees #1, #3, and #5). Some leaders use violence against their own community in '*binary loser versus winner logic*' in order to establish their legitimacy, mirroring capitalist mechanisms presenting domination and competition as positive values (interviewees #5 and #6).

Masculinity Constructions

The contours of the definition of masculinities remain vague and nebulous. One interviewee, a member of an association working to prevent Islamist, far-right, pro-Russian and antisemitic movement radicalisation, reported that he had not observed any clear differences in the way these masculinities are expressed or valued according to the ideologies (interviewee #2). However, the degree of centrality and theorisation of these narratives varies according to the extremist movement (from the Exposure Manifesto thoroughly theorising women's oppression to the Iron Skull Division manifesto which does not give such a central place to gender domination) (interviewee #3).

Commonalities between different masculinist movements lies in the promotion of a '*societal project based on domination and the polarisation of gender norms*' (interviewee #4). Extremist discourses on masculinities also revolve around issues of power, money and social status, thus establishing a class hierarchy (interviewees #2 and #5), but also around the cult of the body, physical performance and appearance (interviewee #2). Thus, the norms of masculinity promoted by these extremist movements are white, Western, privileged, cisgender, heterosexual and able-bodied masculinities.

Therefore, the search for a scapegoat as an oppositional reference point for the construction of identities and masculinities fits perfectly with far-right ideology (interviewees #1, #4, #5 and #6). These '*right-wing masculinities*' constitute an *identity-building process in opposition to norms perceived as progressive or 'woke' (...) and dangerous to White, Western civilisation*' (interviewee #5). Moreover, some



groups overturn class stereotypes, such as those of the French *'beauf'* ('chav') or the hunter, as embodiments of traditional rural masculinity (interviewee #4).

Finally, ableism is presented as one of the under analysed dimensions of masculinist movements. Men should be *'physically capable'*, i.e. of violence and domination through physical strength (interviewee #1) as evidenced by the live death of Jean Pormanove (a disabled man) on Kick (interviewee #5). Hence, masculinities act as a *'lever'* (interviewees #4 and #6), a *'work objective'* (interviewee #2), and a steppingstone *'that unlocks other mental boxes'* leading to other extremist ideologies (interviewee #4).

Impact on Prevention and Democratic Engagement

Many respondents emphasise that the main consequence of extremist discourses mobilising the notion of masculinity is the production and legitimisation of gender-based violence, occurring in both digital and physical spaces (interviewees #3, #4, #5 and #6). This violence constitutes a direct attack on fundamental democratic principles, in particular respect for human dignity, the right to life, the right to live free from violence and the right to privacy (interviewee #5).

This violence is sometimes directed against women, children and gender minorities as individuals (cyberbullying, sextortion, online sexual exploitation, forced mutilation or even forced suicide, etc.), but also against feminist organisations as rights defenders. The example of the French family planning (*Planning Familial*), one of the oldest feminist movements for popular education in France, which has been campaigning for more than 60 years against violence and for education on sexuality, as well as reproductive health, illustrates these dynamics of intimidation against feminist structures. Their premises, located throughout France, are regularly targeted by attacks and vandalism committed by extremist actors (interviewee #4). These physical attacks are part of a continuum of online to offline violence and also manifest themselves in systematic harassment online, particularly when the *Planning Familial* launches awareness campaigns on inclusivity, trans identities and access to abortion. These attacks also take the form of trolling under the *Planning Familial's* social



media communications, cyberbullying of its representatives, and raids organised by the 'Manosphere' (interviewee #4).

Respondents also mention the growing influence of media entryism by economic actors from the far-right (interviewee #1), who are strengthening their influence on the political and cultural agenda⁶⁴ (interviewees #5 and #6). This influence leads to the promotion and normalisation of misogynistic, racist, classist, transphobic and ableist hate speech (interviewees #1, #5, #6). As summarised by a prevention practitioner, these phenomena contribute to a decline in *'universalist ideas in favour of a conservative ideology'* increasingly dominating the public debate (interviewee #2).

Notable Practitioner Insights

The interviewees revealed a broad range of response strategies. For feminist activists and practitioners, the adoption of an intersectional framework is a central pillar of the response framework (interviewees #4 and #5). Practitioners who are more involved in primary prevention and support for radicalised individuals emphasise the effectiveness of a multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach (interviewees #2 and #3). One interviewee also reflects on the place of male allies in activist circles, particularly feminist circles, who should materially contribute through logical and financial support rather than create male-only spaces (interviewee #4).

Moreover, the issue of discourse framing came up regularly in the interviews. Respondents highlighted the political issues associated with the use of terms such as 'radicalisation', 'extremism', 'terrorism' and even 'violence', which can be exploited for racist and Islamophobic purposes (interviewees #2, ##4, 5 and #6) and to repress social movements (interviewees #4, #5, and #6). The notion of 'radicalism' also encompasses a positive connotation, often promoted by feminist movements (interviewee #6). Another participant critically analyses the categorisation process altogether: *'determining what is [...] extremist or not is a way of removing what is 'acceptable democracy' from the democratic sphere', one of the reasons for far-right parties' normalisation'* (interviewee #4). One interviewee expressed concern about the consequences of discourse framing on the



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



development of security-oriented public policies for surveillance purposes, particularly around the end of online anonymity, such as the Chat Control Regulation (interviewee #5).

The discursive framing calls for a more comprehensive reflection on the issues of visibility and media coverage. Some respondents advocate the need to politicise the media discourse (interviewees #4 and #5), while another promotes a strategy of 'political neutrality' (interviewee #2). Several trends in media coverage have been identified, such as sensationalism of the subject around Islam (interviewee #2), and the equal treatment of anti-feminism and feminism by certain media outlets, particularly in the choice of speakers to address this subject (interviewee #6). The interviewed journalist's editorial team wishes to cover this topic in a more specialised manner (interviewee #1). Another key dimension of the visibility strategies lies in the media coverage of attacks against feminist organisations (interviewee #4). While in some situations, internal policies consist of not publicising physical attacks, other configurations allow organisations to capitalise on attacks to increase their own visibility, mobilise public support or trigger fundraising campaigns.⁶⁵

Finally, the role of women in spreading extremist ideologies emerges in the interviews as an increasingly important issue. Alliances between transphobic movements, particularly TERF (Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminism) groups, and far-right movements (interviewees #4, #5 and #6), provide both groups with access to institutional spaces of power (interviewee #4; Bock, 2022). Other forms of alliances are observed between extremist movements mobilising masculinist and femonationalist currents, such as *Némésis* (interviewees #1 and 5). One respondent also highlights the evolution of her own feminist association that moved beyond condemning masculinist movements as such, but also of exposing certain women from the far-right in normalising such discourses (interviewee #6).

Concluding Analysis: Cross Source Convergence

Research and response strategies concerning the mobilisation of masculinities by extremist actors in France lag behind other European and North American



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



contexts,⁶⁶ partly due to the relatively recent emergence of masculinities studies in France in the mid-2010s.⁶⁷ In this context, establishing the link between masculinities and extremism remains an emerging field of research, although work on anti-gender movements has already documented certain aspects of the French context, especially in English-language literature.⁶⁸ It seems that activists, particularly feminists, as well as journalists and online content creators, have anticipated academic research in identifying and analysing the phenomenon of radicalisation through masculinities, as shown by empirical results. In general, the content of interviewed stakeholders' discourse seems to converge, with the exception of the framing and politicisation of the topic, which differ significantly between activists and more institutionalised actors.

Transnational Dynamics

Empirical and desk-based research reveals that the mobilisation of masculinities by extremist movements is truly rooted in transnational dynamics (all interviewees). This can be explained by the borderless digital dimension, the increasing accessibility of English-language content, and the transnational mobilisation power of these highly organised and well-funded movements (interviewees #1, #3, and #6).

Although the French case does not appear as particularly unique, one transnational anti-gender politics expert highlights three dimensions that are characteristic of the French context (interviewee #6). The first is a certain delay in understanding the scale of the phenomenon and adopting public policies as a consequence of both a culture of French exceptionalism and the country's status as the home of human rights and freedom of expression (*ibid.*). This analysis is confirmed by French-language literature produced by our Canadian neighbours, who are pioneers on this issue.⁶⁹ The second dimension is the question of convergence between extremist masculinist movements and femonationalist movements (interviewee #6). Indeed, Sarah R. Farris⁷⁰ has theorised the concept, drawing on, among other things, the French context characterised by secular republicanism, colonial heritage and the influence of femocrats, figures of White, institutional feminism. Finally, the third dimension



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



identified is the growing mistrust of democratic institutions and mainstream media, triggering the success of social networks as a source of information (interviewee #6).

Role of Masculinity in Extremist Mobilisation

Research strongly demonstrates that narratives around masculinity are particularly strategic discursive and ideological tools for extremist movements. They are powerful instruments for recruitment, movement structuring and communication. Digital technology seems to have considerably accelerated this phenomenon, which has greatly favoured the emergence of numerous political, activist and media leadership figures. Although practitioners in the field point out that the radicalised public does not distinguish between or perform models of masculinity that are explicitly different according to extremist currents (interviewee #2), it is possible to hypothesise that masculinity norms vary according to the actors, their political positioning and their ideological goals. Further analysis is therefore needed to identify and compare trends in the discourse between actors who use legal and human rights rhetoric, such as movements for the 'protection of fathers' rights', and other movements that openly advocate illegal hate speech around white supremacy, for example.

Indeed, even within far-right groups, whether among extremist militant groups or even at the level of far-right parties (from the *Rassemblement National* to *Reconquête!*), the discourses do not appear to be entirely convergent, without being fundamentally opposed. These nuances would enrich our understanding of the reception and effects of these narratives. That said, on the far-right, it would seem that the emphasis on promoting white masculinity as a remedy for 'civilisational decline' is increasingly becoming a common theme for targeting immigrant, Muslim and racial minorities. The experts interviewed and the literature confirm this convergence, namely the appropriation of feminist themes or tools. For example, Eric Zemmour borrowed the term 'femicide' to form the neologism 'francocide', the murder of French people, allegedly because of their nationality. Meanwhile, he bans the words 'gender' and 'LGBTQIA+', symbols of 'new identities, subdivisions that are unbearable for the proponents of a united, uniform and immemorial French identity'.⁷¹



Implications for Policy and Prevention

The issue of training as a form of primary prevention is identified as a key lever in the fight against extremism. The aim is to implement training provided by expert associations to professionals (police, justice, health, education, leisure, etc.), as well as school and university students (interviewees #2 and #3). The issue of educating men and constructing positive and inclusive representations of masculinity appears to be paramount in the context of this prevention component (interviewee #4). At the same time, data production and research are considered essential components of the prevention system (interviewees #2 and #3). Formulating a ‘fundamental theory’ based on field experience is considered as a key area for improvement in order to better understand and prevent the phenomenon while informing public policy (interviewee #2), with a gender-based approach (interviewees #5 and #6).

Support structures for radicalised individuals would benefit from systematising the inclusion of the digital aspect into the deradicalisation process (interviewee #2). Indeed, this shortcoming leads to a lack of expertise in dealing with and understanding the extent of the digital phenomenon in the construction of narratives around extremist masculinities. This response model must be based on a multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach through strong collaboration between the health, psychosocial, education, culture, justice and other sectors⁷² in order to avoid the pathologisation of the phenomenon. Furthermore, the interviewed practitioner from the platform for reporting illegal online content reiterated the importance of effectively deploying platform moderation and monitoring mechanisms in order to protect victims of cyberviolence (interviewee #3). These measures include the deployment of the ‘trusted flagger’ status, provided for in the Digital Services Act, as well as transparency reports to account for moderation practices and compliance with digital rights by platforms.

Finally, according to the respondents, advocacy should rely more on transnational and European alliances (interviewees #2, #3, and #6) as a lever for implementing national public policies. Notably, only organisations



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



established within the institutional landscape of the fight against cyberviolence and radicalisation are familiar with the RAN/Knowledge Hub and use it in particular to form European networks or consortia for research projects (interviewees #2 and #3). These public policies must empower both states, technology companies and platforms in collaboration with actors in the field, including transnationally (interviewees #3 and #5).

Some respondents cite foreign measures, such as the Take It Down Act in the United States, as examples that could inspire stronger European regulation on collaboration with platforms (interviewee #3). Beyond specific measures, feminist foreign policy is identified as a decisive political tool for integrating digital rights into the international equality agenda (interviewee #6). Interestingly, the fourth ministerial conference on feminist foreign policy, hosted by France in October 2025, included a session devoted to online violence. Another popular form of transnational advocacy includes the development of European social tools and networks based on common democratic values, which would constitute a true 'European antithesis to X'.⁷³



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Germany

Friz M. Trzeciak, Göttingen Diversity Research Institute, University of Göttingen

Andrea D. Bührmann, Göttingen Diversity Research Institute, University of Göttingen



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



GERMANY

Country Context and Extremism Landscape

In Germany, the political climate has increasingly been marked by a mainstreaming or ‘normalisation’ of far-right narratives.⁷⁴ This development reflects broader debates over social belonging across postcolonial, post-fascist and post-socialist contexts.⁷⁵ Far-right actors draw on anti-feminist, heterosexist, racist, antisemitic, ultra-nationalist and *völkisch*-authoritarian⁷⁶ ideas to delineate exclusionary distinctions between ‘us’ and ‘them.’ In these antagonistic mobilisations, gender and sexuality play a central role, in conjunction with other dimensions of differentiation and inequality such as ‘migration’ and race.⁷⁷

Binary and hierarchical constructions of gender and sexuality, and the idealisation of the (heterosexual and white) nuclear family, have long been integral to far-right worldviews. What is distinctive today, however, is the extent to which actors – such as the *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) – actively seek to reshape contemporary gender discourses.⁷⁸ They strategically exploit gendered and sexualised as well as racialised and migrantised⁷⁹ conflicts that resonate with everyday experiences and emotions.⁸⁰ These reactions emerge amid contradictory (neoliberal) transformations of gender relations since the 1970s, including the partial integration of women into wage labour alongside the continued exploitation of unpaid care work, as well as the recognition of same-sex marriage.⁸¹ Far-right actors frame these developments as threats to social cohesion and to an allegedly ‘natural’ (and unequal) social order.⁸² In the context of multiple intersecting social, political and economic crises, their antagonistic narratives offer exclusionary yet simplified explanations. Researchers identify a renewed emphasis on white, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied male supremacy (the ‘re-sovereignisation of masculinity’).⁸³

Social uncertainty provides fertile ground for far-right narratives of fear.⁸⁴ The strongest increases in AfD support occurred in 2022-2023, amid the economic repercussions of Russia’s war on Ukraine as well as peak inflation.⁸⁵ Germany has experienced three consecutive years without economic growth, the longest



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



stagnation since 1949.⁸⁶ Rising housing costs,⁸⁷ food and energy prices,⁸⁸ and cuts to welfare systems have exacerbated the perception of social divisions, contributing to far-right mobilisation.⁸⁹

Economic malaise intersects with geopolitical tensions, such as surging energy costs and the effects of pro-Kremlin information warfare,⁹⁰ the climate crisis,⁹¹ and pandemic-related conspiracy narratives.⁹² The war between Israel and Hamas further amplified antisemitic and anti-Muslim narratives, accompanied by rising incidents of violence.⁹³ Far-right actors instrumentalise these overlapping crises to reinforce social polarisation.

Ongoing struggles over discursive boundaries shape the political landscape. Far-right actors seek to normalise anti-migration, racist, antisemitic, heterosexist, and anti-feminist narratives.⁹⁴ Mainstream party actors increasingly echo these discourses, further shifting boundaries to the right.⁹⁵ Claims about 'cancel culture' are used to portray far-right actors as victims of censorship,^{96,97} positioning them against broader democratic movements such as LGBTIQ+ and Black Lives Matter.⁹⁸

In the 2025 federal election, the AfD became the strongest opposition party, gaining particularly in East Germany, while the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschland* (SPD) and *Freie Demokratische Partei* (FDP) suffered historic losses.⁹⁹ Although the AfD performed strongly in European (European Parliament, 2024) and regional elections (e.g., in Thuringia and Saxony),¹⁰⁰ it has also recently lost several local contests.¹⁰¹

Survey data indicate declining trust in democratic institutions and increasing acceptance of far-right attitudes. The 2025 *Mitte-Studie* finds that democratic values remain widely supported while acceptance of anti-democratic statements is on the rise.¹⁰² Although the share of respondents with fully right-wing extremist [*rechtsextremistisch*] worldviews has declined, a stable grey zone of ambivalent attitudes persists.¹⁰³ These trends were corroborate'd in the 2024 *Leipzig Authoritarianism Study*, which reports declining satisfaction with democracy, rising 'xenophobia' in Western Germany, increasing hostility against trans* people, anti-Americanism, anti-capitalism and antisemitism.¹⁰⁴



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Politically motivated violence has reached its highest level since 2001.¹⁰⁵ Sharp increases were recorded in xenophobic [*fremdenfeindlich*] (+29.1%), anti-foreigner [*ausländerfeindlich*] (+34.3%), antisemitic (+20.8%), and anti-women crimes (+73.3%).¹⁰⁶ Anti-feminist incidents doubled¹⁰⁷. Digital attacks have risen dramatically, disproportionately affecting women, the LGBTIQ+ communities, and migrantised and racialised groups.¹⁰⁸¹⁰⁹

Historical and Current Extremist Activity

After 1990, far-right networks between West and East Germany consolidated, developing specific local dynamics.¹¹⁰ Violent attacks targeting particularly racialised and migrantised groups marked the early 1990s (e.g., in Hoyerswerda 1991, Rostock-Lichtenhagen 1992, Mölln 1993 and Solingen 1993).¹¹¹ In the same period, far-right parties such as the *Deutsche Volksunion* (DVU) and *Die Republikaner* (REP) gained electoral footholds. There was also a growth of neo-Nazi groups in *Kameradschaften*,¹¹² the *Rechtsrock* (far-right rock) scene and autonomous nationalist networks.¹¹³ Between 2000 and 2007, the neo-Nazi terrorist group 'National Socialist Underground' (NSU) murdered at least ten people.¹¹⁴ These crimes were only uncovered after the suicides of two underground neo-Nazis in 2011, exposing structural racism and deep institutional failures.¹¹⁵

Since the 2010s, global crises, the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war against Ukraine, have intensified social polarisation. Anti-lockdown protests led to connections between conspiracy groups and far-right actors.¹¹⁶ Germany also witnessed a resurgence of far-right terrorism, including the murders of CDU politician Walter Lübcke¹¹⁷ (2019), the Halle synagogue attack (2019) and the Hanau shootings (2020).¹¹⁸

The 'long summer of Migration'¹¹⁹ marked a critical turning point: while many citizens acted in solidarity through volunteer and community initiatives, racist and nationalist rhetoric intensified particularly around racialised and sexualised narratives regarding migrantised masculinities after the 2015/2016 '*Kölner Silvesternacht*' (Cologne New Year's Eve night).¹²⁰ Far-right mobilisation surged,



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



racist attacks increased,¹²¹ asylum laws were tightened, and anti-migration discourses consolidated.¹²²

Parallel developments unfolded in anti-feminist and anti-queer mobilisations. Historically rooted in backlash against women's emancipation, contemporary anti-feminism increasingly fuses misogynist, anti-queer and ultra-nationalist worldviews.¹²³ These respond to both anti-racist and feminist resistance and critique,¹²⁴ such as the 2017 NSU Tribunal in Cologne,¹²⁵ and the global impact of Black Lives Matter following the murder of George Floyd in 2020, and to progressive gains in gender and sexual equality.¹²⁶

Key Actors and Ideologies

The German far-right includes heterogeneous actors who share overlapping political orientations. Anti-feminism, hostility against non-binary and trans* communities, as well as hyper-masculinity function as 'bridging narratives'.¹²⁷

The 'Manosphere': An online ecosystem of so-called 'men's and fathers' rights activists, 'Incels' (involuntary celibates), participants in the 'MGTOW' movement ('Men Going Their Own Way'), adherents of 'red-pill' worldviews, and masculinist life coaches spreads anti-feminist, misogynist, heterosexist, patriarchal, authoritarian-masculine, or hyper-masculine worldviews.¹²⁸ 'Life coaches' commodify these ideas and tie them to issues of individual autonomy, success, discipline and hierarchy.¹²⁹

Neo-Nazi actors: Groups such as the parties *Der Dritte Weg* or the former *Nationaldemokratische Partei / Die Heimat* openly reference Nazi worldviews and promote a 'soldierly masculinity'.¹³⁰ This is centred on toughness, discipline and sacrifice for the (nationally and racially imagined) collective, devaluing other masculinities, femininities and queer people.¹³¹

The 'New Right': Groups like the Identitarian Movement, and think tanks such as the former *Institut für Staatspolitik* or Compact, deploy 'metapolitical' strategies to shift public discourse.¹³² Concepts such as 'ethnopluralism' (i.e., the idea of culturally homogenous, territorially bound ethnic groups), or 'the Great



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Replacement' merge antisemitism, antifeminism, anti-communism, racism and hyper-masculinity.¹³³ They foreground a figure of the (white and heterosexual) elitist male right-wing intellectual.¹³⁴ Among them are actors of the far-right parties (e.g., the AfD) who participate in democratic political processes.

Christian-fundamentalists ecosystems: These actors combine Christian-fundamentalist and *völkisch*-authoritarian, racist, antisemitic, anti-feminist and heterosexist narratives.¹³⁵ They use familiar online formats, with social media playing a central role, to spread conspiracy narratives, religious-fundamentalist messages and far-right worldviews.¹³⁶

Masculinity in National Context

Hegemonic masculinity¹³⁷ in Germany has historically been shaped by a gendered division of labour that anchored male identities in the nuclear family, paid employment and women's economic dependency.¹³⁸ In the *Federal Republic of Germany* (FRG), neoliberal transformations since the 1970s have widened social inequalities, despite feminist gains and the gradual liberalisation of gender relations.¹³⁹ In the *German Democratic Republic* (GDR), hegemonic masculinity was shaped by state-socialist ideals of productive labour, collective achievement and political loyalty.¹⁴⁰ Although formal gender equality was promoted, gender inequalities persisted.¹⁴¹

After 1990, regional differences gradually diminished as West German masculinity construction became hegemonic.¹⁴² Nevertheless, post-socialist experience continues to influence contemporary gender and identity formations, including East German far-right and neo-Nazi milieus.

Neoliberal restructuring and feminist achievements have destabilised historically entrenched forms of male authority in both the family and the labour market, while new insecurities around breadwinning and social status have emerged.¹⁴³ Additionally, the rise of the service economy has diversified masculinity models, including more egalitarian family practices and broader acceptance of queer lifestyles.¹⁴⁴



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Intersection with Extremist Narratives

Recent years show a rise in anti-feminist attitudes, both online and offline, along with growing support for far-right and authoritarian models of gender.¹⁴⁵ The liberalisation of gender politics appears to be increasingly contested. Young men in particular show receptiveness to hierarchical, heteronormative and rigid constructions of gender.¹⁴⁶ In Germany, in the 18-24 age cohort, 35 % of young women voted *Die Linke*, whereas young men made the AfD the strongest party.¹⁴⁷ Men under 40 are overrepresented among masculinists who actively promote anti-feminist ideologies, defend authoritarian and hierarchical gender norms and mobilise against gender equality.¹⁴⁸

The ‘re-sovereignisation of masculinity’ is closely tied to far-right constructions of masculinity that valorise male domination, aggression, and the defence of a racially and sexually (white) homogenous and binary imagined community.¹⁴⁹ Historically, forms of *soldatische Männlichkeit* (‘soldierly masculinity’) held hegemonic status in German society until 1945 after which other forms of masculinity largely replaced them.¹⁵⁰ Nevertheless, across far-right milieus, the ideal of the disciplined, militarised and violence-oriented man who provides for his family both economically and physically continues to occupy a dominant role.¹⁵¹ Digital environments amplify these militant ideals.¹⁵²

Mobilisation Trends

Two anti-feminist and anti-immigration campaigns illustrate the current dynamic.

‘Stolzmonat’ (‘Pride month’): a far-right counter-campaign to Pride Month that appropriates national colours to promote anti-queer narratives. It is adopted, for example, by New Right and AfD actors.¹⁵³

‘Remigration’: Popularised by the French Identitarian Movement, ‘remigration’ functions key far-right mobilising concept. It is used to advocate for mass denaturalisation and expulsion of racialised groups.¹⁵⁴



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Transnational Dynamics

Digital platforms facilitate the global circulation of far-right, anti-feminist and anti-LGBTIQ+ narratives. U.S. gender political mobilisations, such as protests against drag story hours, have been adopted in Germany.¹⁵⁵ Some masculinist influencers adopt monikers such as the 'German Andrew Tate'. Transnational references also stem from political figures such as US President Donald Trump, who resonate with European far-right leaders such as Italy's Giorgia Meloni and Hungary's Viktor Orbán. Current research shows that the German-speaking 'Manosphere' largely mirrors international patterns.¹⁵⁶

This dynamic intersects with the broader use of digital technologies by far-right actors: far-right content remains highly visible on platforms such as X, and similar strategies are employed across other online platforms, undermining trust, safety and fact-checking measures. These developments demonstrate how far-right actors exploit technological infrastructures to their advantage, while worldviews emphasising libertarianism, authoritarianism, deregulation and individual autonomy can inadvertently align with far-right narratives.¹⁵⁷ Such interactions have concrete effects in Germany, as seen during recent elections, where digital mobilisation and algorithmic amplification played a notable role in shaping public discourse.¹⁵⁸

Interview Findings

In total, 10 interviews were conducted with expert representatives of NGOs, educators and civil society actors engaged in initiatives aimed at preventing radicalisation or promoting democratic values. The interviews were recorded and transcribed using the software Noscribe. Interviewees were anonymised. The organisations were kept identifiable, in agreement with the participants and in line with the ethical guidelines of the EMMELO project, to highlight their specific expertise.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Interviewee #	Details
1	<p><i>Verein Niedersächsischer Bildungsinitiativen e.V.</i> (Association of Lower Saxony Educational Initiatives, VNB). The VNB is a certified educational organisation recognised by the state of Lower Saxony which offers training and support for individuals, NGOs and civic initiatives. Its work focuses on queer and gender issues, intersectional perspectives on migration, and critical masculinity studies for practitioners and educators.</p>
2	<p><i>DISSENS Institut für Bildung und Forschung e.V</i> (Institute for Education and Research, Berlin) is an educational, consulting and research institute in Berlin, recognised by the Federal Agency for Civic Education and as a provider of child and youth services. Since 1989, it has focused on gender relations and critical, gender-reflective masculinity work; current projects include research on the 'Manosphere' and far-right masculinity. is a specialised counselling and resource centre addressing issues arising from the lived realities of boys and men. The organisation supports them in managing challenges and seizing opportunities, acknowledging the tension between the problems they experience and those they may cause.</p>
3.	<p><i>Mannigfaltig e.V. Institut für Jungen- und Männerarbeit in Hannover</i> (Institute for Boys and Men's Work in Hanover) is a specialised counselling and resource centre addressing issues arising from the lived realities of boys and men. The organisation supports them in managing challenges and seizing opportunities, acknowledging the tension between the problems they experience and those they may cause anti-feminist groups, as well as smaller niche organisations. It situates current racist, antisemitic, and neo-Nazi ideologies within their historical continuities and developments.</p>
4	<p><i>apabiz - Antifaschistisches Pressearchiv und Bildungszentrum Berlin e.V.</i> (Anti-Fascist Press Archive and Education Center Berlin) focuses on the far-right in Germany after 1945. It monitors and analyses militant neo-Nazis, far-right terrorism, extremist parties, racist and anti-feminist groups, as well as smaller niche organisations. It situates current racist, antisemitic, and neo-Nazi ideologies within their historical continuities and developments.</p>



<p>5</p>	<p><i>Distanz e.V. - Distanzierungsarbeit, Jugendkulturelle Bildung und Beratung e.V.</i> (Disengagement work, youth cultural education, and counselling, Weimar) is a Center for Disengagement Work in Thuringia and a non-profit organisation active across Germany, both online and offline. Its work focuses on interventions against far-right extremism and group-focused enmity, particularly among young people.</p> <p>The Center for Gender and Right-Wing Extremism provides nationwide training and advisory services with a gender focus to civil society, policymakers, youth workers, educational institutions, and media professionals on how to address far-right extremism, far-right populism, and group-focused enmity.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p><i>Fachstelle Gender und Rechtsextremismus, Amadeu Antonio Stiftung</i> (Center for Gender and Right-Wing Extremism, Amadeu Antonio Foundation, Berlin). The Amadeu Antonio Foundation (AAS) aims to strengthen a democratic civil society that consistently opposes far-right extremism, racism and antisemitism.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p><i>Bundesforum Männer</i> (Federal Forum for Men, Berlin).</p> <p>The Federal Forum for Men is a German umbrella organisation of 38 organisations that promotes gender policy work for boys, men and fathers throughout Germany.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>AntiAnti is a project by the NGO <i>medialepfade.org - Verein für Medienbildung e.V.</i> It operates in Berlin and Brandenburg, focusing on universal or primary prevention of far-right extremism, Islamism and antisemitism. AntiAnti aims at enabling young people to develop skills that help protect them from engaging with (online) content produced by far-right extremist or Islamist actors and from internalising antisemitic resentments.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p><i>Mobile Beratung gegen Rechtsextremismus Berlin</i> (Mobile Counselling Service against Right-Wing Extremism Berlin). The MBR serves as a central point of contact for individuals and institutions seeking to strengthen their capacity to respond effectively to manifestations of far-right extremism, far-right populism, racism and antisemitism in both professional and private contexts. The MBR collaborates with on-site stakeholders to develop context-sensitive strategies for action, including long-term and preventive approaches.</p>



10	<p><i>Violence Prevention Network (VPN)</i> is an NGO with over two decades of experience in preventing extremism and supporting deradicalisation and disengagement processes. Its team holds internationally recognised expertise in working with ideologically-motivated offenders and individuals at risk of far-right or Islamist extremism.</p>
----	--

Shifts in Extremist Strategy and Leadership

The interviewees observe a diversification and hybridisation of the far-right. This development is accompanied by increasing visibility of far-right positions and their ‘normalisation’ in the societal mainstream. The individuals involved are becoming noticeably younger amid intensifying radicalisation (interviews with MBR, VPN, and AntiAnti).

‘[We observe] a process that has been underway for several years: a strong pluralisation of right-wing extremism [Rechtsextremismus] across various initiatives and milieus. These include groups that, only a few years ago, one could hardly have imagined cooperating, whether in demonstrations, joint projects, or similar activities. There is also a broader milieu marked by growing disillusionment with democracy, a trend that continues to intensify.’ (Interview with MBR)

In connection with these developments, the interviewees report an increase in far-right violence, based on data from reporting and monitoring centres, as well as official crime statistics (see first section). They highlight high levels of anti-feminist, politically motivated, antisemitic and racist violence. Attacks targeting queer people have reached record highs. In the digital sphere, they emphasise the likely large number of unreported incidents.

Interviewees agreed that far-right actors have become key players in digital political communication, setting themselves apart from established parties, which have been relatively slow and ineffective in using social media platforms like TikTok or Instagram (interview with *Distanz*).¹⁵⁹ On X (formerly Twitter), far-right narratives appear to be widely spread without any sanctions such as



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



content takedowns or account bans. Interviewees note that other platforms, such as Instagram and YouTube, put more effort into regulating content (e.g., by complying with legal requirements such as the EU Digital Services Act, DSA). A related criticism is that many platforms seem to respond more to user reports rather than taking proactive actions.¹⁶⁰ In general, interviewees observe insufficient intervention and regulation regarding hate speech and illegal content that undermines democratic values and human dignity. As a result, digital environments seem to provide ideal conditions for advancing mobilisation strategies and disseminating anti-democratic content.

'What we're noticing, especially with a focus on these youth groups, is that it has, of course, become much easier to spread far-right content. You no longer have to wait for the NPD's schoolyard-CD to get a chance to listen to Nazi or far-right music. It's all much faster now, and ... you can just do it at home by yourself. You don't have to work up the courage to go over to some group in the schoolyard and ask if they'll take you along to a concert. So, it's all much more low-threshold.' (Interview with apabiz)

'One must also consider the points of contact, which have become much more permeable, i.e. the entry opportunities into the right-wing extremist scene. Simultaneously, there is a noticeable spread of so-called alternative media, including various right-leaning, legally ambiguous media formats and platforms operating extensively in the digital space. This intersects strongly with radicalisation, contributing to the emotionalisation of actors and the simplified or selective treatment of certain political developments.' (Interview with MBR)

Far-right and 'Manosphere' actors use online platforms for mutual exchange, networking, recruitment, and mobilisation, often reinforcing gendered and sexualised narratives. For example, groups and individuals linked to the AfD, the Identitarian Movement, or the *III. Weg* use platforms like X, Telegram, or Instagram to organise, coordinate and promote offline actions, such as counter-protests against Christopher Street Day and Pride parades in cities like Magdeburg, Dessau, or Halle.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



'That's why I definitely see a lot of networking potential there, and at the same time, the possibility to mobilise in a top-down manner [...] for an actual kind of street-fighting, in the sense that anti-democratic demonstrations and actions are being planned.' (Interview with AntiAnti)

Educators and practitioners describe that children and adolescents often encounter far-right and/or anti-feminist material (such as memes or Instagram Reels by 'Manosphere' influencers) without actively seeking it out or recognising their ideological framing (interviews with *Distanz*, VNB, and AntiAnti). The rapid, anonymous circulation of information can accelerate radicalisation processes among young people (interviews with *apabiz* and MBR). Police raids in Berlin and the '*Verteidigungswelle*' case in Mecklenburg (where very young individuals were involved in planning terrorist attacks) illustrate this trend (interviews with *apabiz* and MBR). These dynamics have intensified significantly compared to previous years, with such cases becoming more frequent (interview with *apabiz*).

Interviewees highlight the COVID-19 pandemic as a critical turning point. During lockdowns, many young people were confined to online environments, losing access to vital social and support networks (interviews with DISSENS and VPN). From 2020 onwards, interviewees observed an increase in online radicalisation (interviews with DISSENS and MBR). This trend applies not only to social media influencers but also to the gaming sector, where, for instance, 'soldierly masculinity' is reproduced.

'So, on the one hand, we observe in the gaming sector spaces that reproduce a certain form of militarised masculinity. Then, on social media, influencers play a huge role, both female and male influencers, such as Andrew Tate, but also right-wing extremist influencers in the German-speaking context, who promote a particular understanding of gender, often combined with right-wing extremist ideology, extremist narratives, or even conspiracy theories.' (Interview with AAS)

'What has also become increasingly apparent are radicalisation processes in digital spaces in which it is no longer necessary for specific individuals to introduce others



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



to right-wing extremism. Radicalisation can take place without the involvement of organised structures.' (Interview with MBR)

However, existing studies indicate that far-right narratives in digital environments have a limited impact unless they are reinforced through offline social environments, such as peer groups or subcultures, within youth clubs, or sports associations (interview with DISSENS). For instance, Tomczyk et al. show that extremist online memes alone have only modest radicalising effects.¹⁶¹ However, their influence increases significantly when individuals are already socially embedded in corresponding offline networks. All in all, interviewees agree that more research is needed to understand the interplay between online and offline far-right mobilisation.

Masculinity Constructions

At the core of far-right constructions of masculinity lies an unequal, hierarchical and rigidly binary conception of gender. This conception is typically framed as 'natural' and immutable, and at times even 'God-given.' Within this framework, only 'real' men and women are recognised as legitimate identity categories, each presumed to possess inherent and distinct characteristics (interviews with *apabiz* and AAS).¹⁶² In particular, interviewees emphasised that constructing gender diversity and feminism as threats to social cohesion constitutes a central strategy of far-right mobilisation.

*'What we really see as the entry point, where young men get drawn in, is this very anti-feminist understanding of gender and the idea of being an 'alpha male.'*¹⁶³ (Interview with AAS)

'We repeatedly encounter irritation among young men, especially when it comes to the term 'feminism.' We simply notice that there is a lot of resistance to engaging with the topic at all.' (Interview with AntiAnti)

Interviewees described the far-right as a male-dominated scene that advances ideas of gender inequality and racialised constructions of society and the nuclear family. White 'soldierly masculinity,' in particular, embodies a hyper-



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



patriarchal, hyper-masculine ideal situated at the apex of a symbolic, gendered hierarchy. It is constructed in explicit opposition to femininity, non-normative and/or racialised and migrantised masculinities and LGBTIQ+ positionalities. This ideal is characterised by an emphasis on authority, decisiveness, physical strength, and the position of a publicly visible protector and ruler. Emotional sensitivity, progressive attitudes or egalitarian behaviours are largely excluded from this worldview. (Interview with *apabiz*)¹⁶⁴

(White) women are primarily seen as mothers and caregivers, or 'guardians of the people' (interview with AAS).¹⁶⁵ They are valued mainly for their reproductive function to secure a racially imagined 'bloodline'. As noted by the interviewees, far-right strategies increasingly provide identity politics aimed at young (cis-)women. Unlike other dimensions of participation (such as involvement in criminal or violent acts), the gender gap appears to narrow regarding far-right attitudes (interview with AAS).¹⁶⁶ Yet, opportunities for women within the far-right movements remain highly constrained. While many young women can engage as activists, their participation is often circumscribed by the expectation that they will eventually marry, bear children, and withdraw from political activity. These formations remain in a highly patriarchal model where hyper-masculinity and heterosexism continue to dominate (interview with AAS). At the same time, there is an increasingly visible demarcation against gender diversity and LGBTIQ+ positionalities. Anti-feminism and anti-queerness have become central areas of action. Misogyny and hostility towards trans*, non-binary, and queer people serve as markers of differentiation from the far-right movement's own male-centred worldview. (Interview with *apabiz*)

Interviewees observed different types of far-right masculinities (echoing the categorisation of far-right actors described above):

Neo-Nazi milieus sustain highly visible public performances rooted in historical National Socialist aesthetics (e.g., symbols such as the swastika, the Black Sun) and gender constructions (e.g., on 'motherhood,' such as described above). They often openly express hate and support physical violence. These performances are characterised by a militarised or 'soldierly form' of masculinity. (Interviews with *apabiz*, AAS, VPN, AntiAnti)



Actors associated with the so-called **'New Right'** tend to cultivate an elitist, academic and bourgeois masculinity. This is framed through selective exclusivity and social hierarchisation, positioning themselves 'at the top of the food chain' (interview with AAS). Narratives such as the 'Great Replacement' suggest that feminism and queerness weaken the (white and homogeneous) imagined community and its purportedly 'natural' gender order. The Western white man, according to this idea, must reassert his masculinity to protect women from allegedly threatening, racialised and migranticised men. (Interviews with *apabiz*, AAS, VPN, AntiAnti, DISSENS).

In digital environments such as the 'Manosphere' interviewees observed a proliferation of so-called 'life coaches' over the past five to seven years. 'Life coaches' offer activities ranging from weekend retreats and boot camps to 'pick-up' training under the guise of mentoring men. These actors promote notions of 'libertarian-authoritarian masculinity' based on physical strength, economic success, sexual dominance and the promise of individual autonomy (interviews with VNB and DISSENS).¹⁶⁷ They often espouse a racist, heteronormative, binary and biologically deterministic worldview. They portray women as inherently predisposed to specific traits and evolutionarily programmed to deceive men (interview with DISSENS). Liberalism and women's self-determination are perceived as problematic as they allegedly undermine the 'natural order' and erode men's individual agency (interview with DISSENS). Masculinist advocates push for a return to what they consider the 'anthropological foundations of human nature' (interview with DISSENS).¹⁶⁸

A further variant emerges among **Christian-fundamentalist actors**. Their narratives centre on defending 'traditional' Christian values, grounded in hierarchical gender relations, heteronormative family models, and nationalist, racialised conceptions of society. They merge conspiracy narratives and religious fundamentalism with far-right worldviews. Also, this form of masculinity idealises male authority and guardianship, portraying white men as protectors of white women and children and a strictly binary and homogenously imagined social order against perceived social decline. It often manifests in opposition to LGBTIQ+ visibility and rights, as well as in resistance



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



to what is framed as 'premature sexualisation' [*Frühsexualisierung*] in education, and rejection of the so-called 'homosexual lobby' (interviews with *apabiz* and *DISSENS*).

Interviewees emphasised that transitions between neo-Nazi, 'New Right', 'Manosphere' and Christian-fundamentalist masculinities are fluid.

'The question becomes: when does a coaching account become a problem, especially when there are so many that are just sharing fitness content? The transition, from 'this is just fitness' to 'this is anti-feminist, this is problematic', is very subtle. That's why we specifically highlight problematic actors like Karl Ess or Alpha Brotherhood as examples. Then there are smaller, lesser-known accounts that are still focused on actual fitness coaching, to show how blurred this boundary is. And yet, there is always a persistent underlying narrative of this performance-oriented mindset.' (Interview with AntiAnti)

However, this fluidity does not eliminate the hierarchy among different models of masculinity. The interviewed educators also described how adolescents develop idiosyncratic interpretations in this context.

'I think that's kind of a TikTok thing ... And somehow it seems like it's something really familiar or has become well-known ... And it's part of this hierarchy of hegemonic masculinity concepts: there are the 'Alphas,' and then somewhere down the line are the 'Sigmas,'¹⁶⁹ which also express something very specific. And I always wonder how much of that ... the adolescents actually pick up on. But if you ask them what a 'Sigma' is, they have some kind of explanation for themselves. And I find that interesting, because when you look at it on its own ... it sounds fine at first. They always say something like: 'Yeah, it's someone who doesn't really care what others say and just does their own thing.'... But then there's this whole chain of implications attached.' (Interview with *mannigfaltig*)

All forms of masculinity share a core emphasis on social hierarchisation and the demarcation of a narrow, exclusive notion of 'true' or 'real' (white, heterosexual, able-bodied) masculinity. Interviewees describe how the 're-sovereignisation of masculinity'¹⁷⁰ is also reflected in political discourse and public media.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Masculinity is portrayed as a 'core essence' that must be affirmed and defended against perceived societal threats, particularly the influence of so-called 'gender ideology' (interview with VNB and DISSENS).

Impact on Prevention and Democratic Engagement

The practitioners and educators interviewed highlighted how the 'normalisation' of far-right positions significantly influences their work. Educators reported that although young people may see themselves as democratic, many have incorporated parts of far-right, *völkisch*-authoritarian and nationalist narratives, such as reproducing anti-migrant or anti-feminist content. In particular, interviewees working in East Germany emphasised that the growing acceptance of far-right worldviews is affecting their pedagogical methods: support for democratic attitudes, once taken for granted, must now be actively cultivated. The practitioners also observed how adolescents are increasingly displaying far-right symbols and openly engaging with far-right music.

Overall, practitioners described how rising anti-democratic attitudes and worldviews are challenging their efforts. This sometimes even results in harassment directed at professionals. They stressed that democracy education must prioritise establishing a solid democratic foundation, which often requires proactive development. Practitioners also highlighted the importance of supporting diverse educational and life course models and critically examining how gender- and diversity-sensitive pedagogical methods and materials are implemented. All interviewees emphasised that unsustainable, short-term funding and programme structures are problematic, particularly amid cuts in democracy education. In cases of anti-democratic radicalisation which respondents increasingly noticed, long-term formats and close collaboration with social workers and psychologists are essential.

Online Extremism: Digital Narratives and Data Insights



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



According to our findings, platform use varies by actors and their target audiences. 'Men's and fathers' rights' activism, which dates back to the 1970s before the internet, often relies on Facebook or a more traditional website format. By contrast, younger users and influencers tend to favour TikTok and X. Actors within the 'Manosphere' or the AfD frequently operate their own websites and YouTube channels to disseminate content. Far-right parties such as the AfD also rely on social media platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp and TikTok to reach broader audiences. According to a CeMAS report¹⁷¹ and several interviewees, Telegram has become the central platform for the German-speaking far-right, particularly after bans on platforms such as YouTube, and Instagram. Similarly, far-right clandestine, terrorist groups such as those associated with the '*Reichsbürger*' ('citizens of the Reich') movement and conspiracy narrative followers (such as COVID-19 deniers) use Telegram as a key communication channel (interview with *apabiz*).¹⁷²

While some actors have migrated to less regulated platforms such as VK, Gab.ai, or BitChute, these shifts often result in a noticeable loss of reach.¹⁷³ Extremist youth groups, including those affiliated with far-right parties, are also known to use platforms such as Tellonym. Among younger age cohorts, particularly those aged 14 to 15, TikTok remains the dominant platform (interview with *apabiz*). As other investigations have shown, gaming platforms such as *Minecraft* or *Roblox* likewise serve as environments for far-right radicalisation and can attract even younger users.¹⁷⁴

Content Types and Aesthetics

A wide variety of memes, slogans, hashtags, symbols, music, and video styles circulate in far-right online environments. Within antagonist far-right mobilisations, derogatory distinctions are produced through constructions of the 'enemy': in particular, queer, feminist and left-wing individuals and politicians, as well as racialised and migrantised groups are depicted in negative terms. In both the desk research, online ethnography and the interviews, the following elements were particularly notable:



Images that contrast the male ‘strong provider’ with ‘tradwives’ [‘traditional wives’], who embody conservative performances of femininity and domesticity. In opposition to these **idealised far-right gender constructions** (see section above), feminists are often depicted as unsuccessful, unattractive, ‘unnatural’ and externally influenced (e.g., through markers such as piercings, tattoos, or dyed hair).

Gendered and sexualised narratives intersect with racist and antisemitic ones: (White, cis-gendered, heterosexual and able-bodied) women’s and children’s safety is often instrumentalised. Male refugees and migrantised men are frequently depicted as violent or sexually threatening (see the narrative of the ‘sexually dangerous Muslim men’).¹⁷⁵ Trans*feminine individuals are often portrayed with grotesque or antisemitic images. Hashtags such as ‘#Stolzmonat’ and ‘#Remigration’ play a prominent role (see section above).

Also, discourse around ‘**migration**’ is heavily exploited. This includes conspiracy narratives such as the ‘**Great Replacement**’ (see above). Feminists and left-wing actors are depicted as aiding the deliberate ‘replacement’ of the ‘native’ population. Mobile populations and migrantised groups are portrayed as violent, criminal or sexually threatening. This is used to emphasise the protection of women and children.

Antisemitic conspiracy narratives depict liberal or left-liberal societies as controlled by secret elites (e.g., the World Economic Forum). Jewish, leftist, feminist, queer or climate activist groups are portrayed as agents of societal decay; they allegedly threaten a ‘natural’ order rooted in gendered and racialised inequality and the (heterosexual and white) nuclear family (interview with DISSENS). ‘Pepe the Frog’ is a widely circulated internet meme appropriated by far-right actors and conspiracy movements such as QAnon.¹⁷⁶

Anti-queer narratives emphasise the preservation of a homogeneous national community (*‘Volk’*). They advocate for the enforcement of the gender binary, as well as the defence of heteronormative and racist family models. Within this context, gender and sexual diversity, along with LGBTIQ+ visibility and rights,



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



are framed as threatening. Children and adolescents are frequently targeted: queerness or homosexuality is depicted as 'perverse' and is sometimes associated with paedosexuality.

Transphobia is strategically employed to instrumentalise 'safe spaces' for women. This is exemplified by Marla Svenja Liebich, a prominent figure in the far-right scene in Saxony-Anhalt who campaigned against a self-determination law. By foregrounding the protection of children and women, these narratives are designed to appeal to the societal 'centre' and attract conservative actors. Transphobia also resonates beyond conservative circles.

Another related meme revolves around the figure of the 'Talahon.' It negatively depicts racialised and migrantised young men who are characterised by specific clothing and urban styles (such as Gucci caps, cross-body bags, football jerseys and thick chains). The term likely derives from Arabic, roughly translating as 'come here.' It gained popularity through the song *Ta3al Lahon* by German rapper Hassan, which circulated widely on TikTok and other online platforms. In recent years, the term has been appropriated for racist and anti-immigration narratives (including actors linked to the AfD and neo-Nazi groups).

Within neo-Nazi online environments, a common focus is on physical and martial activities such as combat sports and narratives of nationalist self-defense. These practices are often explicitly violent. They may encompass both combat sports training and participation in violent actions.

This resonates with symbolic imagery like 'pack' [*Rudel*] motifs, survivalism and campfire aesthetics. However, interviewees noted that these resonate less with younger audiences.

Mythical narratives and landscape (such as mountains) invoke idealised 'one-upon-a-time' imaginaries (interview with *apabiz*). These are used to portray alleged external influences as threatening social coherence, thereby giving rise to narratives of danger.

Simplistic, exaggerated and idealised gender depictions based on National Socialist prototypes circulate widely. Many of them are AI-generated. They



often feature white, blond, blue-eyed, athletic, cis-gender, and abled-bodied girls and women in skirts with long or neatly braided hair, alongside men with the same characteristics and hypermasculine, 'alpha' physiques.

Within neo-Nazi online environments, **anti-Antifa sentiment** were described as particularly dominant among adolescents. This could be seen through statements such as 'hunting leftist ticks' or in symbols like '1161' (a numerical code for 'Anti-Antifascist Action', a counter sign to '161', 'Antifascist Action').

Subcultural phenomena were also observed. '**Ostmullen**' refers to young East German women active on platforms such as TikTok and X (formerly Twitter). They adopt far-right aesthetics, partly shaved heads, football fan imagery and streetwear codes.¹⁷⁷ While their content normalises far-right gendered positions, it diverges significantly from the 'traditional', domesticated femininity (e.g., represented by 'tradwives' as seen in the LUKRETA movement).¹⁷⁸ They instead embody a more subcultural form of far-right femininity embedded in binary, nationalist frameworks.¹⁷⁹

A parallel coaching scene was observed that partially overlaps with far-right environments. While especially common in the 'Manosphere,' it is not unique to it. Many male 'life coaches' emphasise dating, nutrition and dietary trends (such as raw food consumption) as markers of masculinity. Simultaneously, they promote body culture and fitness through muscular, highly trained physiques. Their content often features clothing that exposes the upper body alongside staged images of sculpted bodies. Beyond prescribing 'male' traits, these actors frequently outline what they consider desirable 'female' qualities. This reinforces essentialist and binary ideas about gender.

In this context, (white, cis-gender, able-bodied and heterosexual) masculinity is often constructed as something to be defended. The boundaries of 'acceptable' male behaviour are often enforced by the nuclear family and peer contexts. Libertarian-authoritarian narratives depict social reality as harsh and oppressive (e.g., due to wage labour), fostering a sense of unfreedom among men. Their proposed solutions emphasise individual success and maximum autonomy (e.g., through financial independence or social status). Emotional or



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



egalitarian partnerships are portrayed as limiting personal freedom within an authoritarian model of masculinity receptive to far-right worldviews. Likewise, demands for social equality and social justice, such as feminist or ecological policies, are perceived as obstacles to male self-empowerment (interview with DISSENS).¹⁸⁰

Across online platforms, **'woke ideology'** functions as a catch-all term for anything perceived to restrict personal freedom or autonomy, particularly that of men. 'Wokeness' is deployed as an enemy image to delegitimise policies promoting social equality or diversity, as well as sensitivity to discrimination (Interview with DISSENS).

All in all, far-right online environments intertwine gendered, sexualised, racist, antisemitic, anti-feminist, anti-LGBTIQ+ and conspiracy narratives to construct enemy imaginaries and present social inequalities as 'natural'. These environments justify authoritarian worldviews by mobilising emotionally charged narratives of social threat, as well as of a racially defined and heteronormative imagined community positioned against solidarity and equality-based visions of society. This reinforces a coherent anti-democratic message that builds on social hierarchisation and exclusion.

Online Mobilisation

The interview findings and desk research reveal an online–offline nexus within contemporary far-right milieus. Digital activity is not confined to virtual environments but frequently translates into concrete forms (such as street-level mobilisation). Offline events, in turn, provide material that is circulated back into online ecosystems. This includes activists travelling to anti-LGBTIQ+ demonstrations or staging far-right rallies, marches and flash-mob-style interventions.

As a CeMas report on anti-Pride protests in 27 German cities during 2024 shows, newer far-right youth groups rely on social media platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp and TikTok for recruitment and coordination.¹⁸¹ Several Queer Pride events faced large counter-mobilisations, with hundreds of far-right activists



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



participating. In Bautzen (in August 2024), approximately 700 neo-Nazis mobilised against a Queer Pride festival attended by roughly 1,000 participants. Observations from the interviewees nuance this picture. According to *apabiz*, some of the far-right (neo-Nazi) groups monitored during their research have more than 1,000 followers on social media. However, their actual mobilisation capacity remains limited. Despite their online reach, it is often only the same 20 to 50 individuals who attend demonstrations or other actions in person. Overall, online mobilisation appears to depend strongly on local dynamics and on the specific forms of activism employed (interview VPN).

Interviewees noted that far-right masculinity politics can function as an entry point to radicalisation (interviews with MBR and *apabiz*). Recent research demonstrates how radical groups strategically leverage algorithms and platform-mediated interactions to identify, target and recruit vulnerable individuals.¹⁸² These developments have contributed to the proliferation of violent incidents and the deterioration of far-right online discourse. In the German context, the attackers from Halle (9 October 2019) and Hanau (22 February 2020) exemplify this dynamic: they belong to a generation of perpetrators who are active and networked online and who display distinctly misogynistic ideas.¹⁸³ These cases illustrate how ideas of gender inequality, anti-feminism, hostility towards LGBTIQ+, antisemitism and racism can facilitate pathways to far-right terrorism.¹⁸⁴

Interviewees observed that young men are particularly vulnerable to far-right content. Masculinity, intertwined with dimensions such as social inequality, age or unemployment, can serve as a gateway for engaging with far-right worldviews. Another key finding is that platform dynamics seem to contribute to the monetisation and normalisation of masculinist content.¹⁸⁵ Influencers exploit biographical and social uncertainties by offering 'traditional' masculinity norms alongside promises of social and political security, dominance and status. They invite men to participate in a shared culture of experience (interview with VPN).

Concluding Analysis: Cross-Source Convergence



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



The findings underscore the risks posed by rapidly evolving far-right ecosystems in Germany. Interview partners from counselling centres, educators and civil society organisations describe a pluralisation and expansion of the far-right actor landscape over several years. Established and emerging far-right networks are increasingly mutually reinforcing, collaborating across online and offline contexts. Far-right concepts such as ultra-nationalist, *völkisch*-authoritarian, racist, antisemitic, anti-feminist and heterosexist positions are increasingly normalised within public discourse. These developments can be read as reactive responses to broader tendencies toward the liberalisation of unequal societal relations in the context of neoliberal transformations. This includes advances that have been pushed forward by queer-feminist and anti-racist movements. A particular development is the involvement of significantly younger individuals in far-right scenes accompanied by an acceleration of radicalisation processes. Official crime statistics and monitoring data indicate a rise in far-right, antisemitic, racist, anti-LGBTIQA+ and anti-feminist violence. Violent attacks on LGBTIQA+ communities, feminists and women have reached unprecedented levels.

Across platforms, central actors in Germany's far-right digital political communication include influencers from neo-Nazi, New Right, 'Manosphere,' and Christian-fundamentalist groups. TikTok, Instagram, X, YouTube and Facebook serve as key visibility platforms; Telegram functions as a central hub for far-right actors following suspensions from these mainstream platforms. Younger audiences encounter far-right content within online gaming platforms such as Minecraft and Roblox.

Interview partners consistently criticised that platform regulation remains insufficient, often reactive rather than proactive. This means that the digital availability of far-right content has significantly lowered access thresholds. Far-right music, memes and videos are instantly accessible. Radicalisation increasingly occurs without direct recruitment, frequently reinforced by algorithmic amplification. This means that young people often encounter far-right content accidentally without recognising its ideological character.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Gendered, sexualised, and racialised narratives emerge as a core organising principle across online environments. The findings illustrate how memes, videos and other formats interweave antifeminism, heterosexism, racism, antisemitism and conspiracy thinking into enemy constructions. This shapes antagonistic imaginaries of 'us' versus 'them'. Interview data further shows that these narratives resonate strongly with younger audiences. This is particularly the case when they tap into biographical uncertainties and broader social insecurities: they provide ostensibly simplified explanations (often) anchored in gendered and sexualised identity politics where masculinity plays a pivotal role.

Across various platforms, German far-right actors work to naturalise binary and hierarchical conceptions of gender, along with an idealisation and privileging of the (heterosexual and white) nuclear family. Researchers have noted a (renewed) focus on white male heteronormative supremacy ('re-sovereignisation of masculinity'). Typically, far-right masculinity is characterised by male domination, aggression, autonomy and a nationalist-authoritarian sense of 'protection.' By contrast, femininity is often associated with motherhood and the reproductive responsibility for an imagined ethnically and racially homogeneous national community. However, other subcultural or milieu-specific articulations of femininity also exist.

Among far-right actors, distinct constructions of masculinity can be identified: for example, the 'Manosphere' promotes individualised hyper-masculinity centred on self-optimisation, sexual entitlement and anti-feminism. By contrast, neo-Nazi groups cultivate militarised, 'soldierly' masculinities defined by discipline, toughness and sacrificial loyalty to a racially and homogenous imagined collective. Meanwhile, New Right actors advance elitist, *völkisch*-authoritarian masculinities that frame white male heteronormativity as the protector of a culturally homogeneous nation. Variants also include Christian-fundamentalist masculinities who merge religious with far-right worldviews on gender. All share a devaluation of women, feminism, queer and trans* people, and migrantised and racialised groups.

These patterns are not isolated to Germany. They reflect and feed into European and transnational circulations of far-right gender world views. Desk



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



research indicates that German actors draw heavily on narratives from US 'Manosphere' channels, but also on Austrian and French networks as well as broader European conspiracy ecosystems. Visual aesthetics (such as hypermasculine bodies, 'TradWife' imagery, and anti-'woke' symbolism) move fluidly across borders. Hashtags like '#Remigration' or anti-queer mobilisation strategies are embedded in pan-European antagonistic struggles. Conversely, German far-right influencers contribute to transnational repertoires, exporting digital content, rhetorical framings and international mobilisation techniques.

The findings underscore that these transnational dynamics shape not only online ecosystems but also offline mobilisation. German actors adopt international far-right strategies, particularly regarding anti-feminist campaigns, anti-queer policies, anti-immigration and racist campaigns. Youth radicalisation increasingly unfolds within these transnational digital environments where German-language content is interwoven with international narratives.

Implications for Policy and Prevention

Far-right actors exploit existing social inequalities and crises to mobilise 'politics of fear'¹⁸⁶ through antagonistic constructions of 'us' versus 'them'. These affective strategies create a lever effect where perceived threat is used to justify exclusionary hierarchies, *völkisch*-authoritarian and heterosexist gender norms. Effective prevention must target these levers of mobilisation, disrupting enemy-image formation and offering alternative pathways that counteract radicalising dynamics.

While such dynamics cannot be translated into simple prevention programmes, they are analytically indispensable for understanding why far-right masculinities resonate. To engage effectively with these affective dimensions, it is crucial to take their references to societal discontent seriously. It is as important to offer alternative responses to pressing questions of social belonging and participation.¹⁸⁷ At the long-term structural level, the focus should be on establishing and maintaining social security systems and counteracting processes of marginalisation and precarisation among specific population groups. This should be done in line with democratic principles of



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



solidarity. Crucially, prevention strategies must actively counteract mechanisms of fear- and enemy-making. This is needed to reduce the discursive and affective power of far-right narratives.

In short, the findings point to three key implications for prevention efforts and the strengthening of democratic resilience.

First, gendered, sexualised, migrantised and racialised narratives that naturalise social inequality and hierarchies must be recognised as central drivers of far-right mobilisation. This underscores the importance of diversity-sensitive pedagogical approaches, proactive engagement with boys, girls, inter, non-binary, and trans* youth. It also requires the promotion of progressive models of masculinity, femininity and diverse gender expressions.

Second, prevention strategies need to address digital radicalisation patterns that are increasingly transnational, aestheticised and youth oriented. This requires stricter regulation of online platforms but also 'safety by design' measures, algorithmic transparency, deeper research on digital environments, and interventions that leverage their potential for dialogue and democratic engagement.

Third, the transnational interconnectedness of anti-feminist, racist and *völkisch*-authoritarian narratives necessitates cross-border cooperation. This will involve sustainable funding structures and integrated approaches across youth work, education, civil society and social services. This entails attention to biographical crises, researcher safety, the sustainable institutionalisation of practical initiatives and comprehensive support structures for those harmed by far-right actors and worldviews. It also should provide tailored programmes for marginalised groups.

Sustainable funding and expansion of mobile counselling, monitoring, deradicalisation and victim support: Mobile advisory services, monitoring initiatives, deradicalisation programmes and victim support centres must be secured with long-term, sustainable funding and systematically expanded to ensure consistent, accessible and effective intervention across regions.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Understanding the performative nature of far-right gender narratives:

Masculinity and femininity are often constructed in hierarchical and binary opposition, resulting in social exclusion and devaluation. Such constructions are fundamentally anti-democratic. Strengthening diversity-sensitive education and social work, providing adequate support, and guiding younger (and older) people through multiple crises are essential to help them navigate beyond authoritarian patterns and develop inclusive, egalitarian frameworks.

Strengthen and support diversity-sensitive pedagogy and diversity-focused initiatives:

These programmes and organisations are central to effective prevention and democratic education. They should therefore be supported in a sustainable and foundational manner. Programmes and policies should systematically incorporate and promote alternative, democratic, non-normative and non-hierarchical understandings of masculinity, femininity and diverse gender identities. Building on intersectional approaches, programmes should account for how gender intersects with race, ethnicity, class, ability and other social dimensions. This will support young people in navigating social norms while fostering awareness, respect and inclusion of diverse identifications. It is recommended that these initiatives ensure the integral participation of marginalised social groups including LGBTQIA+ communities as well as racialised and migrantised communities. This is necessary so that their perspectives and experiences meaningfully shape programme design and implementation.

Articulation of progressive models of masculinity: Masculinist influencers exploit insecurities around ‘becoming a man’, promising dominance, stability, and control. Interventions should address these issues of broader life conduct as entry points to counteract authoritarian masculinities. This should cover work, family, friendships, care relationship and leisure.

Distancing from far-right narratives and fostering democratic values: Far-right masculinities do not necessarily align with the aspirations of young people. While these narratives promote inequality, young people may also seek respectful, equitable relationships. Progressive interventions should address



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



desires for connection, stability and care without reinforcing reactionary and binary gender norms.

Stricter and comprehensive regulation of digital platforms: Legal capacity to intervene on digital platforms is essential. European and German frameworks, such as the EU DSA and the DDG, provide mechanisms for content moderation and platform accountability. However, enforcement gaps remain. Provisions (e.g., to protect women such as the 2024/1385 Directive on Combating Violence Against Women and Girls) should be strengthened to better enforce mandatory algorithmic transparency, accountability for recommendation systems, and ‘safety by design’ standards. This can reduce user exposure to extremist content while promoting safer online environments. Given that social media often perpetuates harms and facilitates access to radicalising content, platforms must take proactive measures to prevent the amplification of extremist narratives.

Research, data access and accountable, long-term knowledge production: The interconnections between digitalisation, (naturalised) inequality narratives and life conduct remain underexplored. Research initiatives should include secure, ethical access to social media data, platform analytics and content moderation records to trace radicalisation pathways effectively. Sustainable, long-term funding should support comparative, inter- and transdisciplinary, and cross-national research. This can institutionalise expertise beyond short-term pilot projects.

Strengthening field sustainability and cross-border coordination: Long-term, stable funding is crucial for research, prevention programmes and educational initiatives. The EU can play a central role by integrating perspectives from researchers and practitioners across member states, fostering cross-border knowledge exchange and promoting the institutionalisation of successful interventions.

Researcher and practitioners’ health, safety and resources: Working on radicalisation, (gendered) far-right extremism and political violence involves emotional, psychological and security-related risks. Funding schemes must



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



provide counselling, mental health support, safety assessments and protective infrastructure for researchers and practitioners' staff.

Support during biographical crises: Experiences of rejection, marginalisation or separation can increase susceptibility to far-right and masculinist narratives. It is crucial to provide long-term, sustainable support for initiatives and programmes that offer pedagogical interventions taking these vulnerabilities seriously. They must provide non-reactionary strategies to manage frustration, relational conflict and emotional strain across all gender groups.

Support structures for those harmed by far-right ideologies: Victims of anti-feminist, queer- and transphobic, racist, and antisemitic violence require accessible, well-resourced and intersectionally informed support networks. Civil society initiatives, counselling services and digital reporting mechanisms should be strengthened and tailored to support boys, girls, non-binary, inter and trans* children, adolescents, and adults with a particular focus on marginalised groups.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Hungary

Violetta Zentai, Department of Public Policy, Central European University

Felix Butzlaff, Department of Public Policy, Central European University



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



HUNGARY

Country Context and Extremism Landscape

In academic and policy literature, Hungary is intensively discussed as a prominent case of democratic backsliding under the leadership of Viktor Orbán and the ruling Fidesz party.¹⁸⁸ Fidesz (in fact a party alliance of Fidesz–KDNP of the former’s dominance) has consolidated power at both national and local levels since its 2010 landslide victory. This enduring power has generated and relied on restricted media freedom, increasing control over the judiciary, manipulated electoral laws, and authoritarian economic and social policies.¹⁸⁹ Although Fidesz has used its parliamentary supermajority to reshape the political playing field by government sponsored media campaigns, gerrymandering electoral districts, and massive fear-mongering ideological persuasion, elections have remained a key mechanism for maintaining the regime’s¹⁹⁰ domestic and international legitimacy.¹⁹¹ Massive redistributive mechanisms of internal and external (EU funds) revenues have been deployed to create dependency relations between electoral politics, economic development opportunities, municipal governance, and social services.¹⁹² Social affairs are governed through ‘deservingness’ principles, which introduce a separation between groups that are entitled to resources and state help and groups that are not, and which sharply contrast demographic, economic, and moral capacities as well as ethnic and cultural properties of groups in society. This method justifies workfare and pronatalist distribution mechanisms that deepen inequalities and polarisation, which the regime explains as outcomes of hostile interventions of malign forces.¹⁹³ These aspects are well developed in international and comparative political science and political sociology literature and appear in the interviews conducted.¹⁹⁴

The consolidation of illiberal political power and governance has nurtured and largely benefited from far-right authoritarian ideological theorems and imaginaries that targeted societal values, popular sentiments, and voting preferences. For the purpose of this report, we use the term ‘far-right’ umbrella term to allow for a broad inclusion of actors ranging from the right side of mainstream political actors to the extremist right.¹⁹⁵ The term ‘far-right’



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



converges around aspects of nativism/ethno-nationalism, authoritarianism, exclusionary understandings of democracy, anti-globalism/euroscepticism and an emphasis on movement identity in contrast to self-understandings as institutionalised party organisations.¹⁹⁶ When it comes to concrete ideology and programmes of far-right parties, these aspects can be addressed in different ways; there is not *one* way to formulate far-right politics. Cas Mudde, for instance, has identified 58 ideological characteristics that have been used to describe members of the party family.¹⁹⁷ These broad perspectives can then be summarised under the three aspects of nativism as an ideological core, authoritarianism and the normalisation of social exclusion and anti-egalitarianism.¹⁹⁸ It is important to note that the term far-right includes both ‘extremist’ parties that are fiercely antidemocratic and reject any form of popular sovereignty or European integration, as well as ‘radical’ parties that question key aspects of the constitutional order but maintain a self-understanding of being (albeit illiberal) democratic forces.¹⁹⁹ The term therefore encompasses neo-fascist and neo-Nazi organisations that are openly and aggressively anti-democratic, as well as right-wing organisations and parties that accept democracy in principle (such as elections or majority rule) but oppose liberal-democratic key elements such as minority rights, pluralism and constraints on majority power such as the rule of law. Mudde has emphasised that during a so-called ‘fourth wave’ of far-right politics, we can observe a mainstreaming and certain normalisation of far-right actors.²⁰⁰

From this perspective, an umbrella term such as ‘far-right’ is helpful to carve out the blurring boundaries between mainstream or government, on the one hand, and fringe actors on the other, while still being explicit about the differentiation between the two. International and cross-disciplinary literature is burgeoning on how illiberal political ideals combine and mold visions of history, sovereignty, social hierarchy and critique of the foundational norms of liberal democracies, human rights, and equality. Our definition allows us to include different ideological aspects and actors and zoom in on the connections and cooperations between different actors of the far-right. And whereas the term ‘far-right’ has been criticised as too broad and blurring due differentiations, we believe that for a thorough analysis of governmental and institutionalised party actors, as well as a variety of civil society and movement actors, a broad



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



umbrella term is beneficial.²⁰¹ This advantage is especially pertinent in the Hungarian case, with a far-right party in government and several civil society actors and movements further to the right engaging with or mutually reinforcing public policies from a far-right perspective.

Furthermore, previous research on Hungary has also made use of the term to describe the development of Hungarian politics.²⁰² Far-right regimes, like the *Fidesz* controlled one in Hungary, often interlace exclusionary nationalism, anti-migration security concerns, and radical contestation of gender equality and LGBTQIA+ rights to form persuasive ideological frameworks for illiberalism.²⁰³ Values and allies of liberal democracy are posited as foreign impositions threatening national sovereignty. Gendered and nationalist narratives serve as instruments of explaining and legitimising inequality and polarisation experiences (by excluding social groups that are presented as ‘deserving’ to be excluded) and thus enacting political control.²⁰⁴ Concepts and practices of masculinities derive from but also shape the far-right’s ideals of good society, social order, national sovereignty, citizenship and gender-partnership-parental responsibilities.

Historical and Current Extremist Activity

The genealogy of the radicalising political reasonings and narratives of the *Fidesz* regime can be understood as a two-staged process.²⁰⁵ In the early 2010s, the institutional transformations along a *Carl Schmittian* vision started at full speed (homogenising the community by appealing to a clear friend-enemy distinction, the suppression and elimination of internal enemies, perpetuation of exceptional conditions, etc.). However, during these first stages, the regime avoided making exclusionary racial and gender talks and agendas explicit, positive and negative alike, with a few exceptions, yet made preparatory steps to later explicit anti-gender performances. The fourth amendment to the Fundamental Law (the Hungarian constitution) in 2013 defined marriage as ‘the union of a man and a woman’ and family as ‘based on marriage and the relationship between parents and children.’ PM Viktor Orbán warned the Hungarian LGBTQIA+ community ‘not to behave provocatively’ to prevent backlash on them in 2015.²⁰⁶ Simultaneously, *Fidesz* MEPs voted for the



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



European Parliament Resolution on the EU Roadmap against homophobia and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity (the so-called 'Lunacek Report') and the ministerial accreditation of a gender studies university master's degree went through in 2016.²⁰⁷

The 2015-16 events framed as a 'migration crisis' signalled a turning point in the regime's ideological building work. The government waged a symbolic war against George Soros for his alleged role in supporting migration to the EU from Muslim countries. In 2017, the Central European University, founded and funded by George Soros, was accused of substandard compliance with technical provisions of higher education legislation (and ultimately forced out of the country). The notion of 'gender' was removed from the curriculum for all school subjects and 'non-traditional' sexual orientations were banned from public schools. Successive legislative measures withdrew gender studies programme accreditations in 2018, introduced legal restrictions of gender recognition, and rejected the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2020.²⁰⁸ In 2021, the parliament passed the Children Protection Act, presented as a safeguard of children's well-being, yet turned into an anti-LGBTQIA+ act prohibiting the portrayal of homosexuality and gender reassignment in any content addressed to minors, such as school education material and television broadcasts. All these acts were referred to as national self-defence against 'gender ideology', associated with Western liberalism and cosmopolitan elites.²⁰⁹

Long before Orbán took hold of power, the Hungarian far-right drew on nationalist myths embracing Christianity and nation-building and the Trianon trauma (post-WWI peace treaties) framing Hungarian identity through victimhood.²¹⁰ In addition, right-wing mobilisation, community building and political agenda setting embraced masculinist identity politics at the intersection of gender, class, religion, ethnicity and sexuality from the late 1990s. MIEP, the first post-Cold-War radical-right party in Hungary promoted extreme nationalism, antisemitism and revisionist views on the Treaty of Trianon from 1993 to mid-2000. In its footsteps, *Jobbik* (Movement for a Better Hungary), emerged as a more dynamic and youth-oriented radical-right party promulgating anti-Roma and anti-EU ideals.²¹¹ Its paramilitary ally, the *Magyar*



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Gárda (Hungarian Guard) became the most known and visible masculinist movement within the far-right landscape.²¹² Jobbik gained significant traction in the 2010 elections, becoming the third-largest party in Parliament.²¹³ From 2013, it showed deradicalisation and shifted toward centrist populism to broaden its voter base. After this ideological shift, former Jobbik members, including László Toroczkai, established the *Mi Hazánk Mozgalom* (Our Homeland Movement) in 2018, which returned to hardline nationalism, social conservatism and Euroscepticism with neo-fascist elements. The movement gained parliamentary representation in 2022 and achieved increased support in the 2024 European elections. In sum, the far-right ideologues, communities and political ambitions in Hungary have been continuously thriving, transforming and reinvigorating collective action spaces and the broader political arena since the fall of the Berlin Wall.²¹⁴

In the last and the current electoral cycles (2018-2022; 2022-2026), both the ruling *Fidesz* party and the strongest far-right actors propagate anti-gender (homophobic, misogynist, anti-trans, anti-gender-equality) and xenophobic anti-migration narratives. Both the distinctive and the interlaced conceptual repertoire of anti-gender and xenophobic themes help frame illiberal governance as patriotic defence and the securitisation of national identity.²¹⁵ While *Fidesz* has appropriated and normalised political ideals of the far-right forces and grabbed centre stage in shaping communication arenas, actors further to the right still play an active role by pushing *Fidesz* more and more to the right and further radicalising the extremist actors.²¹⁶ The relationship between the regime-controlled far-right and the far-right movements' idea production is competitive and mutually reinforcing. The competition is spiralling by multiplying the de-democratising and human rights restricting political and social outcomes. There is also a mutually reinforcing relationship between online and offline spaces where these discourses are organised: online discourses from far-right civil society actors pressure offline political actors to pick up (and mainstream) terminology and policy projects.²¹⁷

At the same time, research on the LGBTQIA+ community in Hungary has also highlighted that social media spaces are not only facilitating coordination and radicalisation for far-right anti-gender mobilisation, but also provide anonymity,



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



community-building and space for identity-formation of members of marginalised or atomised communities.²¹⁸ Whereas physical spaces for open queer culture in Hungary have been shrinking, digital spaces still offer crucial and important pathways, both in strategic and identity perspectives.

Several researchers have pointed to the fact that the government role in mainstreaming anti-gender communications and messages has had a double-sided effect: on the one hand, hate crimes and hate expressions (especially in the digital sphere) have grown.²¹⁹ On the other hand, previously active militant groups of the extreme-right have all but disappeared, but extremist groups are less interested in engaging in violent action than in the past. This has led to a decrease in direct physical violence associated with extreme-right groups that had been present in the 2000s.²²⁰

Key Actors and Ideologies

As a rare case in Europe, narratives and communication channels of far-right ideological work are largely state-manufactured and sponsored due to the supermajority of *Fidesz* in Parliament, its authoritarian governance mechanisms and almost full control of print and traditional online media (most importantly state-owned TV channels). In a mutually empowering competitive-cooperative configuration of governmental and other far-right forces, the *Fidesz*-led government integrates far-right themes, such as anti-genderism, ethno-nationalism, as well as Christianity as a civilisational marker into mainstream governance.²²¹ State power and resources compose the infrastructure, whereas a competitive plurality propels the content generation. In these settings, unlike marginal subcultures, contemporary extremist narratives are often stimulated as top-down government campaigns to shape broader political imaginaries and normalise exclusionary nationalism and misogyny as part of mainstream political discourse.²²²

For influential far-right political actors, performative representation of anti-gender and masculinity values serves as the backbone of their public behaviour. Prominent figures of Our Homeland Movement, Deputy Chairwoman Dóra



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Dúró (MP) and her husband, member of the party's board, Előd Novák, are key actors in these public performances. As a married couple, their mediated family life promulgates conservative and pronatalist values, whereas their political advocacy acts fleshes out inflamed anti-gender and anti-LGBTQIA+ feelings and messages. As an infamous performance, Dúró shredded a creative pro-diversity children's book called *A Fairy Tale for Everyone* in September 2020, which became one of the trigger events leading to the 'gay propaganda law' in June 2021.²²³

The ruling party constructs and performs hegemonic masculinity through symbolic politics, legislation, and cultural narratives.²²⁴ This involves portraying 'authentic Hungarian manhood' as rooted in hard work, patriarchal family structures and readiness to defend the nation against external and internal 'others.' It is fair to argue that ideology building through images and myths of the productive working man (associated with industry, agriculture and demanding physical work) is relatively thin. Men as the main earner in the family to which adequate respect should be paid by society is an old traditional trope, which in itself is not suitable for articulating radical or extreme ideals. The unconditional authority of the patriarchal family head (protector, breadwinner, decision-maker) is a decisive move to link valued masculinity to the war on 'gender ideology', portrayed as a cultural invasion from the West that seeks to destroy the 'traditional Hungarian family'.²²⁵ These anti-gender rationales are embedded in a broader discursive ecosystem in which gender equality and LGBTQIA+ rights, which contest patriarchal authorities both in the family and in society, are posited as avenues to moral decay. Reversing gender ideology promises to reinvigorate family, partnership and sexual norms that reinforce male and heterosexual dominance.²²⁶ Finally, aptly tailored masculinity is positioned as both a national heritage and political virtue. This creates a direct link between personal gender identity and loyalty to the nation. More closely, illiberal masculinity enables men to become national warriors, defenders of Christian Europe, and Hungarian sovereignty.

As developed above, the notion of rejecting modern liberalism and the democratic concepts that come with it has played a key role in the development of a fourth wave of the far-right, in which the claim of 'illiberalism' takes centre



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



stage. Furthermore, the broader academic literature has underlined that ‘political masculinity’ plays a central role in political performances in illiberal authoritarian regimes, especially in the case of populist politicians.²²⁷ For example, Putin’s and Erdogan’s political performances build on the masculine concepts of being ‘bad boys’ but ‘good fathers’ to preserve a conservative political order.²²⁸ Similarly, masculinity occupies a central place in leadership ideals of Hungarian illiberalism. Orbán, who has mastered an illiberal regime for 15 years and his party for more than three decades, enacts the figure of the father of the whole nation, a charismatic and extraordinary leader. He uses the metaphor of immigrants ‘breaking down the door’ and claims that building a fence was of absolute urgency to ‘hold back the tide’.²²⁹ At the same time, Orbán also presents himself as an everyday macho, who enjoys traditionally masculine food and adores football.²³⁰ Visual populism further supports this narrative. Orbán’s Instagram imagery depicts him in hypermasculine postures, engaged in masculine activities and positioned with other men (male footballers, soldiers, other male politicians etc.), while women appear mostly in supportive roles, or hardly appear at all.²³¹

As a recent phenomenon, in addition to promoting anti-gender policies as vigilance to children’s rights, targeted child protection duty and authority is posited as constitutive of responsible far-right masculinity. This tenet has been enhanced by a crisis reaction to recent scandals in Hungary (2023-2025) related to paedophilia, child pornography and child abuse cases among *Fidesz*-supported, *Fidesz*-related, or even decorated child protection officials, religious and media public figures, diplomats or co-opted by far-right actors.²³²

In recent years, women politicians affiliated with or appointed by the ruling part have been a lot more forthcoming in spreading masculinity norms in Hungary. Yet, the two most senior *Fidesz*-backed women politicians, participating in normalising traditional or sometimes radical anti-gender propaganda, were forced to step back from their senior position due to a scandal of pardoning child-abusers.²³³

Masculinity in National Context



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



The subsequent governments under Orbán's leadership have constructed hegemonic masculinity as a central ideological and emotional resource for illiberal nationalism.²³⁴ Deploying gendered configurations of East and West has become an outstanding narrative technique to make sovereignty and supremacy claims in international and geopolitical affairs.²³⁵ The illiberal regime (especially the political masculinity of Orbán) promulgates a narrative in which the state is conceptualised through its 'masculine' national self by positing the 'feminine' and 'feminising' West, and the 'hyper-masculine' East against each other. Some argue that militarising masculinity discourses of sovereignty do specific political work in justifying the gradual militarisation of public discourse in Hungary, locally and nationally.²³⁶ Security narratives cast men as defenders of the border and women as reproducers of the nation.²³⁷ These narratives reinforce patriarchal hierarchies while legitimising securitisation policies.

Ultimately, hegemonic masculinity functions as a moral vocabulary for both elite power and popular consent, blurring boundaries between populist governance and extremist ideology. The ideological assemblage embraces:

Anti-genderism: Gender equality and LGBTQIA+ rights are framed as foreign threats. Masculinity is positioned as authentic national identity, while feminism and liberalism are associated with cosmopolitan elites.²³⁸

Militarised nationalism: National identity is linked to military defence, border control and hypermasculine heroism.²³⁹

Historical victimhood: The Trianon myth provides emotional legitimacy to nationalist exclusion, reinforcing 'us versus them' politics.²⁴⁰

Authoritarian populism: The leader's masculinity is portrayed as synonymous with national strength.²⁴¹

The lifestyle politics around masculinity, such as the valorisation of meat consumption, fossil fuel dependence, and traditional rural aesthetics, function as boundary markers between 'real Hungarians' and feminised, cosmopolitan others.²⁴² These narratives can be thought of as both class-stratified (working-class vs. urban elites) and civilisational (Christian Europe vs. Western



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



decadence). As a most recent layer of his public image building, Orbán employs ‘petro-masculinity’s blend of climate denial, racism, and misogyny’ to legitimise his regime.²⁴³ Petro-masculinity ridicules the constraints set by liberal Western hypocrisy to perpetuate the extraction of finite natural resources and endorses the use of wasteful and excessive consumption of energy and fossil fuels secured from Russia.²⁴⁴

Mobilisation Trends

The government and government-organised actors have become the primary disseminators of anti-gender and anti-LGBTQIA+ narratives. Based on a broad network of actors, a whole infrastructure has been built including government-organised NGOs (GONGOs), think tanks and subservient media channels, semi-independent family and anti-abortion organisations, as well as far-right organisations of mixed xenophobic, anti-gender, and nationalist imaginaries.²⁴⁵

Media capture plays a crucial role in mobilisation. Over 90 percent of Hungarian mainstream media is owned or aligned with the ruling party.²⁴⁶ Government figures and party-linked influencers use traditional and digital media to circulate moral panic narratives, particularly around gender and migration. This creates a tightly controlled discursive environment in which dissenting voices are marginalised. In the digital domain, Facebook remains the primary platform for political communication and mobilisation, while TikTok, YouTube and Instagram serve as parallel spaces for both state-aligned messaging and grassroots communication, particularly among youth.²⁴⁷ The government’s use of online platforms amplifies its ideological narratives, extending their reach beyond formal media control.

Rock bands, sports clubs (MMA) and paramilitary community building groups are influential far-right actors.²⁴⁸ The appeal and strategic outreach of right-wing popular culture, in particular ‘national rock’ or ‘nationalistic rock’ to youth groups, has been discussed in the local academic literature by very few authors.²⁴⁹ They argue that in addition to the consumption of this type of rock music through media platforms, the associated face-to-face community events,



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



camp and festivals also contribute to building and empowering right-wing political audiences and subcultures.²⁵⁰

The most comprehensive report explores the international liaisons and activities of the Hungarian far-right actors in anti-gender and anti-LGBTQIA+ mobilisation, including their US, Russian, German and regional nexuses.²⁵¹ These liaisons are manifold and extensive and lavishly sponsored by governmental sources. There is also a significant and increasing overlap between ultraconservative anti-gender movements and the 'Manosphere': communities that gather around misogynistic worldviews, promote male superiority, who are attracted to anti-feminist and anti-woke rhetoric that are extensively promoted by alt-right online communities.²⁵² Research on how these spaces are evolving from within Hungary are still in a nascent stage.

Interview Findings

For the purpose of this report, and for triangulating the state of the literature, we have conducted four interviews. Interviews and transcripts have been anonymised so that names and personal details of interviewees are not visible and no identification is possible. We removed direct identifiers, generalised indirect identifiers, as well as maintain strictly limited controlled access to the original data.

Interviewee #	Details
1	Activist working for one of the oldest Hungarian NGOs working on queer topics.
2	Expert works for an international progressive political foundation and focuses on the topics of democracy, human rights, and younger generations in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE).
3	Expert working as an academic on the question of masculinity and extremism in Hungary.



4

Active in academia and as an activist on the topics of masculinity, extremism, and feminism in Hungary.

One of the Hungarian peculiarities, and something that appears time and again in the interviews as well as in the desk research is that the discourse around masculinity is structured by a media landscape very much dominated by the governing far-right party, *Fidesz*. Interviewees familiar with the Hungarian media system estimate that more than 80 percent of all media products in Hungary are directly owned or related to the governing party.²⁵³ These estimates are furthermore corroborated by an impressive number of studies scrutinising the changes of the Hungarian media system during the last two decades.²⁵⁴ This dynamic creates a very specific kind of discourse as well as far-right social media landscape, in which imaginations of masculinity are often firmly connected to a) official policies, and/or b) government narratives. It also implies that there are very limited possibilities to contest these discourses.

Online spaces are particularly '*invaded*' (interviewee #3) by official political advertising. Many platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, are perceived as almost flooded by imaginations and narratives of what it means to be a Hungarian Man and that this involves the exclusion of social, ethnic, religious or sexual minorities not considered part of Hungarian society. This is backed, for instance, by the government narrative, emphasised by reforming art. 15 of the Hungarian constitution, which states that 'there are only men and women' in Hungary—and nothing beyond or in between this binary distinction.

The narratives and imaginations of masculinity in Hungary are, against this background, reinforcing the far-right *Fidesz* government and their leading politicians as a clear embodiment of masculine leaders and a personification of Hungarian masculinity—that 'men are there to lead us'. Far-right masculinity in Hungary is, therefore, not an oppositional radicality formed purely bottom-up or in a grassroots fashion to influence mainstream discourse from the fringes. On the contrary, it is a key part of governmental top-down strategies that are carefully interlinked with far-right social movement actors benefitting from ideational, resource-based and concrete organisational support. This is also



emphasised by a) the fact that there are hardly prominent and powerful women personalities in the government, and b) how a recent scandal about the female president was handled to showcase that women are just not able to handle power.²⁵⁵

Shifts in Extremist Strategy and Leadership

Masculinity narratives in Hungary have developed gradually since *Fidesz* assumed government in 2010. As interviewee #1 puts it: *'There was a lot of, how would I say, low level symbolic rejection of LGBTQIA+ people, like saying, you know, marriage is the Union between a woman and a man, and they added that to the Constitution, saying things like traditional family values have to be protected by all media service providers. There were these things, but no direct attack on what had been already achieved, right, but more kind of like making sure that this is where you get to, this is where you are and we're making sure you're not getting any further.'* They emphasise that even in the first years under the *Fidesz* government, there was still room for improvement and opportunities for development, especially in criminal law. The LGBTQIA+ community as political enemy or counterpart—and also as a way to emphasise what the opposite, 'true Hungarian manhood' looks like, was made the scapegoat only from 2018/19 onwards. By now, *'the backsliding is really, really, crazily measurable.'*

Others second this impression and emphasise that anti-gender mobilisation increased shortly after the 2015 migration crisis. At first, migrants were identified as scapegoats, but gender later became a focal point. From 2015/2016 onwards, it quickly 'escalated' (interviewee #4), and laws that were framed as child protection followed suit.

Also, a lot of political strategies cater to a feeling of masculinity as source of being needed and sources of a pride being under threat: *'it's a kind of fear that they might lose their masculinity or that they are perceived to be less masculine and thus they kind of overcompensate. It's there so, so with some of these people, even in private discussions, it's there.'* *'So, we need to help boys and men to kind of find a route back to their masculinity and there's nothing transformative about it. It's not like it's new. No, it's not. Nothing new about masculinity. Like, it's not masculinity*



linked to gender equality. No, it's a very traditional form of masculinity to be identified with like strength, bravery, power.' (Interviewee #1)

It also creates very different roles within politics and political behaviour: *'...they very clearly say they are of secondary role in the movement, that the movement has to be led by men because women have a different role. So, this very strong reliance on this kind of complementary gender roles that men have these gender roles and women have these gender roles.'* (Interviewee #1)

Masculinity Constructions

Fidesz as the governing party 'learns and borrows' from notions of masculinity of the more extreme political far-right actors in Hungary, such as the *Mi Hazánk* party or the 64-county youth movement (*Hatvannégy Vármegye Ifjúsági Mozgalom*, or HVIM, named in memory of Greater Hungary, which was divided into 64 counties). This would create a kind of '*motor of innovation*' (interviewee #3) on the extreme-right between the government and actors even further to the right. As the government adopts narratives and imaginations of masculinity from them, actors are dis-appropriated (in the terms and theories they make use of) and consequently pushed to come up with new and own ideas – which then again might be adopted by government officials and policies.

However, this situation not only creates opportunities for both sides and makes them grow closer but also leads to challenges and tensions for the government, as well as the far-right actors. As interviewee #1 puts it, *'There are also even like other football, fan clubs, etcetera and a few other of these kinds of extremist organisations. So they are of course even more extreme than the government and I think for a few years the government was even playing this card that they are the moderate middle, that that keeps the balance between the liberal left and then these kinds of extremists.'* *'So, they (Mi Hazánk and the 64-county movement, FB) struggle a lot with their ideology being the ideology of the governing party, they struggle with that because they perceive they don't agree with Fidesz on the corruption, etcetera. It's a struggle for them that they think that their ideology has been, of course, in the kind of what they say, a watered-down way, but has been appropriated by Fidesz to a certain level at least.'* As a result, *Fidesz* and the government are often criticised



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



for *'not being man enough, for not being anti-gay enough'* (interviewee #4). This was especially prevalent in the case of recent pride parades that were held even though *Fidesz* had tried to prohibit them. This form of critique is for instance raised by movements such as the far-right *Betyársereg* (BS, Outlaw's Army), *Hungarian Defence Movement* (MÖM, Magyar Önvédelmi Mozgalom), *New Hungarian Guard Movement* (Új Magyar Gárda Mozgalom), and *Légió Hungária* (Hungarian Legion, LH).

For many of the interviewees, the sphere of far-right activism beyond the government, offline and online, remains at least semi-connected, subsidised, encouraged or controlled by the *Fidesz* party or the government itself. Many organisations have ties to official politics or are steered informally. For instance, interviewees highlight the Fathers for Justice (*Apák az Igazságért Egyesület*) CSO as semi-government-related. They often present a mix of motives which then connect nicely with attacking feminist movements, activists, progressive judges and feminist claims. The organisation posits itself as a bottom-up format but is backed regularly by leading *Fidesz* politicians. As a result, and in a radicalisation spiral, government anti-gender narratives have escalated – and aggressive tones, especially online, have greatly increased as this form and tone have been strongly encouraged by official politicians.²⁵⁶

Some of the interviewees portray the tensions between *Fidesz*, the Hungarian government and far-right CSOs as a 'theatre' and as an orchestrated effort and roleplay between *Fidesz* and activists further to the right which allows both sides to gain credibility: the more extreme-right fringes as ideologically coherent and strong, and *Fidesz* as representing a social consensus and a political middle ground. This way, also in comparison to other cases and countries, CSO narratives and discourses are never fully separated from government and official policy imaginations but need to be interpreted considering these connections.

Furthermore, many of the attacks on Hungarian opposition politicians circle around denouncing them as *'not man enough'* (interviewee #4), as weak and physically unfit. The government attacked many leaders of opposition parties, civil society, and movements as not being sportif enough (and therefore, for



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



instance, objecting the application to host the Olympic Games). Government mastermind Zsolt Bayer is one of those especially prone to making anti-masculine denunciations.²⁵⁷

From a different angle, opposition leaders are mocked for taking care of young children in non-masculine ways. For instance, carrying children, even more so in baby slings etc. has been framed as feminine and anti-masculine by Philip Rákay, a far-right influencer and entrepreneur.²⁵⁸ (Although this mocking has been met with a strong counter-mobilisation online when many men posted picture of themselves carrying babies or young children).

The interviewees emphasize that in Hungary, the idea that you might need care (as an individual, in the case of illness, age, etc.) is delegated to the family, in which men are portrayed as the sole breadwinners. This places a lot of subjective responsibility on men's shoulders, too, as facilitators of the family. Interviewees emphasise that in comparison to other societies, in Hungary a lot is not understood to be organised through the public or state institutions (also due to a comparatively resource-poor state so that it is not economically feasible) but taken care of by families as facilitators of the last resort. This, in the eyes of interviewees, changes the gravity and importance for narratives of masculinity as it connects them to economic and moral responsibilities for families, women and children. *'A man doesn't ask for help or need medical care'* (interviewee #4), especially in rural areas. In turn, the interviewees perceive alcoholism as a more or less accepted part of manhood.

Men and masculinity are portrayed as a *'social anchor of stability'*—and the political purpose of mainstreaming this version of the Hungarian man as a way to *'improve the daily life'* (interviewee #3) of all Hungarians. The Hungarian father is *'a caring father'* (interviewee #4), as Orban, for instance, is often posting pictures of himself with grandchildren etc.—but with a clear separation from female notions of caring, which circle around providing hygiene, food, clothing etc. *'A loving father is important but changing diapers is a woman's job'* (interviewee #4).



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Connected to this, there appears to be a lot of emphasis on ‘protecting’ children in the Hungarian political discourse of the far-right (official-government narrative and far-right civil society), which is connected to ideas of masculinity. This narrative is brought forward both by male and female far-right actors. For instance, an interviewee mentions the already presented prominent and very active social media couple, *Előd Novák* and *Dóra Dúró*, from the *Mi Hazánk* movement, who emphasise and popularise far-right notions of masculinity from a woman’s perspective.

Child protection as a common denominator of many activists is underlined by the fact that most actors agree on the necessity of being as hard as possible on paedophiles or even demanding castration or capital punishment for paedophiles. This is often connected to the message that being gay or trans needs to be considered as paedophilic.

This constellation also transfers responsibility and the feeling of ‘being needed’, which in the eyes of some of the interviewees, can have positive mental as well as financial effects (in terms of feeling acknowledged or being the person that holds the economically profitable job).

Masculinity and femininity in Hungary are strictly essentialised and firmly attached to a version of ‘being Hungarian’, so it is connected to a nationalised version of manhood. These ideals of manhood are somewhat held beyond the far-right and the government, though. Also, with the opposition parties and leaders imaginations of masculinity as strong and powerful prevail. For instance, one of the leading opposition figures, Péter Magyar, calls himself ‘Magyar Peter the Man’ as his Instagram alias.²⁵⁹ Here, he presents himself as sporty and fit, both of which are understood as conveying the image of strength and leadership. Connected to this, notions of veganism, vegetarianism, cautious nutrition etc. are also widely considered as anti-masculine or feminine. The notion of powerful and self-confident men prompts the imagination of a meat-focused diet.²⁶⁰

Women, in contrast, are portrayed against the background of the ‘ideal woman’ (interviewee #4), which means, first and foremost, giving birth. Several of the



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



interviewees emphasize that this ideal in Hungary has become economically less and less feasible.

Impact on Prevention and Democratic Engagement

Some of the interviewees underline that they consider the anti-gender narratives in Hungary as appealing for many people as a form of compensation for social hierarchy: I may be poor but at least I am not gay or a Roma. In a situation where many people face economic grievances, pride can be upheld by emphasising manhood, as it enables them to maintain an important contribution to family and society. Any narrative that is perceived as threatening this source of pride is considered a serious attack.

Lastly, narratives of masculinity in Hungary seem to be often paired with racism. Anti-feminist narratives then highlight that it is the Hungarian masculinity with its anti-migrant emphasis that enables women's freedom and liberty. Feminists are then often considered as not willing to understand this constellation and should not be entitled to voice criticism.

Online Extremism: Digital Narratives and Data Insights

While the Hungarian far-right historically relied on offline networks such as nationalist youth organisations and paramilitary formations, their contemporary strategies are deeply integrated with mainstream and fringe online spaces.²⁶¹ Digital platforms have become key spaces for circulating extremist and illiberal narratives, particularly those linked to gender, national identity and sovereignty.²⁶²

Hegemonic masculinity has become widespread through pro-governmental social media groups and influencers. Although the European trends during the last decade have shifted from Facebook to Instagram in social media consumption, in Hungary, there are still 6.96 million Facebook users (73.5 percent of population), 3.1 million Instagram users (32.8 percent), 5.82 million Messenger users and two million LinkedIn users.²⁶³ According to the latest



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



report by another international media survey group, Facebook, Messenger, Instagram and TikTok lead the list of the most-used platforms among people of age 16+.²⁶⁴ Among Hungarian teens, Messenger, Instagram and TikTok lead the daily consumption statistics.²⁶⁵

Facebook remains the dominant platform for political communication, including the distribution of government campaigns and mobilisation by far-right parties such as *Mi Hazánk Mozgalom*. The Hungarian government did attempt to extend its firm control over traditional media into the social media platforms, namely, by pressuring Facebook over content regulation. As Facebook has remained comparatively open for diverse expression, Hungary's deeply polarised political climate means that online discussions around gender, sexuality and identity are often highly confrontational.²⁶⁶ With 1.5 million followers by the end of 2025, Facebook is also the Prime Minister Orbán's most wide-reaching channel of communication into the Hungarian discourse. Compared to his Instagram activity, he posts more narrowly political and campaign content, aiming at pro-government networks and political mobilisation, on Facebook.

Instagram can work as a bridge between state-led narratives and affective populist mobilisation. For instance, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán uses his personal account with carefully curated content to project masculinity, leadership and national belonging. His posts combine curated authenticity with symbolic power, reinforcing illiberal narratives through visual language rather than overt ideological claims.²⁶⁷ Here, he addresses lifestyle topics with symbolic, visual, and approachable background stories, through which he conveys the imagery of Hungarian men and families as the backbone of his political ideology.

TikTok has emerged as a particularly significant platform for grassroots extremist and misogynistic content, especially among young male audiences.²⁶⁸ Content creators disseminate gendered and nationalist narratives through humorous or ironic frames that lower the threshold for engagement and normalise extremist ideas. These narratives often appear in the form of short, punchy videos (the main format used on TikTok) that mimic lifestyle content,



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



including dating 'advice,' self-improvement and financial advice, or those that mock interactions with women, making misogyny appear naturalised and relatable. The Prime Minister Orbán also maintains a TikTok channel for more experimental, lifestyle-oriented postings, which do not reach the followings his activities on Instagram and Facebook.

Drath and Hevesi note that it's an easy and effective way to disguise extremist ideas, which enables the content to bypass both platform moderation (another problem is the overall lack of moderation of non-English content) and users' ideological defences.²⁶⁹ A notable tactic is platform differentiation: while TikTok accounts are used to spread more explicitly misogynistic or aggressive messaging, many of these influencers maintain cleaner, more 'respectable' Instagram profiles, projecting a neutral or aspirational lifestyle image. This strategic separation allows them to reach broad audiences on mainstream platforms while preserving a more radical core on TikTok, effectively layering their messaging to appeal to different audiences.

YouTube appears in broader scholarly accounts primarily as a tool to build collective identity, foster intra-group solidarity and normalise selected values and views. Furthermore, YouTube has been described as a breeding ground for ideological networks of political groups of the far-right. Due to the platform's architecture, YouTube communication facilitates the formation of communities around converging ideas and ideologies resulting in the proliferation of political content on the platform.²⁷⁰ For example, *Mi Hazánk Mozgalom*, like many actors and movements, efficiently uses the complementary and different character of platforms to address and mobilise followers and spread messages over various channels. But one channel stands out in their ecosystem of media communication: the movement's president and MP, László Toroczkai's YouTube channel has over 324k followers with over 42 million overall views,²⁷¹ in contrast to his 44'000 followers on TikTok and about 25'000 followers on X.

As another forum for political and ideological discourse, X reported 87'400 users in Hungary in early 2025.²⁷² This is considerably less than Facebook or Youtube. But X still developed as an influential stage for far-right discourse and the connection of political, government and civil society actors. Victor Orbán, for



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



instance, has close to 700'000 followers on X, not all of whom are Hungarians, as this is his only social media channel that functions in English solely.

Some of the online 'news portals' of distinctively far-right agenda and values also profoundly shape the online media space on masculinities through various proxy topics. Through an inconclusive and selective review of posts on *Pesti Sracok* (Boys of Pest²⁷³) online news portal known for its pro-government, far-right and nationalist orientation, components to construct toxic masculinity are visible. The name refers to the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, evoking a heroic, masculine, nationalist identity. The portal frequently features content that aligns with traditional gender roles, militaristic imagery and male-centric narratives, often marginalising progressive gender discourse. Dominant narratives reinforce rigid gender binaries and stigmatise deviation (in behaviour, sexuality, ideology), moralise fear-based framing, especially about children, 'threats to tradition' that masculinity must defend and reject softness/vulnerability. By means of misrepresentation, it encourages men to defend themselves violently or publicly, rather than allowing nuance or due process.

Betyársereg (Outlaw Army²⁷⁴) is one of the main Hungarian far-right paramilitary and nationalist groups. Its online portals, particularly its official website, project a distinct narrative of militarised masculinity, ethno-nationalism and traditional male roles. The typical posts advocate for warrior ethos and physical strength and mobilises for events like strongman competitions, fight nights and motorcycle tours reinforcing the image of the 'warrior male' who is always prepared for confrontation. The group presents itself as a closed male community, offering belonging and identity to young men who feel alienated or disillusioned. Membership is explicitly restricted to ethnic Hungarians by excluding minorities and outsiders. Masculinity is tied to racial purity, national pride and defence against threats, such as immigration or liberal ideologies. The group's rhetoric includes anti-LGBTQIA+ and anti-feminist undertones.

As the most recent development, in May 2025 Prime Minister Viktor Orbán announced the launch of *Harcosok Klubja* (Warriors' Club), a new digital



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



mobilisation platform. It represents a strategic evolution in *Fidesz's* political communication and grassroots organizing, particularly in response to the growing online activism of the first-ever serious contender to *Fidesz* at the next elections in 2026. The platform intends to build a digital support network of 100,000 activists by 2026 and form a 'digital homeland defence force'. The instrument operates on a closed, invitation-only basis on Facebook. The name and branding evoke militaristic and masculine ideals, positioning members as 'fighters' in a cultural and political war. Participants identified as 'digital freedom fighters' signal heroic resistance against liberal and globalist forces.²⁷⁵ The platform's tone and aesthetics mirror combativeness, loyalty, and strength, aligning with traditional masculine virtues. Women are largely absent from the symbolic narrative, which centres on male agency, protection and sacrifice, echoing broader far-right patterns of gender exclusion.

Content Types, Aesthetics and Narratives of Masculinity

Regarding the content of far-right narratives and communication, different far-right and extreme-right social platforms serve as theatre stages and 'loudspeakers' of far-right actors promulgating and enacting powerful masculinity models. Many of these actors have been convicted by criminal justice and/or occasionally embargoed on social media for their hateful content, and some of them have even lost their legal status as social/civic organisations. For them, social media platforms offer community, audience, and attention (e.g., Szilvay, Téglásy, Budaházy, Tyirityán, Gaudi-Nagy, etc.)

Misogynistic content circulates widely among young male audiences, often disguised as humour, lifestyle advice, or 'alpha male' self-improvement. Drath and Hevesi show that Hungarian TikTok influencers normalize control, humiliation, and violence toward women through videos with relationship 'tips', presenting these attitudes as common sense.²⁷⁶ They identify the following types of themes that appear in these videos: (1) Reinforcing gender stereotypes and slut-shaming, (2) Control and manipulation, (3) Trivialising violence, (4) Promoting stalking behaviour post-breakup. The tactic of mixing up entertainment and self-development content with abusive or extremist ideas



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



enables misogynistic messages to spread rapidly and appear socially acceptable.

Concluding Analysis: Cross-Source Convergence

Across all sources there appears to be a strong convergence around **four key dynamics** shaping the online far-right and extremist ecosystem in Hungary:

The first is the blurring of the lines between the state and far-right actors.

This also includes a blurring of lines between mainstream and far-right narratives. Rather than operating on the margins, nationalist and gendered extremist discourses are deeply entangled with mainstream political communication. The ruling party's ideological frames—particularly around anti-genderism, nationalism and sovereignty – mirror the narratives used by far-right and misogynistic online actors.²⁷⁷ This convergence creates a continuum rather than a clear boundary between official discourse and extremist content. What is more, there is a continuous flow of confirmation, resources and validation between Hungarian official politics and far-right mobilizations in Hungary.²⁷⁸

Central role of digital platforms - digital media can be seen not just as amplifiers, but as core spaces of narrative production. Viktor Orbán's Instagram, far-right party websites, and misogynistic TikTok networks operate in parallel, reinforcing each other's messaging through cross-platform dynamics.²⁷⁹ Algorithms privilege highly emotional, visually striking, and polarising content, enabling illiberal and extremist narratives to reach large audiences quickly.

Gender and masculinity as structuring logics - masculinity appears as a central organising narrative across state-led, party-led and grassroots extremist communication. From Orbán's visual performance of masculine authority to misogynistic TikTok content targeting young men, gendered narratives provide a cultural and emotional anchor for exclusionary politics.²⁸⁰



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Platform differentiation and hybrid strategies - a striking finding is the strategic separation of content across platforms. Influencers and movement actors can use TikTok for more radical or transgressive messaging, while maintaining cleaner, lifestyle-oriented Instagram profiles to broaden reach. This layered approach allows extremist narratives to spread widely without appearing overtly extremist in all contexts.

Transnational Dynamics

While Hungary's far-right meaning-making landscape has specific national features, it is also embedded in wider transnational far-right and misogynistic networks.

Illiberalism in Hungary is state-driven and top-down, unlike in some other European contexts where extremist actors operate mainly from the margins. The governing *Fidesz* party sets the discursive agenda, which allows other actors to build on it more easily than when it is a marginalised topic.²⁸¹ Nationalist mobilisation draws heavily on rehearsed historical traumas, especially the Trianon myth, positioning Hungary as a victim nation. This particular feature is highly localised, even when aligned with broader far-right currents. Legal restrictions on LGBTQIA+ representation in schools and mainstream media have pushed identity-related debates into digital spaces, intensifying their polarised character.²⁸²

Hungary mirrors European trends in the use of social media for misogynistic and nationalist mobilisation, especially through TikTok and Instagram. The performative and ironic style, identified by Drath and Hevesi, resembles international trends.²⁸³ As online misogyny and manosphere-adjacent narratives are inherently transnational, many Hungarian TikTok creators use globally circulating 'alpha male' tropes (like those shared by a popular anti-feminist content creator Andrew Tate) and adapt them to local cultural references. Similarly to right-wing populists across Europe, visual populism is also applied to present political leaders as both 'ordinary' and 'exceptional'. Prime Minister Orbán's Instagram exemplifies this method with a special intensity.²⁸⁴ In sum, Hungary represents a hybrid model: an illiberal state



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



structure embedding far-right narratives in official discourse while simultaneously tapping into transnational digital trends that give these narratives cultural traction.

Role of Masculinity in Extremist Mobilisation

Following the aspects emphasised above, masculinity plays a central role for extremist mobilisation in Hungary, as the Hungarian man is portrayed as the core of Hungarian society. Masculinity has been deeply engrained in all forms of implicit and explicit far-right imaginations of society and democracy and, therefore, it is constantly addressed in official government policies, the social media profiles of Hungarian officials, and the mobilisations of Hungarian far-right movements.

Implications for Policy and Prevention

The literature on democratic resilience in Hungary reveals how groups exposed to anti-gender mobilisations emphasise the importance of community organising and solidarity.²⁸⁵ Also, the surprisingly large and powerful mobilisation around Budapest Pride 2025 confronting the Hungarian government's attempt to restrict the parade underlines that queer communities maintain an impressive organisational capacity. They are able to connect to many other social groups to mobilise against the politics of exclusion and the restriction of human rights.²⁸⁶

Still, the fact that far-right extremism and radical anti-gender narratives often find themselves siding with the government and are therefore integrated and somewhat dampened does not mean that there is a) less threat for civil society actors advocating gender or LGBTQIA+ rights, or b) that a democratic change in government would rapidly shift this situation. Instead, the blurring of lines between mainstream and far-right fringe debates underlines that far-right actors have access to state resources and communication and have managed to make their narratives heard and (to some extent) accepted in parts of the Hungarian society. As a result, a political change at the level of the national government might not easily change this dynamic. Thus, any perspective on



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



prevention in the Hungarian case would need to actively engage and include the communities that have showcased strength and resilience resisting far-right narratives and strategies in the last two decades and explore the strategic connections these communities might establish with social groups that are sympathetic to their cause.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Ireland

Mary-Ann Ciosk, Irish Centre for Human Rights, University of Galway

Mary McGill, Centre for Global Women's Studies, University of Galway

Ekaterina Yahyaoui Krivenko, Irish Centre for Human Rights, School of Law, University of Galway



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



IRELAND

Country Context and Extremism Landscape

Like much of Europe, the Republic of Ireland is currently experiencing a protracted housing crisis and rising rates of homelessness, as well as record levels of inward migration through both working visa routes and through the asylum process.²⁸⁷ These factors, combined with a now longstanding cost of living crisis and the new, potential impact of the Trump administration's tariffs on the Irish economy, signal rapid demographic changes amid economic hardship.²⁸⁸ This hardship compounds the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, which sections of the Irish economy and society have struggled to recover from.²⁸⁹ The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)²⁹⁰ recently found that *'attitudes to immigration are more negative in disadvantaged communities'* and in rural areas; regions often perceived as being *'left behind'* in terms of resources and investment.

Extremist politics struggled to make inroads during the 2024 general and local elections, with Ireland's four registered far-right parties (The Irish Freedom Party, The Irish People, The National Party and Ireland First)²⁹¹ garnering less than 1% of voter support in most constituencies.²⁹² Nevertheless, new manifestations of extremism are on the rise in Ireland. These include events such as the 2023 Dublin riots,²⁹³ vigilante-style attacks against buildings rumoured to be earmarked as asylum accommodation,²⁹⁴ and in 2024, what Europol classified as the first recorded incident of jihadist violence in Ireland: a knife attack on a Defence Forces chaplain in Galway, carried out by a 16-year-old boy who had recently converted to Islam and was allegedly radicalised through online extremist content.²⁹⁵ A key dimension of each of these events is their relationship to online communities that harbour and promote extremist ideologies, whose emergence marks a new phase in Ireland's relationship to extremism. These communities are active across a range of digital platforms including Telegram, YouTube, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and TikTok.²⁹⁶

The longstanding sectarian conflict known as The Troubles (1968-1998) has traditionally been characterised by terrorism and extremism. While definitions



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



of these terms are highly politicised and variable, in the context of the IRA, English defines terrorism as violence against civilians to produce fear, and extremism as absolute political goals without compromise.²⁹⁷ Much scholarship on Irish extremism focuses on this history and its legacies. Although largely conducted in the six counties of Northern Ireland, The Troubles also impacted the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom, shaping both jurisdictions' responses to both extremism and terrorism to the present day.²⁹⁸

By comparison, the study of online extremism in the Republic of Ireland beyond these frameworks is emergent. This landscape is a quickly evolving one where the enduring impact of ethnonationalist paramilitary violence (including ongoing though much reduced paramilitarism) sits alongside the rising threat of jihadist and right-wing extremism. Europol's 2024 European Union Terrorism Situation Trend Report lists arrests for terrorist offences in Ireland for the year 2023 as follows: jihadist (9), right wing (1), and ethnonationalist and separatist (4).²⁹⁹

Historical and Current Extremist Activity

In a trend replicated across Europe, Ireland's longstanding and newly developing relationships to extremism are being shaped in real time by the rise of technology and proliferation of digital platforms. Europol notes that Republican Dissidents (who represent one side of the sectarian division in Northern Ireland, Unionists the other) use social media to *'propagate their narratives and publicise accounts of their interactions with law enforcement'*.³⁰⁰ Research has also shown how social media can facilitate the planning of street riots in Northern Ireland³⁰¹ and other forms of anti-social behaviour.³⁰² This use of technology to foment and organise in Northern Ireland echoes the activities of the Republic of Ireland's emerging far-right, as reflected in events such as the Dublin Riots. ISD's recent report details how far-right actors utilise online platforms to target migrants and organise attacks,³⁰³ and Europol's report reveals how 'several high-profile [Irish] right-wing extremist online figures' seek 'online donations, partially in cryptocurrencies.'³⁰⁴ Digital platforms are also reported to have played a key role in Ireland's first recorded jihadist attack which involved a teenager becoming radicalised by 'Islamic state-style material' he encountered online.³⁰⁵



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



While the rise of digital technology is shaping extremism in Ireland, as it is in other countries, Ireland has lower rates of extremist activity than other European countries such as France and Germany³⁰⁶. The effects of partition (in which a border was introduced on the island between the twenty-six county Republic of Ireland and the six counties of Northern Ireland, which remains under the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom) and the trajectory of Irish nationalist politics over the Twentieth-Century and into the early stages of the Twenty-First, meant that the Republic of Ireland has not to date produced the mainstream far-right political infrastructure common to many European states.³⁰⁷ Ireland is also notable for the lack of jihadist violence it has experienced relative to other European societies, although the state has been identified as an active site for jihadist organising.³⁰⁸

Given the lack of an established far-right political presence in Ireland, the emergence in recent years of a fringe but increasingly visible movement has become the focus of discussion by anti-extremism organisations and civil-society groups, e.g., Hope and Courage Collective, ISD. In the early twenty-first century, the internet, specifically forums like Stormfront, were regarded as central to far-right activities, with Garner remarking, *'Irish far-right thought is stronger on the Internet than on the ground'*.³⁰⁹ The proliferation of social media platforms in recent years, which facilitates borderless, real-time communication, has enabled Ireland's online far-right to connect with international far-right figures and discourses³¹⁰. This integration of the local with the global produces effects whereby international talking points (such as conspiracy theories like QAnon³¹¹) become reinterpreted and embedded within Irish national contexts.³¹²

The increased visibility of the far-right in Ireland has been attributed to several interconnected factors. In research conducted in 2022 by Maynooth University, representatives from Irish civil society identified the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, economic austerity policies and a lack of political leadership as key factors driving the rise of the Irish far-right.³¹³ Additionally, the civil society representatives interviewed regarded social media as a space where far-right ideas are tolerated to an alarming degree, thereby enabling the Irish far-right



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



to disseminate its ideology largely unencumbered, outside traditional media. They also noted how social media served as an ‘amplifier’ for far-right activity taking place in other countries, which they perceived as contributing to *‘spreading FR [far-right] activities and personalities’ into Ireland.* This idea of ‘personalities’ and the central role that they play in the Irish far-right online ecosystem is also captured in Niamh Kirk’s conceptualisation of an emerging ‘Irish Alt-Right Influencer Network.’³¹⁴ This network is *‘not confined to the island of Ireland and has links with the alt-right in the United States and the United Kingdom’*, with talking points common to wider European far-right discourses including anti-EU, anti-immigration, and anti-climate sentiments.

Masculinity in National Context

The role of masculinity has received little attention thus far in analyses of the Irish right’s online activities (see ISD’s report on online far-right activity in Ireland).³¹⁵ However, emerging research indicates that gender as both a topic of culture war contestation (see Dunne and Siapera’s study mapping Irish Alt-Tech channels³¹⁶) and as a performative stance are embedded within these online communities. The theme of patriotism, for example, which is a common discursive thread, provides a useful starting point to consider how conceptualisations of Irish masculinity intersect with online extremism. While Ireland has undergone a profound period of modernisation in the last fifty years, resulting in a loosening of traditional gender roles, Irish understandings of masculinity often remain wedded to the traditionalist, breadwinner model.³¹⁷ This model does not exist in a vacuum; it is shaped by changes in the economic and social fabric of the country with new iterations of Irish masculinity emerging, particularly at times of financial uncertainty.³¹⁸ This model is also shaped by global forces and the circulation of discourses of masculinity from other jurisdictions such as the United States and the United Kingdom.³¹⁹ The rise of digital media in Ireland has enabled the intermingling of local and global understandings of masculinity, reflecting popular media’s longstanding role as a space where issues and questions relating to Irishness and masculinity play out.³²⁰



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



As a type of dominant or hegemonic masculinity³²¹ the breadwinner model is often associated with stoicism and notions of protection, provision, self-sacrifice and defence. These characteristics have much in common with patriotic forms of masculinity, particularly in an Irish context where the nation has traditionally been perceived as ‘feminine’ by those seeking to subjugate her (such as the British Empire), liberate, or rescue her (Irish Nationalists and Republicans).³²² In their analysis of Twitter accounts belonging to Irish far-right parties (the Irish Freedom Party and the National Party),³²³ Phelan and Kerrigan note that *‘discourses of ‘patriotism’ and so-called ‘patriots’ often centre on ‘the promotion and justification of an ‘Ireland for the Irish’ geopolitical imaginary.’* Designed to be exclusionary and provocative, this imaginary draws on rhetoric and symbolism from Irish history which has an enduring cultural resonance. The imaginary also draws on patriotic concepts of masculinity, whereby an ‘Ireland for the Irish’ is a proposition that requires protection and defending against perceived threats; in the contexts Phelan and Kerrigan³²⁴ explore, this typically refers to the establishment (the EU) and outsiders (immigrants).

This type of Irish patriotic masculinity is perhaps best exemplified by Conor McGregor, one of the most visible examples of populist, nationalist masculinity both in Ireland and internationally, with over 10 million Twitter/X followers, as of November 2025.³²⁵ Through his use of social media, McGregor regularly depicts the Republic of Ireland as a nation in need of saving.³²⁶ As with Irish patriotic masculinity’s strategic use of Irish history, McGregor’s shift towards ‘populist nationalism’³²⁷ also evokes longstanding popular stereotypes of ‘the fighting Irish’ through both his career as an MMA athlete and his ambitions as a political figure ‘fighting’ for his country. The transnationality of McGregor’s appeal and his position within the broader politically-right ecosystem is underscored by the support his political ambitions have received from alternative influencer figures like Russell Brand³²⁸ and the Tate brothers.³²⁹

In Ireland’s far-right landscape, other prominent voices include politicians from right-wing parties. Justin Barrett, former leader of the National Party and current leader of the group *Clann Éireann*, has spoken at events organised by the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD), suggested Irish citizens of foreign-born parents should have their citizenship revoked, posted a



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Hitler quote on Telegram, appeared at an anti-immigration protest wearing an SS-reminiscent uniform, and on immigration in Ireland, has said, *'Not one person from Africa or Asia belongs or can ever belong here. No matter how much they integrate.'*³³⁰ Other well-known far-right political figures in Ireland include Hermann Kelly, founder of the Irish Freedom Party, who has pushed for Ireland to leave the EU³³¹, and Derek Blighe, who founded Ireland First, considers himself a citizen journalist, and frequently posts anti-immigration videos online. In addition to political leaders, Ireland has a number of far-right online influencers, such as Philip Dwyer, a conspiracy theory activist and self-described citizen journalist who posts anti-immigration, antisemitic, as well as anti-Muslim and Arab content online, to a Twitter/X following of nearly 39,000.³³²

Interview Findings

Five civil society actors were interviewed across organisations and industries. As specified in the consent form terms that each subject agreed to, the records from the study are kept as confidential as possible, with only the project coordinators having access to the files and audio tapes. All digital files, transcripts, and summaries are handled on secure devices and uploaded via a secure connection to the University of Galway's secure online data storage.

Interviewee #	Details
1	Works at the <i>Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD)</i> , a counter-extremism think tank, and identifies strategies and trends related to the intersection of far-right extremism, mis- and disinformation, conspiracy theories, and targeted hate.
2	Works at <i>Men's Development Network (MDN)</i> on various projects with the aim of improving the lives of men, such as providing a help line, programmes that support men ending domestic violence, and research on fatherhood, care, and masculinities.



3	Works at <i>Doras</i> , a refugee and migrant support organisation in Limerick, which provides support through various integration and well-being services.
4	Works at <i>Unite the Union</i> , a trade union representing workers and campaigning for better workplace conditions, in communications, research, and community outreach.
5	Works at <i>Move Ireland</i> , Men Overcoming Violence, supporting the safety and wellbeing of women and children who have experienced domestic violence.

Shifts in Extremist Leadership

Practitioners unanimously reported a marked increase in extremist activity within Ireland, defined by recent incidents of violence against South Asian communities, the Dublin riots, and the harassment and assault of migrants, particularly at IPAS (International Protection Accommodation Services) centres. Practitioners described individuals sometimes being harassed in public spaces based on their skin colour alone, and migrants were consistently identified as the primary target group. An increase in anti-trans rhetoric online and in sexual violence was also noted. Many identified the Covid-19 pandemic as a significant turning point, as much of the population increased online engagement, and were exposed to more far-right and conspiracy theory content.

Move Ireland describes what they view as the shift from questioning masculine identity to far-right ideology, with online spaces playing a key role: *'we have completely left a whole generation of boys and men with a sense of who am I, what am I supposed to be now? [...] And then you put them on social media, and they start looking to people to give them that [...] and then suddenly they're being fed algorithms that are maybe positive at the start, like, this is what it is to be a man. And before they know it, they're led down a path with algorithms towards the far-right.'*

While conducting a research project, MDN noted a rise in far-right rhetoric: *'Scrolling through the 500 responses, you could actually see, 'I don't like foreigners, there's too many black people here, Ireland for the Irish', that kind of stuff. There's*



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



even someone said, 'I'm homophobic and I just don't like gay people.' And this isn't a question of that had nothing to do with any of this stuff, even remotely. It was kind of 'what do you worry about for your child's future?' And it's like, 'there's too many foreigners here.' When we did that same piece of research about three years ago, there was none of that.' MDN went on to describe the transformation of public discourse within the past several years: 'These marches and rallies are happening all the time. That wouldn't have been acceptable [in the past], and that is kind of worrying.'

ISD noted that one influential figure in the Irish far-right told people to stop using the term, *'illegal immigrants'* in favour of the more general term *'foreigners'*, indicating that anti-migrant rhetoric is becoming more extreme and explicitly xenophobic. Unite the Union added that the working class is a primary target of right-wing rhetoric, which exploits economic grievances and social frustration to promote division.

A pervasive sense of fear was also noted among both practitioners and community members. Many are reluctant to speak out against the described far-right activism and extremism for fear of becoming targets themselves. Several practitioners described being directly targeted online, which has led them to withdraw from digital spaces. ISD noted a particular intention to silence female voices that speak up against far-right activities. All practitioners interviewed have withdrawn to a significant degree from online spaces due to harassment, abusive comments, and threats. Unite the Union believes that the general public also feels uncomfortable speaking up: *'that's quite worrying because it creates a chill factor for the decent people and communities to try and stand up because they don't want to be targeted. They don't want people who know them in the community attacking them or their homes.'*

Practitioners noted that the rise of the far-right is likely in large part driven by social media engagement. They described Irish society as increasingly polarised, reactive, and digitally saturated. ISD noted, *'ideologies that were once confined to the fringe are now kind of really pushed into the mainstream. I think that's something that's very, very important.'* Online algorithms were described as amplifying emotionally charged or misleading content, often spreading lies and



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



conspiracies that are difficult to control or even monitor. During Covid-19, multiple conspiracy narratives merged and intensified. ISD noted that far-right accounts on Twitter that had previously been banned for violating platform safety rules had been reinstated following Elon Musk's takeover of Twitter (becoming X), and were those directly linked to inciting the Dublin riot violence.³³³ MDN sees online content as creating the illusion that far-right beliefs are more widespread than they actually are. This illusion, however, can fuel real-world action.

Practitioners repeatedly mentioned figures such as Andrew Tate, Donald Trump, Conor McGregor, and Jordan Peterson as central to online radicalisation, particularly among young men. Practitioners also observed that producing far-right content online can be financially lucrative, further fuelling its appeal. Notable far-right Irish influencers post PayPal accounts under livestreams, allow viewers to post their comments to the top of a feed for a fee, advertise their fundraising page and sell merchandise.³³⁴

MDN reflected on how easily ordinary people can become drawn into extremist causes through social media disinformation: *'You do see people in real life who end up on marches and stuff like that. If you took them aside and said, do you realise what you're doing here? Or do you realise who these people are that you're marching with and what their message actually is? Because it doesn't fit with your values as a person and you've kind of been duped.'*

Extremist movements in Ireland have historical roots in Catholic and religious conservatism, including anti-abortion, anti-divorce, and anti-LGBTQIA+ groups. Even though more progressive attitudes have become mainstream, Unite the Union noted that a minority can still be influential, citing the overturning of abortion restrictions: *'I think a lot of these characters galvanised when we repealed the 8th Amendment in Ireland³³⁵ because they saw even though it passed by two-thirds majority, they probably figured there's a third of us here that can be brought together and form something.'* While The Troubles began through a civil rights movement, ISD sees the right manipulating this narrative: *'In recent years, there has been an effort to misappropriate these kind of older elements of Irish*



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



nationalism [...] to justify exclusionary policies and exclusionary politics. So nationalism has become ethno-nationalism.'

Practitioners emphasised that socioeconomic conditions have made Ireland especially vulnerable to extremist narratives. *'It's not surprising that we've got the problems we have when you've got so many people with nowhere to sleep,'* Doras commented. The housing crisis and the broader struggle to meet basic living standards have created fertile ground for far-right and extremist rhetoric, which provides simple, emotional answers by scapegoating migrants as the cause of these hardships. MDN observed the toll of this environment, remarking, *'when you're walking down the street with your colleagues and you're wondering, is one of them going to have a racial epithet screamed at them now and what do I do if that happens? Like, that's a thoroughly depressing place to be.'*

Practitioners agreed that Ireland remains behind the rest of Europe, the UK, and the US in terms of far-right extremism and believed that Ireland may not have had a big anti-immigration movement in the past simply because there were not previously many non-White migrants in Ireland. The practitioners expressed deep concern about recent trends and warned that current developments suggest the country could follow similar trajectories.

Masculinity Constructions

Practitioners consistently reported that traditional gender roles are a central element of far-right ideology in Ireland. Women are increasingly targeted under the guise of protection, with far-right narratives portraying men as protectors of women against perceived external threats, particularly from migrant communities, as well as against women's own rights and choices, such as access to abortion. *'And what they mean by protecting them, I think we can guess. It's not about protecting our well-being, it's about protecting us as their property, I presume,'* notes Unite the Union. As Doras explained, *'it's men using what they see or what they present as an inherent weakness of women as the reason why they have to assume the role of protectors.'* Several practitioners also highlighted the hypocrisy of this framing, observing that many men who present themselves as defenders of women are simultaneously facing charges of domestic abuse.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



The far-right often positions feminism, LGBTQIA+ rights, and multiculturalism as existential threats to traditional values and ways of life. While men may view themselves as the 'protectors' of traditional values, they may also present themselves as the 'victims' of feminist movements, left-wing organisations, social progress, and cancel culture. Practitioners noted that some men feel threatened by these developments because they challenge conventional understandings of masculinity and social hierarchy. MDN noted that many men who commit abuse are also historically victims of abuse themselves. While now perpetrators, their actions can be partly understood through a cycle of trauma.

Move Ireland sees a big part of the problem as the lack of support for vulnerable males: *'there is a complete deficit and a dearth of supports, research and information around how do we support men, how do we support boys?'* While women are often victims of hegemonic masculinity, Move Ireland views women as also part of the system that produces it: *'we still have stereotypical beliefs where we want equality, but we also want a man that can provide for us and is the strong silent type [...]. We are responsible in the large part for how we socialise our boys and men in the home. We can't put half of the world in refuge. We can't put the other half of the world in prison.'*

Although far-right movements were historically dominated by men, practitioners observed that women now play a growing role in right-wing messaging. ISD suggested that the right also uses women to try to make their message appear more mainstream:

'during the round of protest movements that started against asylum seeker accommodation [...] they would actually make women and children push to the front of those protests. So they would have these pictures of mothers wheeling their children in prams and they would post these online being like, 'this is the far-right in Ireland'. You know, it's a kind of this idea that you can't be far-right if you're a mother and you can't be far-right if you're a woman. I suppose it portrays this idea that this is a harmless movement and that people just care about safety.'



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



MDN described an incident at one of their events where a man verbally attacked the workshop leader, accusing them of trying to *'turn men into women'*. This touches on the idea of a crisis of identity among men. ISD observed that, *'there is a sense of a kind of loss of identity among a lot of young men today. They're kind of hearing that there are two different things that are going on. You have to be like strong and stable, but you also need to be emotionally vulnerable. And it's very hard, I think, for a lot of young men to figure out where their place is in society.'*

The theme of men suppressing emotions and the consequences of that behaviour was also a common theme. Doras emphasised that emotional suppression limits empathy. They recounted, *'I met a man the other day, who told me that his brothers and father had just been murdered by the Israelis in Gaza. Having to just engage with that is – yes, it can be challenging. You know, you have to open yourself up a little bit to be able to hear that.'* Practitioners suggested that genuine engagement with such stories, and the emotions they evoke, could lead individuals to question their values and move away from the rigid ideologies that currently define much of the far-right movement.

Impact on Prevention and Democratic Engagement

Several practitioners expressed scepticism about the Irish government's interest in or capacity to meaningfully combat far-right extremism. ISD viewed the government as adopting increasingly restrictive policies around migration, due in part to far-right activism, and Unite the Union saw the government as neglecting to address the root causes of far-right activism and extremism, such as the housing crisis and broader structural inequalities. Practitioners argued that until these systemic issues are addressed, efforts to counter extremism will remain limited in their impact. Doras explained that when basic needs are met, people can feel more empowered: *'I think fundamentally people can and will behave in more appropriate ways if they're given the opportunities to do that, and if the circumstances aren't defeating them.'*

Doras acknowledged that the government has made positive steps by funding certain initiatives, such as CUAN (The Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Agency), which aims to address gender-based violence and promote



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



safer communities. Nonetheless, they pointed out that project funding is often fragmented and short-term, rarely extending beyond pilot projects. This lack of continuity was described as a chronic problem across the NGO sector, preventing meaningful, long-term progress.

In general, practitioners suggested programmes such as those fostering critical thinking among schoolchildren, encouraging open discussions on extremist topics, and improving digital literacy. As Move Ireland put it, *'the thing that we don't teach, when we teach everything else in school, is how to be a human. What are my emotions? How do I regulate them and how do I learn what it is to be a person and an individual? And how do I really learn how to relate to another person in my life?'* To counter extremism effectively, both ISD and MDN emphasised the importance of working through trusted community voices. MDN cited the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) as an especially effective vehicle for positive social engagement.

Confrontational or adversarial conversations tend to be counterproductive. MDN noted, *'you don't start by telling people what's wrong with them, you start by telling them everything that's right with them, and if there's little things that need to improve to make you even better than you are now. [...] Nobody wants to be told that they're a problem.'* Similarly, Doras recommended non-confrontational, one-to-one engagement, describing how they have privately spoken to individuals who made inflammatory comments in public to avoid escalating conflict or triggering defensiveness. Move Ireland echoed this sentiment: *'if you push somebody into a position of shame and guilt, you're going to put their defences up. They're not going to be able to look at their behaviour and come to a position of change.'*

Offline engagement was often mentioned as a more effective way to build empathy and understanding. Practitioners observed that online environments often dehumanise individuals, lowering inhibitions and increasing aggression. MDN noted, *'A person in the room standing in front of you, who's flesh and blood – it does make it a lot easier to have those kind of conversations, and it does make it a lot easier to kind of foster that spirit of openness and even fragility or vulnerability.'* They added, *'just think of the worst thing anyone has ever said to you or about you*



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



online and imagine someone standing in front of you and saying it to your face. They won't, because it's this inhibition effect.' Practitioners also stressed the importance of maintaining a visible presence in physical spaces, such as through street outreach and public engagement, to prevent extremist groups from dominating those environments.

Practitioners highlighted the importance of partnerships between organisations within Ireland and internationally. They emphasised that no organisation can effectively tackle extremism alone, and that cross-sector collaboration is vital for sharing resources, expertise, and strategies. Doras pointed out that frontline workers are not always adequately informed about extremism and, in some cases, may even hold prejudiced views themselves, which can unintentionally reinforce division, indicating the need for better training.

While the government's interest in addressing far-right activity was questioned, the need for maintaining a peaceful society is clear. *'What all politicians do care about is maintaining social cohesion, because even in the Irish context, or anywhere else, no elected representative wants to have to deal with daily unrest or fights on their streets,'* said Doras.

Concluding Analysis: Cross-Source Convergence

Desk research and practitioner interviews revealed a rising visibility and normalisation of far-right ideology, facilitated in large part by online platforms and social media. While Ireland has historically lacked a mainstream far-right political infrastructure, new groups are increasingly visible online, including fringe political parties, far-right influencers, and episodes of street violence such as the 2023 Dublin riots and attacks on asylum accommodation centres. Practitioners corroborated this trend, noting that the Covid-19 pandemic served as a significant catalyst for far-right rhetoric through increased online engagement, increasing exposure to extremist narratives among young men, in particular. Interviews highlighted that extremist rhetoric, particularly concerning conceptions of masculinities and anti-immigration stances, is now increasingly mainstreamed, particularly in socioeconomically disadvantaged



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



communities. Far-right actors often capitalise on the socioeconomic insecurity and housing crisis in Ireland and use immigrants as a simple answer and scapegoat for these complex and systemic issues.

Transnational Dynamics

Ireland has distinctive national characteristics that shape its far-right landscape. Historical factors, such as the legacies of The Troubles, have constrained the development of a mainstream political far-right infrastructure. Unlike other European states with established far-right parties, Ireland's far-right remains largely online and without significant following in politics. While Ireland has experienced a rise in protest and riots in recent years, it is still significantly less developed than in other European countries. Contemporary social media platforms and channels have become the primary sites of organisation and discourse, with local actors drawing on global narratives, particularly those from the UK and US, while adapting them to the Irish context. This hybridisation produces a distinct Irish far-right identity that blends patriotic symbolism, historical references, and gendered tropes to resonate with domestic audiences.

The transnational dimension is evident in the circulation of ideas, strategies, and personalities across borders. Irish far-right actors maintain links with alt-right networks abroad, appropriating talking points such as anti-immigration narratives, conspiracy theories, and anti-EU sentiment. Influential figures like Conor McGregor, Russell Brand, and the Tate brothers serve as vectors for these transnational ideas, particularly among young men seeking cultural validation and guidance regarding masculinity and identity. Practitioner interviews highlighted that social media algorithms amplify these messages, giving the impression of widespread social acceptance, which helps mobilise people to take action offline, through protests or riots.

A notable distinction from other European contexts, such as Germany or France,³³⁶ is the limited occurrence of jihadist or violent ethnonationalist activity within the Republic of Ireland. However, as transnational influences are felt,



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



particularly through social media, Ireland could follow a similar trajectory, if preventive measures are not adopted.

Role of Masculinity in Extremist Mobilisation

Practitioners consistently reported that traditional gender roles are a central element of far-right ideology in Ireland, framing men as ‘protectors’ of women and the nation, reinforcing gendered hierarchies, and justifying hostility toward migrants and minorities. Simultaneously, men may present themselves as the ‘victims’ of feminist movements, left-wing organisations, social progress, and cancel culture. Practitioners noted the loss of identity that young men may struggle with as society moves away from traditional roles. Practitioners emphasised that men struggling to find masculine identity are especially susceptible to extremist messaging, which promises clarity, purpose, and social status through adherence to traditionalist ideals.

Practitioners noted social media algorithms presenting a curated narrative of masculinity that increasingly overlaps with far-right ideology. As Move Ireland described, the path often begins with seemingly benign content about *‘how to be a man,’* which algorithms then steer toward more extreme ideologies, highlighting the role of social media in radicalisation.

Masculinity also interacts with concepts of nationalism. Figures like Conor McGregor embody a male archetype that is dominant to the point of violence. These representations resonate within far-right networks, where notions of strength, stoicism, and defence of women and the nation converge, reinforcing both the ideological and performative appeal of extremism. The interviews further revealed that far-right movements may also manipulate gender norms in strategic ways, including deploying women in public protests to present a façade of legitimacy and broad social support. This highlights symbolic dimensions of gender in the mobilisation of extremist ideology.



Implications for Policy and Prevention

The desk research and interviews point to implications for policy and prevention. Firstly, the importance of online platforms and prevalence of masculinity narratives underscores the need for initiatives to focus on digital citizenship, digital literacy and critical thinking among young people, especially boys. Social media algorithms and influencer culture significantly shape perceptions of normative masculinity and social engagement. Interventions targeting these spaces, particularly through community-based education, would be a good starting point.

Secondly, socioeconomic precarity emerges as a key driver of susceptibility to far-right ideology. Policy responses should address underlying structural inequalities, including housing, and employment security, alongside targeted interventions addressing ideological exposure. Without these structural remedies, some of the root causes risk being left unaddressed.

Thirdly, interventions should consider the concept of masculinity and gendered narratives. Programmes that provide safe spaces for emotional expression, social development, and mentorship can help mitigate identity crises exploited by far-right movements. Move Ireland and MDN's approaches demonstrate the value of community-based, gender-sensitive interventions that empower men while addressing harmful norms, without alienating them or triggering defensiveness. Engaging trusted community voices and institutions, such as sports clubs and educational bodies, can further improve these effects.

Fourthly, practitioner insights emphasise that non-confrontational engagement is essential for prevention and de-escalation. Adversarial or shaming approaches risk triggering defensive attitudes. Initiatives that promote dialogue, empathy, and exposure to alternative narratives, particularly in offline, face-to-face settings, are more likely to be more effective in fostering critical reflection and resilience against far-right ideology.

Finally, global dynamics at play highlight the need for international collaboration. Ireland's far-right networks are not isolated but are connected to



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



broader European and Anglo-American ecosystems. Coordinated monitoring, knowledge sharing, and joint policy initiatives can strengthen early-warning mechanisms and disrupt transnational content flows that facilitate radicalisation. Collaboration with civil society groups, digital platform monitors, and academic institutions could help develop holistic strategies that encompass both online and offline dimensions of far-right activity.

Concluding Analysis: Cross-Source Convergence

Ireland's current rise of the right is a result of the interplay between national characteristics, emergent socioeconomic issues, and transnational influence. The country has historically been insulated from mainstream far-right politics due to unique political and historical conditions, yet the rise of online platforms and the visibility of global extremist narratives have fostered new ideological mobilisation, with effects in both online and physical spaces. While the Irish far-right remains limited compared to other European contexts, there has been a notable rise of far-right activity since Covid-19, and demonstrations and riots have become increasingly common and violent in recent years. Masculinity plays a key role in far-right ideology and framing, emphasising strength, national protection, and a hierarchy among social groups. Interventions should target structural inequalities, foster digital literacy, critical thinking, emotional awareness, and engage trusted community voices to counteract these trends.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Slovakia

Jozef Michal Mintal, Research and Innovation Center, Matej Bel University

Tomáš Beňuška, Department of Security Studies, Matej Bel University



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



SLOVAKIA

Country Context and Extremism Landscape

Slovakia's political arena has been sharply polarised since the snap parliamentary election of September 2023 returned Robert Fico's SMER-SSD to power in coalition with HLAS-SD and the Slovak National Party (SNS). International observers assessed the election as competitive and pluralistic but noted a highly polarised information environment and areas for improvement in campaign finance oversight and dispute resolution.³³⁷

The government's early moves re-shaped the national debate around rule of law and foreign policy. In November 2023 the cabinet rejected a previously drafted military aid package for Ukraine and signalled that state donations of arms would halt, while allowing commercial sales to continue. This fulfilled a core campaign promise and aligned Bratislava more closely with Budapest's position inside the EU.³³⁸ The foreign-policy turn has been politically costly at home: large street protests recurred from late 2024 into 2025, with organisers and media framing them as a rebuke of a perceived 'Russian tilt'.³³⁹ Domestically, the government's fast-tracked overhaul of criminal law, abolishing the Special Prosecutor's Office and reducing penalties for financial crime, triggered tens of thousands to rally in early 2024 and drew concern from the European Commission about effects on anti-corruption enforcement.

Gender and 'family' have become central to political identity-building and policy debates. A decade-long mainstreaming of anti-gender discourse reframed politics as a clash between a 'conservative majority' and liberal elites, enabling illiberal agendas to present themselves as the rightful voice of 'the conservative people'.³⁴⁰ Parliamentary rhetoric across parties, Christian-democratic, populist and far-right, mobilised overlapping narratives about threats to tradition, nation and sovereignty, with the far-right using the most abusive language toward LGBTQIA+ people.³⁴¹

Slovakia's digital sphere both mirrors and appears to accelerate these divides. The 2023 campaign was an EU test case for 'cheapfakes' and deepfake audio:



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



two days before the vote, an AI-manipulated recording purporting to feature Progressive Slovakia's leader and a journalist discussing electoral fraud during the pre-election 'silence,' complicating debunks. Analyses since then caution against over-attributing the electoral outcome to one incident, but concur that highly polarised, pro-Kremlin information ecosystems made the electorate more vulnerable to such manipulations.³⁴²

The structure of the Slovak online space is becoming well mapped. For example, ISD/Strong Cities have identified 375 Slovak extremist pages, groups, accounts or channels across Facebook, Instagram and Telegram and analysed 11,779 posts.³⁴³ The most prevalent narratives included nationalist frames, anti-LGBTQIA+ content, antisemitism, anti-media and anti-democratic messages. A separate Slovak study of Telegram shows the ecosystem is dominated by disinformation and pro-Kremlin actors, including alt-media outlets (e.g., *Zem a Vek*, *InfoVojna*), politicians, especially from *Republika*, and 'disinfluencer' channels run by individuals.³⁴⁴ However, regarding research on the 'Manosphere', the literature in Slovakia on the topic is very limited.

Economically, Slovakia has experienced the same post-pandemic and energy-price shocks as its neighbours. Those pressures, paired with corruption fatigue and distrust of institutions after the 2018 Kuciak murder—the killing of an investigative journalist and his fiancée in their home because of his investigation into a nexus of corruption between Slovak politicians and businessmen—create fertile ground for grievance politics that connect cost-of-living concerns with anti-elite and anti-Western narratives in both mainstream and fringe discourse. The persistence of mass commemorations and protests around the Kuciak case, and their recent revival against perceived democratic backsliding, keep governance and integrity issues at the centre of public life.

Historical and Current Extremist Activity

Slovakia's contemporary far-right grew out of the 1990s skinhead and neo-Nazi subculture and consolidated organisationally in the mid-2000s around *Slovenská pospolitost*—*Národná strana (Slovenská pospolitost)*, an ultranationalist



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



group espousing antisemitic, anti-Roma and neo-fascist positions. After the Slovak Supreme Court banned *Slovenská pospolitost'* in 2006 for violating democratic principles, its leadership and activist base did not disappear but instead re-entered formal politics by taking over a small, dormant party (*Strana priateľov vína*) and transforming it. Through a series of renamings and restructurings, this platform was rebranded in 2010 as *Ludová strana Naše Slovensko* (LSNS). As a result, LSNS represents not a rupture but a continuation and institutionalisation of the networks, ideology and personnel of *Slovenská pospolitost'*, translating earlier extremist subcultural milieus into a more electorally professionalised far-right party. Early mobilising frames were bluntly ethnonationalist and above all anti-Roma; they later fused with anti-immigrant, anti-elite, antisemitic and anti-LGBTQIA+ narratives as actors sought wider appeal.³⁴⁵ With various studies identifying anti-Roma rhetoric as the 'central issue' and main mobilisation tool of extremist parties.³⁴⁶

From the early 2010s, 'gender ideology' became the discursive glue connecting church actors, nominally civic groups, conspiracy media (notably the radio *Slobodný vysielateľ*) and anti-system politicians. This mainstreaming coincided with the 2014 constitutional amendment defining marriage as heterosexual and the 2015 'Referendum on the Family,' and it culminated in the 2016 entry of far-right and anti-system lists into parliament.³⁴⁷ Parliamentary debates in the 2004–2020 period show how anti-gender frames migrated across the right and far-right, with LSNS blending all strands and using especially vitriolic anti-LGBTQIA+ language.

Offline violence has been rare but significant. On 12 October 2022, a 19-year-old attacker murdered two people outside an LGBTQIA+ bar in Bratislava. His manifesto and digital footprint located him firmly within the contemporary white-supremacist accelerationist milieu: he embraced the belief that violence can hasten a collapse of the current democratic order, fused extreme antisemitism with anti-LGBTQIA+ hatred and consumed transnational extremist content.³⁴⁸ Investigations show that he was radicalised primarily online and was active in channels and networks associated with the 'Terrorgram' ecosystem, where he interacted with and circulated materials from global accelerationist communities.³⁴⁹ His manifesto explicitly referenced and modelled itself on



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



earlier attackers in Buffalo, Christchurch and elsewhere, illustrating how the Bratislava shooting was embedded in a wider, digitally networked, transnational far-right subculture.³⁵⁰

Since 2023, political turbulence has coexisted with the steep decline of ĽSNS, driven by internal splits, court cases and the departure of its most active cadres. The party's fragmentation culminated in the creation of *Republika* in 2021, founded by Milan Uhrík, who was long the right-hand man of ĽSNS leader Marián Kotleba, joined by virtually all of ĽSNS's prominent members of parliament (MPs) and organisational heavyweights. This exodus effectively hollowed out and marginalised ĽSNS, while *Republika* inherited its networks, rhetoric and mobilisation capacity. However, far-right narratives continue to circulate across parties, alternative media and encrypted platforms. At the same time, the policy agenda of the current government, criminal code reforms, media and NGO legislation, and a foreign-policy pivot away from Kyiv, has kept streets mobilised and digital spaces febrile, with recurrent protests and energetic online counter-mobilisation.

Key Actors and Ideologies

The governing camp comprises SMER-SSD, HLAS-SD and the nationalist SNS. Some of the coalition's rhetoric intersects with illiberal and sovereigntist narratives, particularly on 'gender,' media, NGOs and Ukraine, which the far-right has long promoted. The opposition's strongest pro-liberal-democratic force is Progressive Slovakia; centre-right groupings remain fragmented.

On the far-right spectrum, ĽSNS's electoral collapse left *Republika* as the main parliamentary-adjacent actor. *Republika* and figures linked to it have benefited from slicker communication and a strategic shift from the neo-Nazi aesthetics associated with ĽSNS to a modernised nationalist brand. Analysts document the ideological continuity: sustained anti-EU, anti-NATO, anti-minority positions and admiration for Russia as the civilisational counterweight to the West.³⁵¹ Paramilitary milieus, most notably *Slovenskí branci* (Slovak Conscripts) have served as recruitment and socialisation spaces for young men attracted to military aesthetics and nationalist protection narratives; they have also been



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



vectors for Russian-linked training and influence.³⁵² The group formally announced its voluntary disbandment in 2022.

The digital-first ecosystem features alternative media (e.g., *Zem a Vek*, *InfoVojna*) and Telegram ‘disinfluencers.’ Mapping shows pro-Kremlin narratives, anti-Western frames and culture-war content dominating high-reach channels; politicians from *Republika* and some figures from SMER/SNS have built large followings in this space.³⁵³ Russian influence on the Slovak far-right is assessed as largely indirect an alignment of worldviews and narratives amplified through networks of fringe media, cultural associations, motorcycle clubs, martial-arts scenes and paramilitary groups, rather than proven direct funding. This works because Slovakia has been comparatively more sympathetic to Russia in regional polling and media discourse, giving Kremlin narratives an easier runway than in neighbouring states.³⁵⁴

Ideologically, the field blends ethnonationalism, nativist welfare chauvinism, conspiracism and anti-liberalism with strongly gendered frames. In parliamentary discourse, traditionalist appeals (family, motherhood, ‘protection of children’) are routinely fused with sovereignty arguments (Istanbul Convention as foreign imposition) and anti-LGBTQIA+ panic. The far-right layers onto this an accelerationist, racist and antisemitic subculture, sometimes openly, often obliquely, repackaged for mainstream platforms.³⁵⁵

Masculinity in National Context

The gender order promoted by conservative and far-right actors is built around a protective, heteronormative national family. Research on Slovakia’s ‘gendered illiberal transformation’ shows how the imagined subject of politics became ‘the conservative people,’ whose grievances justify dismantling gender equality institutions, redirecting funding to ‘family functionality’ initiatives and casting feminism and LGBTQIA+ rights as elite projects. This reframing widened beyond values talk to socioeconomic claims about redistribution and representation, helping illiberal agendas resonate with voters who see themselves as culturally and materially insecure.³⁵⁶



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Parliamentary speech analysis details how different parties localise this gendered script: Christian-democratic and new populist actors emphasise Catholic tradition and the family; nationalist actors elevate sovereignty and legal resistance to 'imposed' conventions; far-right actors blend all of the above and reserve the harshest invective for transgender people and sexual minorities.³⁵⁷ In paramilitary milieus, masculine identities are anchored in discipline, moral hierarchy and the role of men as national defenders, resonating with younger recruits and linking personal pride to illiberal political projects.³⁵⁸

These masculine ideals travel easily across borders: online communities draw from transnational 'Manosphere' tropes and actors, such as Andrew Tate, and English-language extremist subcultures, then localise them into Slovak memes and slogans about 'decency' and 'protection.' The Bratislava attacker's manifesto makes the link explicit, folding misogyny and transphobia into a conspiratorial white-supremacist frame and valorising prior shooters as models of virility and agency.

Mobilisation Trends

Transnational links are well documented. Slovak extremist communities import frames and aesthetics from US and European alt-right circles.³⁵⁹ Pro-Kremlin narratives focused on 'Slavic brotherhood,' 'traditional values' and anti-NATO ideas, flow through a mesh of aligned political actors, alt-media, cultural associations, martial arts clubs and paramilitary groups. The evidence suggests mostly indirect support rather than traceable funding streams, but the effect is nonetheless powerful in agenda-setting and legitimising illiberal positions domestically.

Interview Findings

We have conducted five interviews with predominantly activists/frontline workers and partly experts from a non-governmental environment. Interviews and transcripts have been anonymised. We removed direct identifiers and maintained strictly limited controlled access to the original data.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Interviewee #	Details
1	Activist working for an NGO that deals with educating people on topics on inclusion, deradicalisation and forming of civic society.
2	Activist working for an NGO connecting children and youth organisations in empowering and forming values of inclusion and democracy.
3	Expert working as a researcher on topics on integration of minorities, migrants, providing support and advocating activities for vulnerable peoples.
4	Activist working for an NGO providing field social work for youth spending time on streets and exhibiting risk behaviour.
5	Activist/Expert working in NGO that monitors human rights violations and provides legal aid to victims of discrimination.

Shifts in Extremist Strategy and Leadership

Across practitioner interviews, a common thread is the sense that extremist mobilisation has become increasingly networked, fluid and platform driven, with leadership migrating from formal hierarchies to influence-based ecosystems.

Changes in Recruitment, Communication and Organisation

Practitioners consistently locate the centre of gravity of recruitment and community maintenance in closed or semi-closed online spaces (chats, gaming-adjacent comms, invite-only servers) rather than on the open 'town square' of mainstream social media. As one youth-sector practitioner put it:



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



'Young people radicalise online... we don't really have a clear picture of the online world of young people... chat tools like Discord, Snapchat and 4chan... are less regulated, or not regulated at all.'

A third respondent, reflecting on how quickly platforms churn, highlighting the operational advantage this gives to recruiters:

'If I finally figure out what Snapchat is, by then Snapchat doesn't exist and there's already something new... it moves terribly fast.'

The upshot is that microcommunities form and recombine at high speed, often around niche interests, pop-culture nodes, or gaming, giving recruiters and propagandists repeat opportunities to catch young people 'between' moderating regimes. In these spaces, globalised grievance repertoires and aesthetic cues travel easily (memes, short video formats, masculinist fitness tropes), while local anchors such as schools, neighbourhoods and youth clubs often only detect problems late, when conduct has already become overtly abusive (e.g., targeted harassment of girls or gender-nonconforming peers). Frontline workers describe the trigger points at which schools finally seek help:

'Either the school notices concrete behaviour... open bullying... or someone spots something online, openly insulting girls... or attacking a transgender student, and then asks what to do.'

Organisationally, prevention practitioners report that referral pathways remain ad hoc, and multiagency protocols are weak. A social-work practitioner summed up the systemic gap:

'Multi-institutional cooperation is missing... we meet at roundtables, but there is no created system, for prevention or deradicalisation. Schools, courts, police don't really cooperate; people reach us randomly 'through contacts.'

These frictions matter because effective responses require continuity (from classroom workshop to family support to alternative sanctions). One programme lead described the operational model they aim for universal and



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



selective prevention in schools coupled with individual and family counselling for those already at risk, precisely the sort of end-to-end support that becomes difficult without institutional buy-in.

Role of Online vs. Offline Leadership

Interviewees describe a decoupling of leadership from formal organisations. Rather than commanders and cadres, today's leadership often looks like content producers, micro-celebrities and controversy-maximising influencers who monetise attention while amplifying grievance and status hierarchies. As one practitioner observed about the influence economy:

'Some protagonists, often from pop culture, use controversial content to attract young people; they might not see the chain of events, where in two years someone could take a life.'

This influence-led model coexists with, and sometimes overshadows, legacy offline formations. Several interviewees noted that the most salient security risk is increasingly the self-radicalised lone actor, not a large, disciplined group:

'I always expected it would be a young member who knows how to handle a weapon and can act alone... the incident confirmed that.'

Masculinity Constructions

Interviewees converge on a working description of extreme/toxic masculinity as an ideology of dominance, control and emotional invulnerability, often performed in front of male peers and amplified by group dynamics:

'For me it's exaggerated aggression and primacy... dominance and the denigration of women... the 'alpha' thing. In groups this can escalate to incitement and even criminal behaviour.'

Another respondent approached the same theme through the lens of exclusion, namely, that gendered hierarchies are used to define who counts in public life:



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



'The key principle in these circles is exclusion of a group from public life, e.g. whether women 'should be present' in public life or sent 'back to the kitchen.'

Practitioners stressed that these norms are not merely imported from subcultural extremist spaces; they resonate with broader social cues. Youth workers encounter normalised sexist language at school and in families, and respondents noted the way public discourse models what is acceptable:

'If someone can call you 'a bitch' in parliament... a son will replicate it because he sees it's okay... it's become normalised; young people are braver about saying these things.'

The visual and affective economies of contemporary platforms, short-form video, body/aesthetic display, and meme-based humour, also matter. One civil-society leader described a pendulum swing toward more overtly 'macho' aesthetics, globalised through TikTok and similar channels:

'What was 'cool' ten years ago, being a nerd, has swung back... now it's more 'macho'... and thanks to social networks these influences are far more globalised.'

Interviewees working with girls and young women additionally flagged sexualised harassment ecosystems, forums for sharing intimate images, coordinated bullying and reputational abuse, as part of a newer radicalisation milieu that polices gender and sexuality:

'They set up pages with photos of their girlfriends, wives, mothers... and support each other in it... this feels like a new type of radicalisation.'

Links to Broader Societal Norms

Practitioners emphasised that extreme masculinities interlock with other boundary-making projects, xenophobia, homophobia and are licensed when high-status actors disparage equality. One human-rights analyst captured the concern succinctly:



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



'When state representatives' question that everyone has equal rights... LGBTQIA+ people become a focus; toxic masculinity and the idea of 'stronger' and 'weaker' predetermine social roles.'

At the same time, frontline workers caution against treating youth attitudes as monolithic; ambivalence is common. A counsellor noted that some clients express support for LGBTQIA+ peers while reproducing mainstream anti-Pride narratives:

'Often it comes down to: 'Why the Pride, it's disgusting... but I have nothing against them; let them do what they want in private.'

This ambivalence suggests a struggle over the meaning of masculinity itself, what counts as 'strength,' who gets to protect whom and the status of emotion and care. As one practitioner reflected, many young men are actively searching for scripts and may find them 'in the wrong places' if democratic institutions and educational settings do not provide credible alternatives.

Impact on Prevention and Democratic Engagement

Respondents voiced a dual concern: erosion of institutional trust and thin civic education. Youth workers described a generation that wants tangible change quickly but sees slow-moving reforms and patchy, often nonspecialist civic instruction:

'Democracy seems to have resigned from the work of shaping democratic citizens... there isn't a proper formative subject... young people want quick wins.'

When democratic engagement appears procedural but ineffective, some youths drift toward tribal belonging in online spaces, where identity affirmation is immediate and accountability diffuse:

'If I join chat groups with radical content, my value-commitment is much stronger... I'll seek a bubble where I'm heard and won't look for people who challenge me.'



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Practitioners also noted the political economy of attention: influencers, and sometimes politicians, weaponise othering for reach and revenue, creating a background hum of hostility that can catalyse violence:

'If you long-term vilify some minority as the problem... I think there's no other way it ends.'

The consequences for pro-democracy work are direct. Civil society actors spoke of polarisation so intense that terms like 'human rights' or 'liberalism' act as conversation-stoppers; dialogue collapses before it begins:

'We're so far apart we're not interested in communicating; labels shut ears, say 'human rights' and people don't listen.'

At the same time, practitioners report that international standards and institutions sometimes provide protective backstops, for instance, rapid legal reviews when problematic laws are rushed. Even when such interventions do not change outcomes, they can legitimate domestic defenders and keep normative space open for pro-democracy advocacy.

Effects on Social Cohesion and Prevention Infrastructure

Social cohesion, in this account, is strained from both ends: by intensified hate-normalisation in public discourse and by institutional fragmentation that leaves at-risk youths and targets of harassment underserved. School-centred prevention is reactive rather than anticipatory; referrals arrive late and randomly; and data-sharing/consent rules, while crucial, are not embedded within cooperative protocols, producing confusion and broken trust:

'There's a lot of non-transparency... a child learns last that something is happening, decisions are made around him... schools notice but often don't know what to do next.'



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Practitioners were adamant that relationship-based, long-horizon work is essential for desistance and resilience:

'If we can work long-term, not just one meeting, then through building the relationship we can get to what's behind the hate and help meet needs in safer ways.'

Where systems enable continued universal prevention in schools plus tailored family counselling and alternative pathways, workers report more traction. But without joined-up governance, even strong programmes feel like isolated islands.

Synthesis

Taken together, the interviews depict an ecosystem shift: away from highly visible, place-bound formations toward distributed, affect-driven networks in which leadership is performed through attention, notoriety, and claims to masculine authority. This shift alters how young people enter extremist milieus (through chat-based micro-communities and globalised audiovisual repertoires), who leads them (influencers and micro-celebrities more than organisers) and where prevention must act (not just classrooms and police files, but also the ambience of platformed culture).

At the cultural core of these developments lie masculinity scripts, valorising dominance, emotional hardness and the policing of gender/sexual boundaries, amplified by group dynamics and normalised when elite and everyday discourse signals permission to demean. These scripts are contested and uneven: many young people express mixed views, and practitioners insist that credible alternative scripts (care, responsibility, plural strength) can gain traction when institutions invest.

For prevention and democratic engagement, the message is twofold. First, procedural democracy must be lived as everyday competence, in schools, youth spaces, and families, through consistent civic and character education and quick, visible improvements that prove institutions can deliver. Second, prevention must be systemic: a stable, multiagency pathway from early signs



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



(including online) to sustained relational work with youth and families. Without that connective tissue, even the best programmes operate under conditions of structural drift, while platform logics continue to pull at the social fabric.

Online Extremism: Digital Narratives and Data Insights

Across interviews and desk research there is a convergence on a handful of platforms young people use and where problematic content circulates. The emphasis is on chat-centred and gaming-adjacent spaces, especially Discord, alongside Snapchat and legacy imageboards like 4chan; these are described as less regulated and harder to map than mainstream feeds, which is why practitioners wanted to map those environments rather than focus only on big social networks.

On TikTok and Instagram, practitioners report high youth exposure and rapid diffusion of identity-laden content. A frontline counsellor notes that for her clients, TikTok and Instagram are the most used, with additional exposure through *'gaming platforms... you can encounter a lot there... Discord would be the first I'd name.'* A civil-society leader similarly highlights the role of TikTok and *'youtubers,'* stressing that many adolescents draw news and worldview cues from these sources rather than professional media.

As for Facebook, practitioners describe it as comparatively less central for teens (one interviewee remarks that essentially *'no child is on Facebook'*), yet it still matters for the visibility and coordination of older cohorts and for the spillover of harassment against NGOs during political flashpoints. The ISD/Strong Cities mapping underscores Facebook's continuing relevance for older and cross-platform extremist mobilisation.³⁶⁰

YouTube surfaces in two ways: as a host for long-form ideation (lectures, talk shows) and as a feeder into other channels via clips and recommendations. One practitioner describes how even non-extremist talk shows and creators can *'open doors'* to more radical material through guest selection and recommendation chains: algorithms suggest *'similar content,'* viewers follow a guest into their own channel, and the journey continues. Notably, Telegram is



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



not foregrounded by these practitioners, while desk research elevates its centrality. The point, from a practitioner and research perspective, is less about a single platform than about how fast the platform mixes shifts and how open feeds, recommendation systems and closed channels interact.

Closed vs. Open Spaces

Interviewees consistently distinguish open feeds (public TikTok/Instagram/YouTube posts) from closed or semi-closed spaces (Discord servers, Telegram, private groups, Close Friends, invite-only channels). These closed spaces are described as precisely where more explicit or boundary-pushing content circulates. Desk research aligns: Telegram's semi-closed channels function as persistence layers for content seeded on open platforms, with alt-media, politicians and disinfluencers anchoring audiences in Slovak-language ecosystems that mix pro-Kremlin narratives with domestic culture-war frames (gender/LGBTQIA+, anti-media, anti-elite).

Practitioners also emphasise how algorithms in open spaces both amplify and filter attention: *'you clearly see more of what you click.'* The 2023 deepfake episode illustrates a governance gap: during statutory 'silence' windows, moderation, fact-checking and corrective amplification struggle to catch up with novel attack types.³⁶¹ Closed spaces then catch and keep those who lean in: *'when I join chat groups with radical content, the value-commitment is much stronger,'* one interviewee notes of the shift from passive consumption to opt-in participation.

Online Mobilisation: How Narratives Feed Offline Behaviour

Practitioners describe two mobilisation pathways linking online narratives to offline behaviour. First, norm spillover in everyday settings, especially schools, where online normalisation of sexist or hateful speech appears to embolden offline harassment. A counsellor explains that schools often intervene after overt behaviour emerges (e.g., *'openly insulting girls... attacking a transgender student'*), sometimes triggered by something first seen online (photos, posts, groups) that then surfaces on campus. Desk research around the 2023 vote also



records spikes in gender-based hate, with female politicians and LGBTQIA+ topics targeted by orchestrated abuse and disinformation.

Second, practitioners highlight risk escalation from lone-actor scripts. One youth expert recounts he always expected the primary security risk would be a self-radicalised young man capable of acting alone; the Bratislava attack confirmed that, in his view. While this interview is not a forensic analysis, it reflects a frontline reading of how online repertoires, including transnational attack lineages, can inform intent and shape offline action.

At the organisational level, NGOs report surges of online abuse translating into offline pressure following political cue-setting. A civil-society leader describes a cascade effect: statements by high-level officials were followed by waves of hate, emails, phone calls, comment floods, severe enough that the organisation implemented a ‘troll wall’ and internal safety protocols (call handling, documentation) to protect staff. Desk-based context situates these waves within a polarised media environment and contentious government reforms, which repeatedly seed online mobilisations that spill into the street.

Role of Influencers and Networked Amplification

Practitioners repeatedly point to influencers and pop culture figures as agenda shapers, even when they are not overtly ideological. Their value lies in attention capture and tone-setting. As stated before, one youth practitioner notes that some protagonists from pop culture (including rappers and influencers) use controversial content to attract audiences without recognising ‘*where the chain of events could end up,*’ potentially fuelling violence when othering is normalised.

Networked Amplification Happens in Two Reinforcing Ways

Algorithmic ladders: Non-extremist but provocative creators serve as on-ramps; recommendation systems ‘open doors’ by suggesting more radical guests/creators or encouraging users to follow guests off-platform into their own ecosystems. This is how an initial interest might become progressive hardening of views through ‘similar content’ and creator networks. In Slovakia,



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



YouTube talk formats and short form clips often serve as the first rung; Telegram/Discord are the landing zones.

Cross-platform logistics and persistence: Short clips and memes seeded on TikTok or Instagram are mirrored into more persistent channels (e.g., Telegram and Discord servers or private groups), where organisers and loyalists keep the conversation, share ‘receipts,’ and coordinate. Practitioners emphasise quantity and tempo as features of the contemporary environment: content is ‘based on quantity,’ flooding eyes and ears so that many young people absorb positions without deep argument.

In this context, influencers and ‘players’ (from gaming scenes) are cited by counsellors as key amplifiers; desk research adds that Slovak ‘disinfluencers’ on Telegram and politicians from *Republika* (and some from SMER/SNS) operate as high-reach nodes in this networked ecosystem. Family socialisation and ambient sexism/racism in the culture can prime receptivity, with influencers ‘*just giving it a louder voice.*’ Finally, practitioners underline the speed of these cycles. Platform churn (*‘Snapchat today, something else tomorrow’*) makes monitoring and literacy hard even for specialists and contributes to a sense that closed chats are always one step ahead of formal safeguards.

Concluding Analysis: Cross-Source Convergence

Slovakia’s extremism landscape is best understood as a meeting point between old national fissures and fast-evolving transnational dynamics. The desk research and the practitioner interviews all point in the same direction: mobilisation today is distributed, affect-driven and sustained by platform architectures that reward controversy and speed. Gendered narratives, especially those centred on protective, hierarchical masculinity, act as connective tissue linking culture-war flashpoints to sovereigntist politics and distrust of institutions. What follows synthesises the common patterns that emerge across sources, distinguishes local specificities from broader European trends, explores how masculinity functions as a strategic resource for extremist and illiberal actors and draws out the implications for policy and prevention.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Across methods there is a consistent picture of how attention is captured, identities are hardened and action spills offline. Open social networks like TikTok, Instagram, YouTube and, for older cohorts, Facebook, remain crucial for discovery and broad reach. Yet the point at which curiosity turns into commitment sits elsewhere. Closed or semi-closed spaces—Telegram channels, Discord servers and private or invite-only chats tied to gaming communities—serve as the persistence layer where audiences are retained, social norms are shaped and more explicit, or boundary-pushing content is normalised. Practitioners describe a practical lag built into this architecture: teachers, counsellors and parents often detect problematic behaviour only once it surfaces in school corridors or family conflicts, long after the worldview work has been done in hidden or semi-hidden channels.

Leadership in this ecosystem is performed through influence rather than formal organisation. The figures who matter most are not always party leaders or paramilitary organisers but content producers and micro-celebrities who understand the logics of virality and monetise transgression. Attention capital, rather than organisational rank, is what opens doors and moves audiences along algorithmic ladders from provocative but apparently mainstream talk formats to ideologically harder material and, eventually, to closed communities. Formal extremist organisations have not disappeared; their rhetoric and cues still matter. But influence routinely outruns hierarchy, and charismatic online personalities can act as recruitment hubs even when they disclaim overt ideology.

This environment privileges the lone actor. Historical cases and frontline observations converge on the self-radicalising young man as the highest-salience risk. He assembles an affective repertoire, grievances, aesthetics and tactical scripts by mixing global content streams with local cues and opportunities. The online sphere supplies frames, validation and mentors at a distance; offline life supplies targets and occasions, whether in schools, nightlife districts, gyms or martial-arts clubs. Practitioners emphasise how long these trajectories can remain concealed; what would once have been legible as a subculture visible on the street now unfolds behind screens for months.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Gendered narratives tie everything together. Appeals to protect ‘normal families’ or ‘the children,’ hostility to so-called ‘gender ideology’ and the policing of sexual and gender boundaries recur across parties, alt-media and encrypted channels. Interviews depict how permissive cues from high-status figures and institutions normalise sexist and homophobic speech, which young people then imitate in peer settings. The same narratives readily fuse with anti-EU or anti-NATO positions, conspiracism about elites, and a nativist framing of welfare and security. In practice, this means that cultural conflict is not a separate arena but a staging ground for broader illiberal projects.

Transnational Dynamics

Many of these features mirror wider European and global patterns. Polarised information environments have become the norm, and platform recommender systems reward content that elicits strong emotion and rapid engagement. Cross-platform logistics are standard. The cast of actors is similarly hybridised in many countries, mixing politicians, alt-media entrepreneurs, ‘disinfluencers’ and subcultural scenes. And across Europe, gender serves as politics by other means: contesting school curricula, family law or LGBTQIA+ rights becomes a vehicle for reasserting hierarchies and rolling back liberal norms.

Slovakia, however, brings its own texture to these trends. Public opinion has tended to be comparatively more receptive to pro-Kremlin narratives than in several neighbouring states, giving those frames an easier runway and making foreign-policy scepticism a potent mobiliser. The institutional memory of corruption scandals and the trauma of the Kuciak and Kušnírová murders keep governance and integrity issues at the centre of civic life; this sustains protest cultures but also furnishes grievance fuel for anti-elite actors. Party-system dynamics matter as well: the decline of a neo-Nazi-branded formation and the rise of a more polished nationalist alternative have reshaped how far-right talking points are laundered into mainstream debate. Meanwhile, the realities of a small-language market complicate platform governance. Slovak moderation capacity is thinner; domestic alt-media can dominate attention niches relatively cheaply; and cross-border Slovak-Czech flows widen



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



distribution for both quality journalism and coordinated disinformation. Finally, the persistence of paramilitary and martial-arts milieus provides offline spaces where hierarchical, protective masculinities can be socialised, even when formal groups face legal scrutiny.

In short, Slovakia is neither a European outlier nor a generic copy. It functions as a highly permeable node while its political history and media ecology make gendered and pro-Kremlin narratives especially resonant.

The Role of Masculinity in Mobilisation

Masculinity in the Slovak context is not an incidental backdrop but a strategic resource that illiberal and extremist actors marshal to confer legitimacy, recruit and discipline members. It operates through three linked mechanisms. First, the protective-family frame acts as a gateway. Pledges to defend children or preserve 'normal' families are politically low-threshold and morally high-yield. They can be advanced without adopting explicit extremist markers, and they translate easily into demands for exceptional policies, from curriculum restrictions to protest escalation. Once accepted, this frame licenses boundary-making about who counts as a legitimate parent, educator, journalist or citizen. It also harmonises with sovereigntist claims that cast international agreements or European standards as alien impositions.

Second, dominance is performed as a public spectacle and groups amplify it. Interviews depict hostile speech and harassment as performances directed at male peers, where prestige accrues to those who demonstrate emotional invulnerability and the willingness to transgress. Likes, shares, stitches and the buzz of private chats reward cruelty with visibility. Over time, the incentives harden identities. What begins as a joke or an edgy meme becomes a marker of belonging, and the social costs of reversing course rise accordingly.

Third, global aesthetics plug into local scripts. The 'Manosphere's idioms, self-improvement as competitive domination, pseudo-biological hierarchies of 'alpha' and 'beta' and contempt for feminism arrive pre-packaged in short-form



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



videos and gym culture. Slovak actors localise them into themes of decency, national protection and anti-elite resentment. Paramilitary and martial arts scenes render these scripts tangible as discipline, hierarchy and a 'warrior' ethic. The result is a marketplace of masculinities where influencers, organisers and coaches compete to supply meaning to unsettled young men seeking pride and place.

Importantly, these narratives are contested. Practitioners encounter young people who hold contradictory views: sympathy for LGBTQIA+ peers alongside disgust at Pride parades; a rejection of 'extremism' paired with admiration for harsh discipline and exclusionary policies. This ambivalence signals that the field is not closed. Alternative scripts, strength as care, protection as responsibility toward the vulnerable, and pride as integrity rather than domination might travel just as effectively when the messengers and formats resonate.

Implications for Policy and Prevention

The converging evidence suggests that interventions must be systemic, mechanism-specific and realistic about the constraints of a small-language market. The prevention pipeline should be re-architected from an incident-driven model to an anticipatory one. Schools, youth services, social work, mental-health providers and law enforcement need a stable pathway with transparent consent and data-sharing rules so that universal prevention in classrooms can flow into selective interventions and, where necessary, intensive family-centred casework without referral cliffs. Within schools, prevention must become a programme rather than a one-off workshop. A sequenced approach across the school year, combining digital citizenship, media literacy that includes audio manipulation and deepfakes, bystander skills, and age-appropriate gender-respect curricula, has a better chance of shifting norms than isolated sessions. Specialist support should be embedded through itinerant teams that rotate regionally, ensuring access outside major cities, and the system should track protective factors such as belonging, adult connection, and bystander efficacy, not just incidents.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Masculinity should be treated as an entry point for prevention rather than as a taboo. Positive-masculinity programming works best when it avoids preachiness and punishment. Partnerships with sports clubs and gyms, mentoring by respected male figures such as coaches or first responders and co-designed youth challenges that reward care, reliability and service can re-route status dynamics towards pro-social ends. Educators and youth workers need concrete routines for interrupting group performances of misogyny or homophobia without humiliation spirals, along with restorative processes that respect adolescent status concerns. Parents benefit from practical tools, short scenario-based guides on closed-chat dynamics, consent, intimate-image harms and conversation starters about online status games that make difficult topics more navigable at home.

Independent youth-savvy media should be supported with micro-funding for fast formats, paired with safeguards for editorial independence. Vulnerable points can be hardened without securitising youth spaces. Municipalities and schools facing surges of harassment need ready-to-deploy toolkits that include call-handling scripts, documentation templates, legal triage and psychosocial support for staff. Partnerships with Discord could pilot optional graduated friction within Slovak servers, gentle prompts before forwarding dehumanising content, visible routes to help for bystanders and reporting to school or community moderators. Paramilitary and martial arts engagement should be approached carefully but not ignored: reputable coaches and veterans can reframe defence as community protection, offer training in de-escalation and first aid and gatekeep against extremist entryism. Victim-centred services, legal aid and counselling must be resourced so that targets of gendered and homophobic abuse can access support quickly through school and police referrals.

Finally, there is work to do across borders and at the EU level. Practitioner mobility funding can spread promising practice quickly: short exchanges between Slovak youth workers and peers experimenting with positive-masculinity programmes, school-embedded prevention and lone-actor risk management produce practical insights faster than literature alone. Research gaps are clear as well. Longitudinal studies on Slovak youth media diets,



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



rigorous evaluation of masculinity-positive interventions and systematic tracking of audio deepfake incidents in small languages would equip policymakers and practitioners with the evidence they need.

The Slovak case shows how gendered illiberalism and platform logics can braid into a self-reinforcing system in which grievances become identities, identities become content and content becomes coordination. Yet the same circuits can carry counter-scripts when institutions and civil society supply compelling messengers, formats and pathways. The practitioners' common lesson is that long-horizon relationships matter. When youth workers, teachers and counsellors have time to get behind the hate, they find unmet needs for status, belonging and competence that can be met more safely. The strategic task is, therefore, to move from incident response to ecosystem shaping, aligning schools, families, platforms and local clubs around a shared aim: enabling young people to experience democracy not as procedure or slogan but as everyday competence and care. If that alignment is achieved, the demand for extremist scripts might diminish, and alternative stories about strength, protection and community might become both credible and, crucially, cool.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Sweden

**Joanna Lindström, Department of Psychology, University of Uppsala,
Center for Research on Extremism, University of Oslo**

Nazar Akrami, Department of Psychology, University of Uppsala



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



SWEDEN

Country Context and Extremism Landscape

Sweden has undergone a marked political shift over the past two decades, as far-right rhetoric has moved from the political margins to the mainstream. The Sweden Democrats (SD), a national conservative populist right-wing group, originated in an extreme right-wing milieu, and consequently were long viewed as illegitimate by mainstream parties and a large segment of Swedish voters.³⁶² Thus, SD was previously dismissed by other political parties and excluded from building coalitions with mainstream parties.³⁶³ However, SD has been more recently accepted into coalitions by other conservative political parties.³⁶⁴ This can be partly attributed to the growth of anti-immigration sentiment, an increase in gang-related gun violence and crime, as well as the fact that SD promotes a harder stance towards immigration and crime, which they argue come hand-in-hand³⁶⁵ Due to these developments, Sweden has witnessed the normalisation of far-right discourse, with anti-immigration and anti-gender rhetoric gradually becoming more prominent in the public debate, shaping new policies.³⁶⁶

Alongside the mainstreaming of racist and exclusionary narratives, civil society monitors such as the Expo Foundation report a rise in right-wing extremist activity, increasing from 1,172 to 1,245 documented actions between 2023 and 2024.³⁶⁷ Expo defines these actions as openly conducted activities that can be systematically verified—ranging from demonstrations and propaganda distribution to combat-style training, ideological meetings and other organised gatherings.³⁶⁸ While noting that some groups intentionally obscure their operations, Expo treats these observable actions as key indicators of mobilisation capacity.³⁶⁹ At the same time, the far-right milieu has become more fragmented and diverse, with a proliferation of loosely organised groups contributing to this upward trend.³⁷⁰

The Swedish Security Service identifies violent right-wing and violent Islamist extremism as the primary threats to national security. Recent assessments highlight a more fragmented and unpredictable landscape: extremist violence



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



is increasingly driven by lone actors, hybrid networks and young individuals radicalised online rather than by established organisations.³⁷¹ Digital platforms—social media, gaming-related spaces, and encrypted forums—have become central arenas where extremist propaganda, violent aesthetics and conspiracy narratives circulate, often targeting minors. Both the Swedish Security Service and the Swedish Center for Preventing Violent Extremism report a rise in cases involving children as young as 12–18 who show intense interest in violence and, in some instances, plan attacks without clear ideological coherence.³⁷²

A report from the Swedish Center for Preventing Violent Extremism also emphasises that many young individuals who come to the attention of practitioners show overlapping vulnerabilities—social isolation, mental health challenges and fascination with violence—where ideology often plays a secondary or ambiguous role.³⁷³ Fluid ‘pick-and-mix’ ideological blends, misanthropic online subcultures, misogynistic communities and violent gaming-adjacent platforms increasingly shape these pathways.³⁷⁴ Far-right Active Clubs are growing and attracting young men through physical training and community-building, while jihadist milieus attempt to exploit the Gaza conflict and Sweden’s heightened geopolitical tensions to mobilise vulnerable youth.³⁷⁵

Geopolitical crises have further intensified Sweden’s security threats. According to the Swedish security police, foreign states—including Russia, Iran and China—now use Sweden as an arena for influence operations, hybrid attacks, and, in some cases, violent acts via criminal networks. Anti-establishment movements, conspiracy-driven communities and disinformation campaigns have expanded in this climate, eroding trust in democratic institutions.³⁷⁶ The Swedish Center for Preventing Violent Extremism highlights that this broadening threat requires long-term, preventive measures that strengthen protective factors such as inclusion, academic achievement and supportive relationships, rather than focusing solely on ideology.³⁷⁷



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Historical and Current Extremist Activity

Sweden has a long history of far-right mobilisation. The racial-ideological milieu has roots in 19th-century antisemitism, grew through Fascist and Nazi movements in the 1920s and was later influenced by British and American white power subcultures in the 1980s.³⁷⁸ Today, it remains characterised by antisemitism, racism, anti-Roma sentiment, Islamophobia, hostility to feminism and LGBTQIA+ rights and conspiratorial thinking. Targets of violence and hatred include immigrants, Muslims, Jews, LGBTQIA+ communities, feminists, politicians and state officials.³⁷⁹

Nordiska Motståndsrörelsen (Nordic Resistance Movement; NMR), which was founded in 1997, has historically been the largest, most visible neo-Nazi organisation in Sweden, with branches in Norway, Denmark, Iceland and Finland. The goal of NMR is to establish a pan-Nordic White state and is known to have a hierarchical bureaucratic structure.³⁸⁰ NMR has recently been classified as a global terrorist organisation by the U.S Department of State for posing a significant risk to the security of the United States.³⁸¹ However, according to a report by Expo Foundation NMR appears to be losing traction, as indicated by a decrease in noted actions by NMR members and a corresponding increase in actions that can be tied to members of more newly formed neo-Nazi groups (e.g., Active Clubs).³⁸²

Key events have shaped this evolving landscape. In 2023, a series of Quran burnings by far-right provocateurs triggered a major diplomatic crisis—including obstacles in Sweden's NATO accession negotiations—and contributed to a sharp escalation in extremist propaganda, with Sweden being directly named as a target by international Islamist organisations.³⁸³ Later the same year, the Israel– Hamas war further polarised Swedish society. The Swedish Security Service identifies this conflict as a key 'hot-driving' factor behind the rise in antisemitic incidents and Sweden's elevated terror threat level.³⁸⁴

In recent years the ideological basis for extremist violence in Sweden has not always been entirely clear. For example, in 2022, Theodor Engström murdered a psychiatric coordinator for the Swedish municipalities (Ing-Marie Wieselgren) at *Almedalen* week in Visby³⁸⁵— an annual Swedish event promoting open and



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



democratic dialogue between politicians, public officials and the public.³⁸⁶ Engström has previously been a member of NMR, and it was revealed that he had also plotted an assassination of Annie Lööf (former minister and party leader of the Centre Party in Sweden).³⁸⁷ However, his motives were also shaped by severe mental illness and anger about the psychiatric care he had received, suggesting that he had both personal grievances as well as ideological reasons for resorting to violence.³⁸⁸ Engström also received an autism spectrum diagnosis.³⁸⁹

This year, Rickard Andersson committed Sweden's worst school shooting in history, with 10 people murdered at a school for adult education in Örebro. The overwhelming majority of victims had immigrant background (e.g., migrated from Syria, Iran and Eritrea); however, Swedish officials have ruled out that this was a terror attack since they were unable to identify an ideological motive.³⁹⁰ Like Engström, Andersson was also known to have autism.³⁹¹

Recently, Alexander Holmberg (a 23-year-old Swedish citizen) was sentenced to prison in Luxemburg for planning a terrorist attack which was to take place at Eurovision 2020. While Holmberg's main target for the Eurovision terror attack was the LGBTQIA+ community, but he had also previously burnt down a Mink farm in Sweden for reasons tied to ecofascist ideology and had planned several attacks on mosques in Sweden.³⁹² He also had ties to the ecofascist group the Green Brigade and was a member of the neo-Nazi group The Base.³⁹³

Key Actors and Ideologies

The right-wing extremist environment encompasses a wide array of ideologies and actors, from organised neo-Nazis to decentralised online networks. Central themes include:

- National Socialism (Nazism): belief in racial hierarchy, White supremacy, antisemitism and the need for authoritarian leadership.
- The 'Great Replacement' conspiracy: the idea that global elites deliberately enable immigration to erase the White race.



- Accelerationism: the belief that violent attacks can hasten societal collapse and racial war.
- Eco-fascism: linking environmental concerns with ethnonationalism.
- Anti-feminism/Anti-gender: the belief that feminism is a destructive force undermining the traditional family and men's status in society.

Prominent right-wing extremist groups include:

- Nordic Resistance Movement (NMR): The most established neo-Nazi group in Sweden.³⁹⁴
- *Det Fria Sverige* (The Free Sweden): Ethnonationalist group focused on building Swedish-only communities, premised on 'the Great Replacement' conspiracy, and known to incite violence.³⁹⁵
- Active Clubs: A new transnational movement, originating in the U.S., that has rapidly spread in Sweden.³⁹⁶

Several recent attacks in Sweden have also been linked to 764/No Lives Matters– a network of online groups engaging in sexual extortion and glorification of violence.³⁹⁷ The network has been known to coerce minors into producing child sexual abuse material (CSAM) and then leverage this to pressure victims into engaging in violence, self-harm or animal abuse.³⁹⁸

Masculinity in National Context

Sweden has a unique gender-equality tradition that has shaped how masculinity is conceptualised in the country. Gender equality has officially been promoted by the state since the 1970s, with men's and women's roles reshaped in response to feminist reforms.³⁹⁹ Movements like *Befria Mannen* (Liberate the Man) encouraged men to question earlier conceptualisations of hegemonic, traditional masculinity based on dominant norms around masculinity, and to embrace new roles as caring fathers and equal partners. This has been referred to as a reformulation of hegemonic masculinity in Sweden, which simultaneously produced progressive transformations (such as gender-equality policies) and a backlash rooted in fears of emasculation.⁴⁰⁰



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



This tension continues to shape far-right and extremist narratives. The far-right depicts Sweden's progressive gender regime as a betrayal of 'real men,' portraying the Swedish state as privileging feminism, LGBTQIA+ rights and multiculturalism over the interests of 'ordinary' men.⁴⁰¹

Anti-feminist and anti-gender narratives are also prominent in Swedish newspapers, neo-Nazi alternative media and Swedish online platforms (e.g., Flashback).⁴⁰² Misogynistic discourse is often rooted in male entitlement (and violation of such entitlement) and is often articulated together with extreme right ideology and used to justify support for far-right and extremist groups.⁴⁰³

Far-right actors often use hypermasculine symbols such as Viking imagery.⁴⁰⁴ For example, NMR organises events where members engage in archery, wrestling and survivalist training. Such activities represent a performance of hypermasculine identity.⁴⁰⁵ Qualitative work on individuals active in neo-Nazi movements in Sweden has also illustrated that violence towards 'the enemy' (i.e., immigrants) is usually a means of 'demonstrating masculinity'.⁴⁰⁶

In the digital sphere, Swedish men and boys also consume content from international 'Manosphere' influencers such as Andrew Tate and Jordan Peterson.⁴⁰⁷ Jordan Peterson has likely contributed to discontent among young men by often citing Sweden as an extreme case in which the gender equality project has gone too far.⁴⁰⁸

Although there is a limited number of 'Manosphere' influencers in Sweden, a prominent example with a large social media following is 'The Golden One' (Marcus Follin) – an Identitarian bodybuilding influencer who promotes a Nordic warrior ideal, hypermasculinity, fitness and far-right ideology.⁴⁰⁹ The Golden One has been featured on far-right and extremist media including the Nordic Resistance Movement's news media and podcasts.⁴¹⁰ The perpetrator of one of Sweden's largest far-right attacks in Trollhättan (Anton Lundin Pettersson) was found to be a follower of The Golden One and viewed his YouTube content prior to carrying out his terror attack.⁴¹¹



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



An emerging line of research on masculinity and Nordic Ecofascism suggests that the previously dominant far-right depictions of militant masculinity are also being challenged by quieter expressions of masculinity, depicting Nordic men in nature engaging in seemingly peaceful activities.⁴¹²

Research also suggests that Swedish men are more likely to engage with incel ideology compared to other countries. The Swedish Defence Research Agency (conducted in 2020) analysed visits to incel forums which indicate that Sweden is among the countries in the world, with the most visits to incel-related online forums when population size is taken into consideration.⁴¹³ Research examining the popular Swedish platform Flashback also shows that incel ideology prominently features in discussion forums.⁴¹⁴ A common conception in these forums is that Swedish men have been ‘cucked’ by immigrant men, and that Swedish women and feminism have ruined the country for ethnically Swedish men.⁴¹⁵

Mobilisation Trends

Aside from the new influence of 764/No Lives Matter, another pressing development in Sweden is the rapidly growing network of Active Clubs, a movement blending hypermasculinity, fitness, martial arts and White supremacist ideology, with members often bearing Nazi numerology or classic Nazi symbols.⁴¹⁶ One goal of these Active Clubs which focus on physical fitness and combat training, is to increase members’ readiness for an upcoming race war. The Swedish network ‘*Aktivklubb Sverige*’ originating at Gym XIV was created in 2023 by an individual who was previously active in NMR.⁴¹⁷ Compared to other forms of right-wing extreme mobilisation, the Active Club milieu places some emphasis on members’ anonymity.⁴¹⁸ In Sweden, the average age of Active Club members is 21 years of age.⁴¹⁹ At least six Active Clubs have been established across Sweden including White Boys Stockholm, *Aktivklubb Hälsningland*, *Aktivklubb Skåne*, *Aktivklubb Småland*, *Aktivklubb Södermanland*, *Aktivklubb Östergötland* and *Aktivklubb Västmanland*. These Active Clubs spread propaganda through their Telegram channels.⁴²⁰ The growing threat of Active Clubs in Sweden has become especially salient in light of a recent discovery that



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



the teenage son of the Swedish Immigration minister (Johan Forssell) was a member of *Aktivklubb Sverige*.⁴²¹

Interview Findings

A total of six interviews were conducted with individuals working for government and NGO's involved in the monitoring and prevention of violent extremism, and gender equality issues in Sweden. Specifically, interviews were conducted with key figures with expertise on extremism, online extremism or masculinity and violence. Interviews were recorded and transcribed with the help of NoScribe, and the transcripts were anonymised so as not to reveal the name of interviewees, though the organisational names were not anonymised.

Interviewee #	Details
1	Swedish Centre for the Prevention of Violent Extremism (Government).
2	<i>Agera Värmland</i> (Civil society organisation providing help to people active or formerly active in extremist milieus).
3	EXIT (Civil society organisation providing help to people active or formerly active in extremist milieus).
4	The Expo Foundation (Anti-racism NGO with expertise on the far-right in Sweden).
5	The Swedish Gender Equality Agency (Government).
6	Swedish Defence Research Agency (Government).

Note: To preserve anonymity, the organisations listed in this table do not necessarily correspond to the interviewee # reported in the quotes below.

Shifts in Extremist Strategy and Leadership

Across the interviews, there was a consensus that the internet has had a significant impact on how people engage with or become drawn to extremism,



making it significantly easier for extremist rhetoric and networks to spread easily. It was also mentioned that the radicalisation landscape is becoming more heterogeneous because online influences are reaching a wider audience more readily: *'The internet and social media have lowered the threshold to extremism'* (interviewee #1), *'It's easier to end up in the radicalisation process'* (interviewee #6), and *'There has been a general change where more social groups, more types of people are reached by and influenced by highly extreme propaganda, which, among other things, leads to radicalization'* (interviewee #3).

Interviewees mentioned a clear shift from street activism to the dissemination of online propaganda. In particular, there has been a shift away from organised groups such as the Nordic Resistance Movement, which traditionally consisted of older, more extroverted men mobilising on the streets, to more lone actors or smaller, more loosely formed, decentralised groups (e.g., post-organisational extremism). The interviewees claimed that there is an increasing trend of younger boys (some as young as 12) being radicalised, who are often socially isolated individuals sometimes characterised by neurodivergence. For example, one practitioner noted that: *'Previously, if you generalise, it was quite strong outgoing young people...who wanted to be seen, who were out in the streets and squares and demonstrated...Today, it is a completely different category that is being radicalised. It is the very vulnerable, younger guys, especially guys who are then radicalised online and where the ideological driving forces are becoming more unclear'* (interviewee #2). Another practitioner echoed this opinion: *'Now we see that a lot of threats come from individuals who rather have difficulty adapting socially...'* (interviewee #6).

The interviewees also emphasised that Ideology has become less important, and violent extremists nowadays tend to have a less clear or a hybrid ideology: *'People can 'pick and build' their own ideology'* (Interview 2), and *'Hybridised mixes—misogyny with racism and antisemitism—where violence can be the central appeal'* (interviewee #1).

The interviewees mentioned that large open platforms such as X, TikTok, and Telegram play a key role in spreading extremist and misogynistic rhetoric, which can provide an initial point of contact with these messages, which then further



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



develops as individuals gain access to more closed, and more extreme forums, for example, on Discord. Several interviewees also mentioned that many young boys are being radicalised through gaming platforms.

Across the interviews, interviewees were also concerned about the normalisation of far-right discourse and misogyny. Interviewees were concerned with the radical-right-wing political party, the Swedish Democrats, bringing such ideas into the mainstream. One practitioner noted that *'The Sweden Democrats have brought these ideas into mainstream politics'* (interviewee #3).

Masculinity Constructions

Although interviewees have noted that masculinity has been a theme for extremist organisations in the past, nowadays masculine rhetoric is more than ever accompanied by hateful rhetoric. Interviewees have also mentioned the influence of key 'Manosphere' figures such as Andrew Tate and Jordan Peterson who they perceive as a gateway or bridge between mainstream online culture and extremist networks. For example, one interviewee noted that *'Peterson gives legitimacy to traditional masculinity, which can serve as a gateway'* (interviewee #4). Another interviewee mentioned that young men are at risk of adopting the misogynistic views of these male influencers: *'Andrew Tate and Jordan Peterson spread very misogynistic views...young men are a risk group'* (interviewee #5).

Overall, the interviewees noted that the form of masculinity being promoted in extremist spaces online can be characterised as a simplistic ideal of hypermasculinity, one that prizes physical strength, dominance, and action. For example, one practitioner stated that *'Fascist masculinity is about being young, strong, and action-oriented'* (interviewee #4).

This masculine ideal is presented as inherently good, with anything deviating from this norm portrayed as weak or wrong. It is often framed in opposition to perceived enemies such as feminism, and LGBTQIA+ issues and tied to narratives about 'restoring' traditional masculinity. One interviewee argued that: *'It's an ideal that they simply push...the closer to this ideal, the more you are*



worth. *The further away from this ideal you get, the less you're worth...that's how it is with right-wing extremist and fascist propaganda, they don't make a big deal about it...this is good and this is bad...like what's good and hate what's bad.*' (Interviewee #4). Another interviewee argued that: *'These groups believe that masculinity needs to be restored. This often includes misogyny and anti-feminism'* (interviewee #2).

One practitioner noted that the core values of right-wing extremism are changing alongside the relevance of masculinity, such that there is a greater focus on the LGBTQIA+ community as a new enemy: *'The LGBTQ+ environment, which is one of their primary threats today, because that is really what threatens masculinity. That men can have a different sexual orientation...the core values within the right-wing extremist milieu are also changing to some extent. Whereas previously there was a very strong focus on racism and stopping immigrants...now people are talking more about the threat from the LGBTQIA+ environment or the threat from feminism and the woke environment. They are looking at more internal threats within the country'* (interviewee #2).

The interviewees believed that Active Clubs in Sweden (in particular Gym XIV's Telegram channel) have been a major actor in promoting this hypermasculine ideal, which is interwoven with far-right extremism, including the narrative that it is white men's responsibility to defend their country. Gym XIV promotes hypermasculinity alongside white supremacy and anti-democratic values, with a masculine lifestyle and identity depicted through 'edits' – short, highly edited videos (e.g., on TikTok or Telegram) with catchy music which promote an aesthetic and lifestyle of violence, fighting and martial arts, hooligan culture, and most importantly, belonging to a group. This lifestyle may be appealing for young men seeking a sense of purpose, meaning and belonging to a community. One interviewee noted that what is concerning about this type of hypermasculinity is that it is often interwoven with racism, anti-feminism and anti-democratic attitudes. If hypermasculinity is appealing for men, then they might also be willing to adopt the more problematic attitudes that are associated with this online portrayal of masculinity. One interviewee argued that: *'What is worrying about masculinity...if you embrace an ideal of masculinity that is also by definition intertwined with anti-democratic ideals and anti-female*



ideals, then we get a very problematic social situation in the long run.' (Interviewee #4).

One practitioner who has worked with people involved in the Active Club scene noted that it can be very easy for young men to become involved in Active Clubs: *'What people are a little afraid of with active club environments is that it is so easy to slip in...here you may not even be aware that you are joining a strongly fascist group. You join a training session. You join a hike. Suddenly you find yourself in a context where these questions come up. Then you may have already established yourself in the group. You don't seek out an active club for your right-wing extremist ideals. You may seek out the group to have somewhere to train or have leisure activities. So, you get this other thing in return'* (interviewee #2).

Impact on Prevention and Democratic Engagement and Notable Practitioner Insights

Across the interviews, there was a strong consensus that civil society organisations play an essential role in the prevention of violent extremism and the challenging of harmful masculinities, which are intertwined with men currently active in extremist movements. This is because they are better able to reach at-risk individuals. As one practitioner noted: *'You could say that civil society's primary role or greatest strength is that we are a low-threshold activity. That's where we might get into situations that authorities or other organizations can't reach...it's a very important role and that we also strengthen the role of civil society on the ground...We cannot do without good cooperation between the authorities, but the authorities cannot do without a strong civil society...'* (interviewee #2).

When it comes to specific prevention efforts, there was also consensus that counter-messages that aim to change ideology are usually not very effective, but that the most effective actions involve educating 'front-line' staff, as well as improving mental health and decreasing isolation among youth.

Practitioners from both EXIT and *Agera Värmland* also mentioned that they have adapted their practices to align with the current trend of the intersection between masculinity norms and extremism. For example, a practitioner from



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



EXIT mentioned that he needs to consider his clients' conformity to masculine norms as well as their clients' family members: *'...There are many actors in this environment who maintain these masculinity principles and norms...many times I also think that it can be cases where they may have fathers who have very classic masculinity principles...it can be difficult...then I might have to step in and try to make a move on the father so that they start talking about things..'* (interviewee #3).

Agera Värmland are also currently running a programme called 'Sports against Extremism' based in gyms and sporting organisations where they educate about harmful masculinities alongside the importance of democratic values. Several interviewees also mentioned the promise of working with organisations involved in the gaming world, such as *Sverok* and *Embracer* group, given the new trend in radicalisation through online gaming platforms.

The practitioners also noted that one of the biggest challenges for them is short-term funding for projects and the general cuts to civil society funding. They also noted that a significant challenge in the Swedish context is that there are 290 different municipalities, each with different strategies and capabilities for prevention, and that they would benefit from a more unified national approach. All interviewees view that online extremism, and in particular white nationalism, is a transnational phenomenon and Sweden is highly influenced by other Western countries, and that the European Union needs to understand the current trends in online extremism—in particular the Active Club milieu—as a transnational and pan-European problem, and P/CVE strategies need to be tailored accordingly.

Concluding Analysis: Cross-Source Convergence

This country profile summarised the extremist landscape in Sweden with a focus on the far-right, the 'Manosphere', and masculinity. Specifically, we combined insights from desk research and interviews with key Swedish stakeholders. Collectively, the overall findings suggest that the extremist landscape in Sweden is characterised by an increasing normalisation of the far-right, young boys and men being radicalised through online platforms, a shift



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



toward decentralised groups, perceptions of internal and external threats, and masculinity aesthetics and rhetoric playing a key role in far-right mobilisation.

Normalisation of Far-right Discourse, Digital Platforms Lowering the Threshold to Radicalisation, and Hybrid Extremism

One of the key themes which emerged is the **normalisation and mainstreaming of far-right discourse**. Both the desk research and interviews aligned in terms of an emerging trend that Sweden has moved from treating far-right politics as politically illegitimate to increasingly incorporating exclusionary rhetoric into mainstream debate, which may be largely attributed to the rise of the Sweden Democrats (Ekström, et al., 2023; Ekström, et al., 2020).⁴²² The increased salience of far-right rhetoric in mainstream discourse has likely contributed to the normalisation of more extreme beliefs and attitudes, since it shifts perceptions of what other find acceptable.⁴²³

A second area of convergence concerns the central role of **digital platforms in lowering the threshold to radicalisation**. Desk research and interviews suggest that youth are increasingly encountering extremist content on large, open social media platforms such as X, TikTok, and Telegram, which can serve as an initial point of exposure to these messages, which can subsequently lead them to participation in closed, more extreme online forums. Importantly, interviewees described a shift toward younger, more vulnerable individuals (e.g., boys aged 12 to 18) who are radicalised through online forums or initially introduced to extremist rhetoric through mainstream social media platforms.

The extremist landscape in Sweden is also becoming more **fragmented and decentralised**. Desk research outlines the declining dominance of older hierarchical groups like NMR and the rise of Active Clubs, youth networks, and transnational digital communities. Interviews describe this shift as 'post-organisational extremism,' where some individuals join seemingly benign activities (e.g., gym training, hikes, gaming groups) and gradually become embedded in extremist milieus without ever formally joining an organisation. This decentralisation makes extremist movements harder to detect, and more



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



able to recruit individuals who would never approach a traditional extremist group.

A third point of convergence lies in the recognition that **ideologies are increasingly hybrid, fluid and individually constructed**, rather than strictly aligned with traditional extremist doctrines. Desk research documents the rise of hybrid or mixed extremism. Interviewees with practitioners confirmed that many young, radicalised individuals ‘pick and mix’ ideological elements, combining misogyny, racism, anti-LGBTQIA+ sentiment and conspiracy theories into personalised worldviews.

Perceived Threat Narratives

Perceived threats also play a central role in structuring far-right narratives in Sweden. Immigrants and religious minority groups (e.g., Jews, Muslims) and LGBTQIA+ people are perceived as threats and consequently become targets of critique and hate. Interviews suggested that although anti-immigration rhetoric has been a long-standing feature of far-right extremist rhetoric, there is currently a trend towards greater emphasis on threats from the LGBTQIA+ and ‘Woke’ environment.

Masculinity as a Key Component of Far-right Mobilisation

Another major point of convergence is the central role of masculinity in far-right mobilisation. Specifically, desk research illustrates how far-right extremist groups, such as NMR (Kølvraa, 2019) and influencers (Burnett, et al., 2025) make use of hypermasculine imagery, physical training and Viking symbolism, and that violence towards immigrants is a way of demonstrating masculinity (Mattsson & Johansson, 2021).⁴²⁴ Interviews further illustrated the current trends of hypermasculine ideals being promoted largely through visual content on Active Club’s Telegram channels. The hypermasculine ideals portrayed in these channels focus on strength, action, dominance, and anti-femininity, which resonate with certain young men seeking purpose, validation or belonging. Exposure to content from Andrew Tate and Jordan Peterson — although not



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



extremist per se — serves as a gateway by normalising anti-feminist narratives which tend to overlap with far-right rhetoric, hence potentially making these movements more appealing to young men. Thus, these findings suggest that far-right actors promote hypermasculine ideals to facilitate readiness to defend against perceived threats to national identity and masculinity (e.g., immigrants, LGBTQIA+ people).

Transnational Dynamics

Finally, it is clear that the extremism landscape in Sweden is highly shaped by transnational trends.

Desk research and interviews show how Swedish extremist narratives draw heavily on U.S. and European movements, 'Manosphere' influencers such as Andrew Tate and Jordan Peterson, and global conspiracy beliefs. Interviews confirm that practitioners view Sweden not as an isolated case but as deeply influenced by international content flows facilitated through the internet and social media platforms. Trends in far-right narratives and aesthetics, and grievances promoted by male influencers are key areas in which the Swedish extremism landscape is continuously shaped by transnational flow of content. This suggests that extremism in the Swedish context cannot be understood in isolation but reflects globalised patterns of digital mobilisation and identity politics.

Implications for Policy and Prevention

These findings have several implications for prevention and policy in the Swedish and European context. First, because extremist narratives are becoming increasingly normalised, prevention cannot rely on counter-arguments alone. Interviewees emphasised that changing ideology is far less effective than strengthening protective factors such as mental health support and social inclusion. Second, interventions need to focus specifically on boys and young men, addressing masculinity norms and need for identity and belonging within both online and offline contexts. Third, civil society actors must be supported with long-term, stable funding, as they are best positioned to



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



engage with vulnerable boys and men, their families and their communities. Fourth, given the decentralised nature of the extremist milieu, prevention strategies should target lifestyle spaces — gyms, martial arts clubs, gaming communities and online youth cultures — where extremist aesthetics and masculine ideals are disseminated. Finally, the transnational nature of online extremism highlights the need for coordinated European and global responses, particularly regarding Active Clubs and increasing online radicalisation among young boys.

Conclusion

Overall, the Swedish extremist landscape is rapidly evolving, increasingly youth-driven and profoundly shaped by masculinity, grievance, and online cultures. Understanding these intersecting dynamics is essential for developing effective prevention strategies that address not only ideological content but also the social, emotional and cultural factors that make such content appealing. Collectively, the findings suggest that far-right actors in Sweden rely heavily on threat narratives—concerning both external and internal enemies—and promote hypermasculine ideals as a means of cultivating vigilance and readiness to defend national and gendered identities. Addressing these dynamics requires interventions that strengthen protective factors, address sources of grievances, educate about masculinity norms and take into consideration the transnational nature of contemporary extremist mobilisation.



ENDNOTES

France

¹ Gougou, F., Guerra, T., Persico, S. (2024) 'Tripartition et tripolarisation : les contours du nouvel ordre électoral'. In Vincent Tiberj et al. (eds) *Citoyens et partis après 2022 : éloignement, fragmentation*, Paris, PUF.

² IPSOS (2025), 'Fractures françaises 2025', 20 October, <https://www.ipsos.com/fr-fr/fractures-francaises-2025>

³ Gougou, F., Guerra, T., Persico, S. (2024) 'Tripartition et tripolarisation : les contours du nouvel ordre électoral'. In Vincent Tiberj et al. (eds) *Citoyens et partis après 2022 : éloignement, fragmentation*, Paris, PUF.

⁴ Rouban, L. (2022) *La Vraie Victoire du RN*, Paris, Les presses de sciences Po.

⁵ Challier, R. et al. (2023), Book review, Dahani, S., Delaine, E., Faury, F., Letourneur, *Sociologie politique du Rassemblement national. Enquêtes de terrain*, Villeneuve-d'Ascq, Presses universitaires du Septentrion.

⁶ Gaillard, M. (2024) 'Les mutations progressives du vote du Rassemblement national', Fondation Jean Jaurès. <https://www.jean-jaures.org/publication/les-mutations-progressives-du-vote-rassemblement-national/>; Mayer, N. (2015) 'The closing of the radical-right gender gap in France?' *French Politics*, 13 (4), pp.391-414.

⁷ Boursier, T., Lemor, A. (2025), 'Mesurer la pénétration des idées d'extrême droite dans les discours gouvernementaux français. Une analyse des déclarations de politique générale (1959-2024)', *Revue française de science politique*, 2-75, pp.261-291.

⁸ Gimenez, E., Voirol, O. (2017) 'Les agitateurs de la Toile. L'Internet des Droites extrêmes. Présentation du numéro', *Réseaux*, 2 (202/203), pp.9-37.

⁹ Monzat, R. 'Une nouvelle extrême droite ?' (entretien), *La vie des idées*, 18 April 2022, available at <https://laviedesidees.fr/Une-nouvelle-extreme-droite>

¹⁰ Rouban, L. (2022) *La Vraie Victoire du RN*, Paris, Les presses de sciences Po.

¹¹ Akkerman, T. (2015) 'Gender and the radical-right in Western Europe: a comparative analysis of policy agendas', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 49(1-2), pp.37-60.

¹² Faury, F. (2024) *Des électeurs ordinaires : enquête sur la normalisation de l'extrême droite*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil.

¹³ Calderaro, C. (2024), 'Quand l'extrême droite s'approprie le féminisme', in Ugo Palheta (ed.), *Extrême droite : la résistible ascension*, Paris, Editions Amsterdam, pp.117-127.

Camus, R. (2024) 'Journal de Renaud Camus', 24 janvier <https://www.renaud-camus.net/journal/2024/01/24/>; Crépon, S., Dézé, A., Mayer, N. (2015), *Les faux-semblants du Front national. Sociologie d'un parti politique*, Paris, Presses de Sciences Po; Leconte, C. (2020) 'Dire le genre à l'extrême droite en Allemagne et France : une étude comparée des techniques de présentation de soi de Marine Le Pen (FN) et Frauke Petry (AfD)', *Revue internationale de politique comparée*, 1- 27, pp.7-41;



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Pruvot, S. (2025) 'The Battle of Concepts: French Feminist Mobilizations Against the Far-right's Appropriation of the Feminist Legacy'. In: Smrdelj, R., Kuhar, R. (eds) *Anti-Gender Mobilizations in Europe and the Feminist Response*. Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology. Palgrave Macmillan, pp.81-105.

¹⁴ François, S. (2022) *Une avant-garde d'extrême droite : Contre-culture, conservatisme radical et tentation moderniste*, La Lanterne; Boursier, T., Lemor, A. (2025), 'Mesurer la pénétration des idées d'extrême droite dans les discours gouvernementaux français. Une analyse des déclarations de politique générale (1959-2024)', *Revue française de science politique*, 2-75, pp.261-291.

¹⁵ Plottu, P. et Macé, M. (2024) *Pop fascisme, Comment l'extrême droite a gagné la bataille culturelle sur internet*, Paris, Divergences; Bouron, S., (2025), *Politiser la haine. La bataille culturelle de l'extrême droite identitaire*, Paris, La Dispute.

¹⁶ Boyadjian, 2015; Albertini & Doucet, 2016; Gimenez & Voiron, 2017; Plottu & Macé, 2024; Chevarin, 2024

¹⁷ Cahuzac & François, 2013

¹⁸ Rouban, L. (2022) *La Vraie Victoire du RN*, Paris, Les presses de sciences Po.

¹⁹ Plottu, P. et Macé, M. (2024) *Pop fascisme, Comment l'extrême droite a gagné la bataille culturelle sur internet*, Paris, Divergences

²⁰ Camus, J. & Lebourg, N., (2015) *Les Droites Extrêmes En Europe*, Le seuil. Camus & Lebourg, 2015; François, 2017, 2021, 2024; Bouron, S. (2017) '« Des « fachos » dans les rues aux « héros » sur le Web. La formation des militants identitaires', *Réseaux*, 202-203, pp. 188-211 Monzat, R.'Une nouvelle extrême droite ?' (entretien), *La vie des idées*, 18 April 2022, available at

<https://laviedesidees.fr/Une-nouvelle-extreme-droite>. Mitrevitch, 2024; Jacquet Vaillant, 2019, 2021; Roger-Lacan, 2025

²¹ Plottu & Macé, 2024; La Horde, 2024; Street Press, 2025

²² Street Press (2025) CartoFaf : La cartographie de l'extrême droite radicale française' <https://www.streetpress.com/sujet/1730738259-carto-faf-cartographie-interactive-extreme-droite-radicale-france-mouvances-groupes-sections-locales-enquete-participative>

²³ Corcuff, P. (2025) 'The Concept of Confusionism: A Tool for Thinking About the Links Between the Crisis of the Left and the Success of the Far-right in France And... Elsewhere?' Left Renewal blog, May 11 <https://leftrenewal.org/webinars/corcuff-confusionism-en/>

²⁴ Sommier, I., Bensaadi, K. et Le Pape, L. (2021) 'Géographies de la violence' in Sommier, I., Crettiez, X., Audigier, F., *Violences politiques en France*, Presses de Sciences Po, pp. 287-312.

²⁵ Studnicki, M. (2021). 'Émergence des hérauts du masculinisme à la télévision. Soral, Zemmour et le discours contre la « féminisation de la société » (2000-2020)' *Le Temps des médias*, 36(1), pp.156-171.

²⁶ Gourarier, M. (2014) "La Communauté de la séduction. Quand les hommes veulent être le "prix" de l'échange," In Broqua, C (eds). *L'échange économique-sexuel, Éditions de l'EHESS*, 247- 266. Gourarier, 2014, Gourarier, M. (2017). *Alpha mâle : Séduire les femmes pour s'apprécier entre hommes*, Le Seuil; Lefort, E. (2018), 'Construire les hommes comme des victimes irresponsables. Les stratégies discursives de associations masculinistes françaises', *Glard ! Revue sur le langage, le genre et les sexualités*, 4, pp.1-15;



Dupré, D. & Carayol V. (2020), "Haïr et Railler Les Femmes En Ligne : Une Revue de La Littérature Sur Les Manifestations de Cyber Misogynie," *Genre En Séries*, 1, 1-23.; Morin, C. (2021) 'Le renouvellement de l'antiféminisme dans la manosphère : Idéalisations de la tradition et individualisme masculiniste', *Le Temps des médias*, n°36 (1), pp. 172-191; Morin, C. & Mésangeau, J. (2022) 'Les discours complotistes de l'antiféminisme en ligne', *Mots*, 130(3), pp.57-78; Andriamandroso, R. (2022), "Violence des hommes contre les femmes: regards croisés Espagne/France des effets d'une entreprise masculiniste de dénégation," *Thèse en Sociologie, Université Paris Cité*. Avila, 2023 & Alava, S. & Bravo-Villasante, M.A. (2025) "La machosphère misogyne : une étude transdisciplinaire des discours antiféministes et masculinistes en ligne," *Journal for Communication Studies*, 18 (1), 193-213. Alava, S. & Chami F. (2024), "Influenceuses radicales : cartographie des discours antiféministes sur les réseaux sociaux en France," *Recherches féministes* 37(2), 177-93.

²⁷ Blais, M. & Dupuis-Déri, F. (2022) "Bibliographie sur l'antiféminisme - Chantier sur l'antiféminisme", *Réseau québécois en études féministes*, https://reqef.uqam.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Reqef_bibliographie_8-5x11_final_web.pdf and Alava, S., Bravo-Villasante, M.A. (2025) 'La machosphère misogyne : une étude transdisciplinaire des discours antiféministes et masculinistes en ligne', *ESSACHESS- Journal for Communication Studies*, 18 (1), pp.193-213.

²⁸ Salle, M. (2019) 'Les « ABCD », révélateur d'une crise de l'égalité', *Revue Projet*, 368, pp.21-27.

²⁹ ISD (2021), 'Between conspiracy and extremism: A long COVID threat? Introductory paper', The future of Extremism series, https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Between-Conspiracy-and-Extremism_A-long-COVID-threat_Introductory-Paper.pdf

³⁰ Ayad, C. (2025) 'Projet d'attentat masculiniste déjoué : une première en France, où la menace « incel » est émergente', *Le Monde*, 02 July https://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2025/07/02/projet-d-attentat-masculiniste-dejoue-une-premiere-en-france-ou-la-menace-incest-est-emergente_6617439_3224.html

³¹ Turcan, M. (2025) 'Humiliation de personnes handicapées : le validisme, angle mort de l'affaire « Jean Pormanove »' *Mediapart*, 5 September, <https://www.mediapart.fr/journal/france/050925/humiliation-de-personnes-handicapees-le-validisme-angle-mort-de-l-affaire-jean-pormanove>

³² Leloup, D., Seelow, S. (2025) 'Néonazis, pédocriminels, masculinistes et nihilistes : enquête sur ces communautés de jeunes hommes fascinés par le mal et l'ultraviolence', *Le Monde*, 29 September.

³³ Plottu, P. et Macé, M. (2024) *Pop fascisme, Comment l'extrême droite a gagné la bataille culturelle sur internet*, Paris, Divergences.

³⁴ Maillé, P. (2020) 'Le jeu vidéo a été parasité par des imaginaires masculinistes', *Usbek&Rica*, 15 January, <https://usbeketrica.com/fr/article/le-jeu-video-a-ete-parasite-par-des-imaginaires-masculinistes>; Cova, B. & Dessart L. (2025) 'Incels : quand le masculinisme empêche les femmes de profiter pleinement des jeux en ligne', *The Conversation*, 7 May, <https://theconversation.com/incels-quand-le-masculinisme-empêche-les-femmes-de-profiler-pleinement-des-jeux-en-ligne-252305>

³⁵ Macé, M. & Plottu, P. (2023) 'Extrême droite MMA, totenkopf et militantes sexy... Le violent combo du «fight club» nazi' *Libération*, 31 January https://www.liberation.fr/politique/mma-totenkopf-et-militantes-sexy-le-violent-combo-du-fight-club-nazi-20230131_A3T653QAENGGFGH4CXBEITQYOA/

³⁶ Bossis, L. Daniel, L., Legal-Pallaro, R., Verrier, M., Gal-Régniez, A., Rouach, D. (2023) "Contre les discours masculinistes en ligne Recommandations à l'Union européenne et ses États membres pour lutter contre les cyberviolences sexistes et lgbtphobes," *Equipop & Institut du genre en politique*, 16 October <https://equipop.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Rapport-Contre-les-discours-masculinistes-en-ligne-EquipopIGG.pdf>



- ³⁷ Lamy, S. (2024) *La terreur masculiniste*, Editions du Détour.
- ³⁸ D'Angelo, R. & Lesueur, C. (2025) 'Pourquoi l'extrême droite mise autant sur les cryptomonnaies', *Le Monde*, 30 July https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2025/07/30/comment-l-extreme-droite-mise-sur-les-cryptomonnaies_6625401_823448.html
- ³⁹ Bossis, L. Daniel, L., Legal-Pallaro, R., Verrier, M., Gal-Régniez, A., Rouach, D. (2023) "Contre les discours masculinistes en ligne Recommandations à l'Union européenne et ses États membres pour lutter contre les cyberviolences sexistes et lgbtphobes," *Equipop & Institut du genre en politique*, 16 October <https://equipop.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Rapport-Contre-les-discours-masculinistes-en-ligne-EquipopIGG.pdf> and Della Sudda, M. (2022), *Les Nouvelles Femmes de Droite*, Hors d'atteinte.
- ⁴⁰ Bouron, S., (2025), *Politiser la haine. La bataille culturelle de l'extrême droite identitaire*, Paris, La Dispute.
- ⁴¹ Forth, C.E., Taithe, B. (2007) *French Masculinities History, Politics and Culture*, Palgrave Macmillan London; Corbin A., Courtine, J.J., & Vigarello, G., (eds.) (2011), *Histoire de la virilité: Volume I, L'invention de la virilité. De l'Antiquité aux Lumières*, Le Seuil. Grosjean, P. (2021) *Patriarcatisme*, Le Seuil; Sohn, A.-M. (2009) « Sois un homme ! » : *la construction de la masculinité au XIXe siècle*, Le Seuil.
- ⁴² *ibid*; Guérin, L. (2016), Book Review Corbin A., Courtine, J.J., & Vigarello, G., (eds.), *Histoire de la virilité : Tome III, La virilité en crise ? Le xxe-xxie siècle*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, *Corps*, 14(1), pp.185-190.
- ⁴³ Chapoutot, J. (2011) 'Virilité fasciste', in Corbin, A., Courtine, J. & Vigarello A. (eds) *Histoire de la virilité, Tome III*, Paris, Seuil, pp. 277-302.
- ⁴⁴ Dupuis Déri, F. (2018). *La crise de la masculinité. Autopsie d'un mythe tenace*, Les Éditions du remue ménage.
- ⁴⁵ Paternotte, D. (2021). 'Backlash : une mise en récit fallacieuse'. *La Revue Nouvelle*, 6(6), 11-15.
- ⁴⁶ Haut Conseil à l'Egalité (HCE) (2025), 'État des lieux du sexisme en France à l'heure de la polarisation', 22 janvier <https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/rapport-2025-sur-letat-du-sexisme-en-france-lheure-de-la-polarisation>
- ⁴⁷ Haut Conseil à l'Egalité (HCE) (2025), 'État des lieux du sexisme en France à l'heure de la polarisation', 22 janvier <https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/rapport-2025-sur-letat-du-sexisme-en-france-lheure-de-la-polarisation>
- ⁴⁸ Dupuis Déri, F. (2018). *La crise de la masculinité. Autopsie d'un mythe tenace*, Les Éditions du remue ménage.
- ⁴⁹ Gourarier, M. (2017). *Alpha mâle : Séduire les femmes pour s'apprécier entre hommes*, Le Seuil. P.9
- ⁵⁰ Studnicki, M. (2021). 'Émergence des hérauts du masculinisme à la télévision. Soral, Zemmour et le discours contre la « féminisation de la société » (2000-2020)' *Le Temps des médias*, 36(1), pp.156-171.
- ⁵¹ Carbonnel, J. (2025) 'From Provider to Precarious: How young men's economic decline fuels the anti-feminist backlash' *European Policy Centre*, 9 April 2025, available at : <https://www.epc.eu/publication/From-provider-to-precarious-How-young-mens-economic-decline-fuels-th-63effc/>
- ⁵² Lefort, E. (2018), 'Construire les hommes comme des victimes irresponsables. Les stratégies discursives de associations masculinistes françaises', *Glard ! Revue sur le langage, le genre et les sexualités*, 4, pp.1-15.; interviewee 4, 5.



- ⁵³ Grange, J. (2024) 'Le néo-virilisme et les mouvements d'extrême droite', *Cités* 97(1), pp.91-105.
- ⁵⁴ Abrial & Persico, 2018; Della Sudda, M. (2022), *Les Nouvelles Femmes de Droite*, Hors d'atteinte., Mayer, 2015; Durant, 2018
- ⁵⁵ Turchi, M. (2025) 'Comment La Droite Catho Identitaire Se Régénère', *Mediapart*, 29 November, <https://www.mediapart-fr.ezproxy.u-bordeaux-montaigne.fr/journal/france/291113/comment-la-droite-catho-identitaire-se-regenere>
- ⁵⁶ Kuhar, R. & Paternotte, D. (2017) *Anti-Gender Campaigns in Europe: Mobilizing against Equality*, Rowman & Littlefield International; Della Sudda, M. (2022), *Les Nouvelles Femmes de Droite*, Hors d'atteinte.; Ojeda et al., 2024
- ⁵⁷ Graff, A., & Korolczuk, E., *Anti-Gender Politics in the Populist Moment*, London: Routledge, 2022; Datta, N. (2019) 'Modern-Day Crusaders in Europe. Tradition, Family and Property: Analysis of a Transnational, Ultra-Conservative, Catholic-Inspired Influence Network', *Političke Perspektive* 8 (3), pp. 69–105. <https://www.epfweb.org/sites/default/files/202006/Modern%20Day%20Crusaders%20in%20Europe%20-%20TFP%20Report.pdf>; Delaporte, L. (2016) 'The obscure allies of France's anti-gay marriage movement', *Mediapart*, 16 October, <https://www.mediapart.fr/en/journal/france/161016/obscure-allies-frances-anti-gay-marriage-movement>
- ⁵⁸ Waldispuehl, E. (2024) 'Cybersurveiller et cyber-harcèler les féministes jusqu'à l'épuisement comme stratégie d'action des réseaux antiféministes en France et au Québec', *Revue française des sciences de l'information et de la communication* 28, pp.1-13; Maes, R (2023). 'Cyberharcèlement antiféministe' *Sextant* 39, pp.1-17.
- ⁵⁹ Meulenysen E. (2025), 'Nemesis, le collectif d'extrême droite qui provoque le cyberharcèlement de militantes féministes et d'élues de gauche', *L'humanité*, 19 August, <https://www.humanite.fr/politique/nemesis/nemesis-le-collectif-dextreme-droite-qui-provoque-le-cyber-harcelement-de-militantes-feministes-et-delues-de-gauche>
- ⁶⁰ Pruvot, S. (2025) 'The Battle of Concepts: French Feminist Mobilizations Against the Far-right's Appropriation of the Feminist Legacy'. In: Smrdelj, R., Kuhar, R. (eds) *Anti-Gender Mobilizations in Europe and the Feminist Response*. Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology. Palgrave Macmillan, pp.81-105.
- ⁶¹ Kiening, M. & Blidon, M. (2024). 'The RESIST Project Report Effects of, and Resistances to 'Anti-Gender' Mobilisations Across Europe: A Report on France', *RESIST Project*.
- ⁶² Leloup, D., Seelow, S. (2025) 'Néonazis, pédocriminels, masculinistes et nihilistes : enquête sur ces communautés de jeunes hommes fascinés par le mal et l'ultraviolence', *Le Monde*, 29 September.
- ⁶³ Vey V. & Perrier Z. (2022), L'humour antiféministe du Raptor et de Papacito: analyse d'une stratégie énonciative de l'extrême droite en ligne, *Cahiers de recherche en politique appliquée*, VIII(1), pp.64-81.
- ⁶⁴ Macé, M. & Plottu, P. (2023) 'Extrême droite MMA, totenkopf et militantes sexy... Le violent combo du «fight club» nazi' *Libération*, 31 January https://www.liberation.fr/politique/mma-totenkopf-et-militantes-sexy-le-violent-combo-du-fight-club-nazi-20230131_A3T653QAENGGFGH4CXBEITQYOA/
- ⁶⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶⁶ Bossis, L. Daniel, L., Legal-Pallaro, R., Verrier, M., Gal-Régniez, A., Rouach, D. (2023) "Contre les discours masculinistes en ligne Recommandations à l'Union européenne et ses États membres pour lutter contre les cyberviolences sexistes et lgbtphobes," *Equipop & Institut du genre en politique*, 16



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



October <https://equipop.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Rapport-Contre-les-discours-masculinistes-en-ligne-EquipopIGG.pdf> Rivoal, H. (2017) 'Virilité ou masculinité ? L'usage des concepts et leur portée théorique dans les analyses scientifiques des mondes masculins'. *Travailler : revue internationale de psychopathologie et de psychodynamique du travail*, n° 38(2), pp.141-159.

⁶⁷ Carrigan, T., Connell, R.W., et Lee, J., (1985) 'Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity', *Theory and Society*, 14(5), pp. 551-604; Connell, R.W. (2005) *Masculinities*, University of California Press; Connell, R.W. (2014) *Masculinités. Enjeux sociaux de l'hégémonie*, Paris, Éditions Amsterdam.

⁶⁸ Pruvot, S. (2025) 'The Battle of Concepts: French Feminist Mobilizations Against the Far-right's Appropriation of the Feminist Legacy'. In: Smrdelj, R., Kuhar, R. (eds) *Anti-Gender Mobilizations in Europe and the Feminist Response*. Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology. Palgrave Macmillan, pp.81-105.

⁶⁹ Blais, M. & Dupuis-Déri, F. (2014) 'Antiféminisme : pas d'exception française' *Travail, Genre et sociétés*, 32, pp.151-156.

⁷⁰ Farris, S.R. (2017) *In the Name of Women's Rights: The Rise of Femonationalism*, Durham: Duke University Press.

⁷¹ Alduy, C. (2024) 'Le « grand remplacement » lexical : enjeux sémantiques, performatifs et démocratiques de « la bataille des mots » à l'extrême droite, du Front national à Éric Zemmour', *Mots. Les langages du politique*, 136(3), pp. 23-40. P.29

⁷² *ibid*

⁷³ Bossis, L. Daniel, L., Legal-Pallaro, R., Verrier, M., Gal-Régniez, A., Rouach, D. (2023) "Contre les discours masculinistes en ligne Recommandations à l'Union européenne et ses États membres pour lutter contre les cyberviolences sexistes et lgbtphobes," *Equipop & Institut du genre en politique*, 16 October <https://equipop.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Rapport-Contre-les-discours-masculinistes-en-ligne-EquipopIGG.pdf>

Germany

⁷⁴ Wodak, R. (2020) *The Politics of Fear: The Shameless Normalization of Far-Right Discourse*. London: Sage; Zajak, S., Meuth, A.M. & Best, F. (2025) 'The Dynamics of (De-)Normalization of the Far-right: Perceptions in the German Population', *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*. [<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10767-025-09532-6>]

⁷⁵ Trzeciak, M. F. & Schäfer, J. (2020) "Aggressive Refugees, Violent Hooligans, Concerned Citizens': Reinterpreting Multiple Processes of Difference-Making in Mediatizations of Migration and Conflict in East Germany in the German Media', *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 19(1), pp. 55–67. [doi: 10.1080/15562948.2020.1856995]; El-Tayeb, F. (2016) *Undeutsch: Die Konstruktion des Anderen in der postmigrantischen Gesellschaft*. Bielefeld: transcript.

⁷⁶ In the German-speaking context, *völkisch* [racial, ethnic] refers to a far-right's ideological framework centered on race and the construction of a homogeneous, racially imagined *Volksgemeinschaft*; Bitzan, R. (2016) Geschlechterkonstruktionen und Geschlechterverhältnisse in der extremen Rechten. In: Virchow, F., Langebach, M., & Häusler, A. (eds) *Handbuch Rechtsextremismus. Edition Rechtsextremismus*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 325.

⁷⁷ Sauer, B. and Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus, p. 98.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



⁷⁸ Rüter, Daniela (2025) *Die Sex-Besessenheit der AfD. Rechte im 'Genderwahn'*. Bonn: Dietz; Sauer, B. & Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.

⁷⁹ The term 'migrantised' refers to a form of social categorisation in which 'migration' functions as a marker of social differentiation and essentialist, homogenising notions of society are invoked; Charsley, K. and Hoellerer, N. (2025) 'Migrantisation: a key concept', *Comparative Migration Studies*, 13, 73. doi: 10.1186/s40878-025-00497-1.

⁸⁰ Sauer, B. & Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus, pp. 89-90.

⁸¹ Sauer, B. & Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus; Kalkstein, F., Pickel, G. & Niendorf, J. (2024). Antifeminismus und Antisemitismus – eine autoritär motivierte Verbindung? In: O. Decker, J. Kiess, A. Heller & E. Brähler (eds) *Vereint im Ressentiment. Autoritäre Dynamiken und rechtsextreme Einstellungen*. Leipziger Autoritarismus Studie 2024. Gießen: Psychosozial Verlag, pp. 161–180.

⁸² Sauer, B. & Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus; Bitzan, R. (2016). Geschlechterkonstruktionen und Geschlechterverhältnisse in der extremen Rechten. In: Virchow, F., Langebach, M., & Häusler, A. (eds) *Handbuch Rechtsextremismus. Edition Rechtsextremismus*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 325–373.; Lehnert, E. (2024) Die extreme Rechte und Gender. In: Virchow, F., Hoffstadt, A., Heß, C. & Häusler, A. (eds) *Handbuch Rechtsextremismus*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 1–16.

⁸³ Forster, E. (2006) 'Männliche Resouveränisierungen', *Feministische Studien*, 2(06), pp. 194–207; Sauer, B. and Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus, p. 80; Markhof, Y. & Stuve, O. (2026). Die Attraktivität autoritärer Männlichkeiten im neoliberalen Kapitalismus. Available at: <https://www.projekt-gerdea.de/blog/von-der-attraktivitaet-autoritaerer-maennlichkeiten-im-neoliberalen-kapitalismus> (Accessed: 03.03.2026); Markhof, Y., Rückgauer, J. & Stuve, O. (2025). (Libertär-)Autoritäre Männlichkeiten in deutschen YouTube- und TikTok-Videos. In: *Journal für Entwicklungspolitik*. XXXI (3-4), pp. 117-137.

⁸⁴ Wodak, R. (2015). *The Politics of Fear: What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.; Sauer, B. and Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.

⁸⁵ Hövermann, A. (2025) *Die Verdopplung des AfD-Electorats: Erkenntnisse aus dem WSI-Erwerbspersonenpanel 2020–2025*. WSI Study 42. Düsseldorf: Hans-Böckler-Stiftung. P. 57-58

⁸⁶ Müller, H. (2025) #10 Wann kommt Deutschland aus der Rezession?, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (bpb). Available at: <https://www.bpb.de/themen/wirtschaft/zahlenbitte/562832/10-wann-kommt-deutschland-aus-der-rezession/> (Accessed: 2 November 2025).

⁸⁷ Waltersbacher, M. (2023) 'Empirische Analysen zur Lage am Wohnungsmarkt in Deutschland', *WSI Mitteilungen*, 75(3/2022). Available at: <https://www.nomos-elibrary.de/document/download/pdf/uuid/ee6602c7-88d3-3e69-9809-43496f0bc709> (Accessed: 21 November 2025).

⁸⁸ Bobeica, E., Koester, G. and Nickel, C. (2025) 'When groceries bite: the role of food prices for inflation in the euro area'. Available at: <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/blog/date/2025/html/ecb.blog20250925~7fd65a388a.en.html> (Accessed: 19 November 2025).



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



- ⁸⁹ Heuer, J.-O. (2021) 'Fiscal austerity, welfare retrenchment and political populism in Continental European welfare states', in Greve, B. (ed.) *Handbook on Austerity, Populism and the Welfare State*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, pp. 155–169. [doi: 10.4337/978178990]; Sauer, B. and Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.
- ⁹⁰ Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) (2024) *Two Years On: An analysis of Russian state and pro-Kremlin information warfare in the context of the invasion of Ukraine*. London: ISD. Available at: https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Two-Years-on_ISD.pdf (Accessed: 21 November 2025).
- ⁹¹ Sturm, G. (2020). Populismus und Klimaschutz. Der AfD-Klimadiskurs, *Soziologiemagazin*, 2-2020, pp. 69-92. [<https://doi.org/10.3224/soz.v13i2.06>]
- ⁹² Rensmann, L & de Zee, T 2022, 'The Pandemic Factor: The COVID-19 Crisis in the Alternative for Germany's 2021 Federal Election Campaign', *German Politics and Society*, vol. 40, no. 4, pp. 69-103. [<https://doi.org/10.3167/gps.2022.400404>]
- ⁹³ Bundesverband RIAS – Bundesverband der Recherche- und Informationsstellen Antisemitismus e.V. (2024). *Jahresbericht. Antisemitische Vorfälle in Deutschland 2024*. Available at: https://report-antisemitism.de/documents/04-06-25_RIAS_Bund_Jahresbericht_2024.pdf (Accessed: 03.03.2026).
- ⁹⁴ Wodak, R. (2020) *The Politics of Fear: The Shameless Normalization of Far-Right Discourse*. London: Sage; Zajak, S., Meuth, A.M. & Best, F. (2025) 'The Dynamics of (De-)Normalization of the Far-right: Perceptions in the German Population', *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*. [<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10767-025-09532-6>]
- ⁹⁵ Zajak, S., Meuth, A.M. and Best, F. (2025) 'The Dynamics of (De-)Normalization of the Far-right: Perceptions in the German Population', *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*. [<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10767-025-09532-6>]
- ⁹⁶ Tappe, I. (2022). Zwischen „Hate Speech“ und „Cancel Culture“: eine medienethische Betrachtung aktueller Debatten um Meinungs- und Redefreiheit im Internetzeitalter. In: Marci-Boehncke, G., Rath, M., Delere, M. & Höfer, H. (eds) *Medien – Demokratie – Bildung. Ethik in mediatisierten Welten*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 273–293. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-36446-5_16]
- ⁹⁷ It further manifests in attacks on regulatory measures, when far-right actors, for example, target the Digital Service Act (DSA) and 'trusted flaggers' as alleged instruments of censorship; For a commentary, see Koopmann, C. (2024) *Soziale Netzwerke Zensur! Oder nicht?* In *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 11 Oktober 2024. Available at: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/trusted-flagger-soziale-medien-dsa-zensur-lux.5q1zDV46dMR4ak4W8dwncK?> (Accessed: 23 November 2025).
- ⁹⁸ Biskamp, F. (2024) 'A societal shift to the right or the political mobilisation of a shrinking minority? Explaining rise and radicalisation of the AfD in Germany', *International Journal of Public Policy*, 17(3), pp. 139–165. [doi: 10.1504/IJPP.2024.138373]; Sauer, B. and Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus. Chapter 4.
- ⁹⁹ Bundeswahlleiterin (2025) 'Vorläufiges Ergebnis der Bundestagswahl 2025 steht fest', Pressemitteilung Nr. 27/25, 24 Februar. Available at: https://www.bundeswahlleiterin.de/info/presse/mitteilungen/bundestagswahl-2025/27_25_vorlaeufiges-ergebnis.html (Accessed: 22 November 2025).
- ¹⁰⁰ Wahlen im Freistaat Thüringen (2024). Landtagswahl 2024 in Thüringen - endgültiges Ergebnis. Available at: wahlen.thueringen.de. 12 September 2024. [Online] Available at:



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



<https://www.wahlen.thueringen.de/> (Accessed: 23 November 2024); Sächsischer Landtag (2024) Ergebnisse der Landtagswahl 2024 (Endgültige Ergebnisse). Available at: <https://www.landtag.sachsen.de/de/mitgestalten/wahlen/wahlergebnisse-9124.cshml?> (Accessed: 23 November 2025).

¹⁰¹ Land Brandenburg (2024) Ergebnis der Bürgermeisterwahl in Brandenburg an der Havel. Available at: <https://wahlen.brandenburg.de/wahlen/de/kommunalwahlen/ergebnisse/buergermeisterwahlen> (Accessed: 23 November 2025); Die Landeswahlleiterin des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen (2024): Wahlergebnisse in NRW. Available at: <https://www.wahlergebnisse.nrw/kommunalwahlen/2025/index.shtml> (Accessed: 23 November 2025).

¹⁰² Zick, A., Küpper, B., Mokros, N. & Eden, M. (2025) *Die angespannte Mitte. Rechtsextreme und demokratiegefährdende Einstellungen in Deutschland 2024/25*. Bonn: Dietz.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Decker, O., Kiess, J., Heller, A. & Brähler, E. (eds) (2024) Vereint im Ressentiment: Autoritäre Dynamiken und rechtsextreme Einstellungen. Leipziger Autoritarismus Studie 2024. Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag.

¹⁰⁵ Bundesministerium des Innern/Bundeskriminalamt (BMI/BKA) (2024) *Factsheet: Bundesweite Fallzahlen 2024 – Politisch motivierte Kriminalität*. Available at: www.bka.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/UnsereAufgaben/Deliktsbereiche/PMK/2024PMKFallzahlen.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2 (Accessed: 2 November 2025).

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.; VBRG – Verband der Beratungsstellen für Betroffene rechter, rassistischer und antisemitischer Gewalt e.V. (2025) *Rechte, rassistische und antisemitische Gewalt in Deutschland 2024*. Available at: <https://verband-brg.de/rechte-rassistische-und-antisemitische-gewalt-in-deutschland-2024-jahresbilanzen-der-opferberatungsstellen/> (Accessed: 2 November 2025).

¹⁰⁷ Lola für Demokratie e.V. (2025) *Anti-feministische Vorfälle in Deutschland 2024: Kurzbericht zu Zahlen und Analysen der Meldestelle Antifeminismus*. Available at: https://antifeminismus-melden.de/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2025/08/Antifeminismus2024_KurzberichtMeldestelle_LOLAEV2025_WEB.pdf (Accessed: 2 November 2025).

¹⁰⁸ Bundesministerium des Innern/Bundeskriminalamt (BMI/BKA, 2024) *Factsheet: Bundesweite Fallzahlen 2024 – Politisch motivierte Kriminalität*. Available at: www.bka.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/UnsereAufgaben/Deliktsbereiche/PMK/2024PMKFallzahlen.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2 (Accessed: 2 November 2025).

¹⁰⁹ Çağlar, G., Hammer, D., Drath, C., Matlach, P. and Schwarz, K. (2025) *Mapping the Ger'Manosphere': A Pilot Study*. SCRIPTS Working Paper No. 57. Berlin: Cluster of Excellence 2055 'Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)'.

¹¹⁰ For both the material and statistical specific dimensions of extreme right violence in East Germany, see Radvan, H. (2025) 'Rechtsextremismus in Ostdeutschland – Spezifik oder Ossifizierung? Kategorien für eine mehrebenenanalytische Betrachtung', *Berliner Blätter*, 91, pp. 103–115.

¹¹¹ Botsch, G. (2016) "Nationale Opposition' in der demokratischen Gesellschaft: Zur Geschichte der extremen Rechten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland", in Virchow, F., Langebach, M. and Häusler, A. (eds) *Handbuch Rechtsextremismus*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, Chapter 3.3.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



¹¹² *Kameradschaften* [neo-Nazi comradeship networks] are informal, often militant far-right youth and activist groups in Germany, typically organized around neo-Nazi worldviews and paramilitary training, operating outside official party structures.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ The names of the victims are: Enver Şimşek, Abdurrahim Özüdoğru, Süleyman Taşköprü, Habil Kiliç, Mehmet Turgut, İsmail Yaşar, Theodoros Boulgarides, Mehmet Kubaşık, Halit Yozgat und Michèle Kiesewetter.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 66-67.

¹¹⁶ Obermüller, C., Radvan, H. & Schiffner, J. (2023) "Es wäre gut, wenn Putin hier mal auskehren könnte" – Analysen zu Mobilisierungen (extrem) rechter Akteure in Cottbus in Reaktion auf den russischen Angriffskrieg gegen die Ukraine 2022', *MIKOWA Arbeitspapiere*, (6). doi:10.26127/BTUOpen-6504; Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) (2024) *Two Years On: An analysis of Russian state and pro-Kremlin information warfare in the context of the invasion of Ukraine*. London: ISD. Available at: https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Two-Years-on_ISD.pdf (Accessed: 21 November 2025).

¹¹⁷ The perpetrator, Stephan E., admitted that Lübcke's pro-refugee statements were one of the main motives for his act; Rivera, E. (2019) The assassination of Walter Lübcke: A murky tale of Germany's first political murder in over fifty years. IERES Occasional Papers, no. 5. Available at: <https://www.illiberalism.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/IERES-Occasional-Paper-5-November-2019.pdf> (Accessed: 21 November 2025), p. 6.

¹¹⁸ The names of the individuals who were assassinated are: Jana Lange, and Kevin Schwarze (Halle); Gökhan Gültekin, Sedat Gürbüz, Said Nesar Hashemi, Mercedes Kierpacz, Hamza Kurtović, Vili Viorel Păun, Fatih Saraçoğlu, Ferhat Unvar and Kaloyan Velkov (Hanau).

¹¹⁹ Kasparek, B. and Speer, M. (2015). *Of Hope. Ungarn und der lange Sommer der Migration*, 7 Sept. 2015. Available at: bordermonitoring.eu/ungarn/2015/09/of-hope (Accessed: 03.03.2026).

¹²⁰ Trzeciak, M. F. and Schäfer, J. (2020) 'Aggressive Refugees, Violent Hooligans, Concerned Citizens': Reinterpreting Multiple Processes of Difference-Making in Mediatizations of Migration and Conflict in East Germany in the German Media', *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 19(1), pp. 55–67. doi: 10.1080/15562948.2020.1856995; Dietze, G. (2016) 'Das Ereignis Köln', *Femina Politica* 1, pp. 93-102.

¹²¹ VBRG – Verband der Beratungsstellen für Betroffene rechter, rassistischer und antisemitischer Gewalt (2017): *Jahresbilanz 2016 des VBRG: 1948 Fälle rechter, rassistischer und antisemitisch motivierter Gewalt in Ostdeutschland, Berlin und NRW*. Available at: <https://verband-brg.de/pressemitteilung-27042017-jahresstatistik-2016-der-opferberatungen-rechte-gewalt/> (Accessed: 23 November 2025).

¹²² Ataç, I., Kron, S., Riedner, L. & Schwiertz, H. (2021) 'Editorial', *movements. Journal for Critical Migration and Border Regime Studies*, 6(1). Available at: <http://movements-journal.org/issues/09.open-call/01.ilker-atac,stefanie-kron,lisa-riedner,helge-schwiertz--editorial~en.html> (Accessed: 23 November 2025).

¹²³ Kalkstein, F., Pickel, G. & Niendorf, J. (2024). Antifeminismus und Antisemitismus – eine autoritär motivierte Verbindung? In: O. Decker, J. Kiess, A. Heller & E. Brähler (eds) *Vereint im Ressentiment. Autoritäre Dynamiken und rechtsextreme Einstellungen*. Leipziger Autoritarismus Studie 2024. Gießen: Psychosozial Verlag, pp. 161–180; Jasser, G. (2023) 'Anti-feminismus und LGBTQIA*-Feindlichkeit als Brückennarrative der Radikalen Rechten', *Demokratie-Dialog*, 13, pp. 62–69. [doi: 10.17875/gup2023-2461]; Blum, R. (2019) *Angst um die Vormachtstellung. Zum Begriff und zur Geschichte des deutschen*



Antifeminismus. Hamburg: Marta Press; Lang, J. & Peters, U. (eds) (2018) *Antifeminismus in Bewegung: Aktuelle Debatten um Geschlecht und sexuelle Vielfalt*. Hamburg: Marta press.

¹²⁴ Kalkstein, F., Pickel, G. & Niendorf, J. (2024). Antifeminismus und Antisemitismus – eine autoritär motivierte Verbindung? In: O. Decker, J. Kiess, A. Heller & E. Brähler (eds) *Vereint im Ressentiment*. Autoritäre Dynamiken und rechtsextreme Einstellungen. Leipziger Autoritarismus Studie 2024. Gießen: Psychosozial Verlag, pp. 161–180.

¹²⁵ Sauer, M. (2025) 'Transformative Listening: An Aesthetic Proposal to Justice – The 2017 NSU Tribunal in Cologne', *Krisis. Journal for Contemporary Philosophy*, 45 (1), pp. 23-42. [<https://doi.org/10.21827/krisis.45.1.42346>]; Tribunal NSU-Komplex auflösen (2025): Tribunal #1, Köln, 17.-21.05.2017. „Wir klagen an.“ Das erste NSU-Tribunal. Available at: <https://www.nsu-tribunal.de/> (Accessed: 2 November 2025)

¹²⁶ Sauer, B. & Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus; Kalkstein, F., Pickel, G. & Niendorf, J. (2024). Antifeminismus und Antisemitismus – eine autoritär motivierte Verbindung? In: O. Decker, J. Kiess, A. Heller & E. Brähler (eds) *Vereint im Ressentiment*. Autoritäre Dynamiken und rechtsextreme Einstellungen. Leipziger Autoritarismus Studie 2024. Gießen: Psychosozial Verlag, pp. 161–180.

¹²⁷ Jasser, G. (2023) 'Anti-feminismus und LGBTQIA*-Feindlichkeit als Brückennarrative der Radikalen Rechten', *Demokratie-Dialog*, 13, pp. 62–69. doi: 10.17875/gup2023-2461; See also Stuve, O. & Markhof, Y. (2025) Die Attraktivität autoritärer Männlichkeiten im neoliberalen Kapitalismus. Available at: <https://www.projekt-gerdea.de/blog/von-der-attraktivitaet-autoritaerer-maennlichkeiten-im-neoliberalen-kapitalismus> (Accessed: 2 November 2025); Markhof, Y., Rückgauer, J. & Stuve, O. (2025). (Libertär-)Autoritäre Männlichkeiten in deutschen YouTube- und TikTok-Videos. In: *Journal für Entwicklungspolitik*. XXXI (3-4), pp. 117-137.

¹²⁸ Çağlar, G., Hammer, D., Drath, C., Matlach, P. and Schwarz, K. (2025) *Mapping the Germanosphere: A Pilot Study*. SCRIPTS Working Paper No. 57. Berlin: Cluster of Excellence 2055 'Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)'; Rothermel, A.-K. (2023) The role of evidence-based misogyny in anti-feminist online communities of the 'Manosphere'. *Big Data & Society*, 10(1). [<https://doi.org/10.1177/20539517221145671>]; Markhof, Y., Rückgauer, J. & Stuve, O. (2025). (Libertär-)Autoritäre Männlichkeiten in deutschen YouTube- und TikTok-Videos. In: *Journal für Entwicklungspolitik*. XXXI (3-4), pp. 117-137.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Virchow, F. (2010) 'Tapfer, stolz, opferbereit – Überlegungen zum extrem rechten Verständnis „idealer Männlichkeit“', in Claus, R., Lehnert, E. and Müller, Y. (eds) *Was ein rechter Mann ist ... Männlichkeiten im Rechtsextremismus*. Berlin: Karl Dietz, pp. 39–52; Lehnert, E. (2024) Die extreme Rechte und Gender. In: Virchow, F., Hoffstadt, A., Heß, C. & Häusler, A. (eds) *Handbuch Rechtsextremismus*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 1–16

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Bruns, J. & Strobl, N. (2015) '(Anti-)Emanzipatorische Antworten von Rechts', *Momentum Quarterly. Zeitschrift für sozialen Fortschritt*, 4(4), pp. 205-217.

¹³³ Ibid.; Amadeu Antonio Stiftung (2021): *Frauenhassende Online-Subkulturen. Ideologien – Strategien – Handlungsempfehlungen*. Berlin: Amadeu Antonio Stiftung, p. 11.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



-
- ¹³⁴ Markhof, Y., Rügauer, J. & Stuve, O. (2025). (Libertär-)Autoritäre Männlichkeiten in deutschen YouTube- und TikTok-Videos. In: Journal für Entwicklungspolitik. XXXI (3-4), pp. 117-137.
- ¹³⁵ Ayyadi, K. (2025) „Ketzer der Neuzeit“ Extrem rechter Influencer und Missionar, Belltower News, Available at: <https://www.belltower.news/ketzer-der-neuzeit-extrem-rechter-influencer-und-missionar-160053/> (Accessed: 2 November 2025).
- ¹³⁶ Ibid.
- ¹³⁷ Hegemonic masculinity refers to the socially and culturally most dominant form of masculinity, which asserts dominance over women as well as other marginalised and subordinated masculinities; Connell, R. (1995). *Masculinities*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- ¹³⁸ Lengersdorf, D. & Meuser, M. (2016): Der Strukturwandel von Erwerbsarbeit und die Transformation von Männlichkeiten. Eine Einleitung. In: Lengersdorf, D. & Meuser, M. (eds) *Männlichkeiten und der Strukturwandel von Erwerbsarbeit in globalisierten Gesellschaften. Diagnosen und Perspektiven*. Weinheim: Beltz Juventa, pp. 7-14; Sauer, B. and Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus. P. 63.
- ¹³⁹ Sauer, B. and Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.
- ¹⁴⁰ Scholz, S. (2008) 'Sozialistische Helden: Hegemoniale Männlichkeit in der DDR', in Scholz, S. and Willms, W. (eds.) *Postsozialistische Männlichkeiten in einer globalisierten Welt*. Münster: Lit, pp. 11–36.
- ¹⁴¹ Dölling, I. (2022) 'Wie modern waren die Geschlechterverhältnisse in der DDR?', in Aleksander, K., Auga, U. E., Dvorak, E., Heft, K., Jähnert, G. and Schimkat, H. (eds.) *Feministische Visionen vor und nach 1989. Geschlecht, Medien und Aktivismen in der DDR, BRD und im östlichen Europa*. Opladen: Verlag Barbara Budrich, P. 175.
- ¹⁴² Brandes, H. (2008) 'Hegemoniale Männlichkeiten in Ost- und Westdeutschland', in Scholz, S. and Willms, W. (eds) *Postsozialistische Männlichkeiten in einer globalisierten Welt*. Berlin: Lit Verlag, pp. 59–77.
- ¹⁴³ Sauer, B. and Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus. Chapter 4.
- ¹⁴⁴ Stuve, O. & Markhof, Y. (2025) *Die Attraktivität autoritärer Männlichkeiten im neoliberalen Kapitalismus*. Available at: <https://www.projekt-gerdea.de/blog/von-der-attraktivitaet-autoritaerer-maennlichkeiten-im-neoliberalen-kapitalismus> (Accessed: 2 November 2025).
- ¹⁴⁵ Lola für Demokratie e.V. (2025) *Anti-feministische Vorfälle in Deutschland 2024: Kurzbericht zu Zahlen und Analysen der Meldestelle Antifeminismus*. Available at: https://antifeminismus-melden.de/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2025/08/Antifeminismus2024_KurzberichtMeldestelle_LOLAeV2025_WEB.pdf (Accessed: 2 November 2025); Kalkstein, F., Pickel, G. & Niendorf, J. (2024). Antifeminismus und Antisemitismus – eine autoritär motivierte Verbindung? In: O. Decker, J. Kiess, A. Heller & E. Brähler (eds) *Vereint im Ressentiment. Autoritäre Dynamiken und rechtsextreme Einstellungen*. Leipziger Autoritarismus Studie 2024. Gießen: Psychosozial Verlag, pp. 161–180; Höcker, C., Pickel, G. & Decker, O. (2020) 'Antifeminismus – das Geschlecht im Autoritarismus? Die Messung von Antifeminismus und Sexismus in Deutschland auf der Einstellungsebene', in Decker, O. & Brähler, E. (eds.) *Autoritäre Dynamiken. Alte Ressentiments – Neue Radikalität*. Leipziger Autoritarismus Studie 2020. Gießen: Psychosozial Verlag, pp. 249–282.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



- ¹⁴⁶ Stuve, O. and Markhof, Y. (2025) *Die Attraktivität autoritärer Männlichkeiten im neoliberalen Kapitalismus*. Available at: <https://www.projekt-gerdea.de/blog/von-der-attraktivitaet-autoritaerer-maennlichkeiten-im-neoliberalen-kapitalismus> (Accessed: 2 November 2025).
- ¹⁴⁷ Hudde, A. (2025) *Die Polarisierung der Geschlechter: Der moderne Gender-Gap im Wahlverhalten bis 2025*. Bonn: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. Available at: <https://www.fes.de/feshistory/blog/die-polarisierung-der-geschlechter> (Accessed: 24 November 2025).
- ¹⁴⁸ Wippermann, C. (2023) Männerperspektiven: Einstellung von Männern zu Gleichstellung und Gleichstellungspolitik. DELTA-Institut für Sozial- und Ökologieforschung GmbH. Available at: <https://maennerperspektiven.de> (Accessed: 2 November 2025).
- ¹⁴⁹ Forster, E. (2006) 'Männliche Resouveränisierungen', *Feministische Studien*, 2(06), pp. 194–207; Sauer, B. and Penz, O. (2023) *Konjunktur der Männlichkeit: Affektive Strategien der autoritären Rechten*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus. P. 80.
- ¹⁵⁰ Theweleit, K. (1987) *Male Fantasies*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- ¹⁵¹ Virchow, F. (2010) 'Tapfer, stolz, opferbereit – Überlegungen zum extrem rechten Verständnis „idealer Männlichkeit“, in Claus, R., Lehnert, E. and Müller, Y. (eds) *Was ein rechter Mann ist ... Männlichkeiten im Rechtsextremismus*. Berlin: Karl Dietz, pp. 39–52; Lehnert, E. (2024) Die extreme Rechte und Gender. In: Virchow, F., Hoffstadt, A., Heß, C. & Häusler, A. (eds) *Handbuch Rechtsextremismus*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 1–16.
- ¹⁵² Ibid.
- ¹⁵³ Mellea, J. & Düker, J. (2024) Eine neue Generation von Neonazis: Mobilisierungen gegen CSD-Veranstaltungen im Jahr 2024 durch rechtsextreme Jugendgruppen im Internet. CeMAS Research Paper, November 2024. Available at: <https://cemas.io/publikationen/neue-generation-neonazis-mobilisierung-gegen-csd-veranstaltungen/> (Accessed: 2 November 2025).
- ¹⁵⁴ Lüdecke, R. (2024) „Remigration‘: Rechtsextremes Framing für Deportations-Fantasien. Available at: <https://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/remigration-rechtsextremes-framing-fuer-deportations-fantasien-108077/> (Accessed: 2 November 2025); Wagner, F. (2025) 'Remigration', in Bartels, I., Lühr, I., Reinecke, C., Schäfer, P., Stielike, L. and Stierl, M. (eds.) *Inventar der Migrationsbegriffe*, 20 February 2025. Available at: www.migrationsbegriffe.de/remigration (Accessed: 20 November 2025).
- ¹⁵⁵ Çağlar, G., Hammer, D., Drath, C., Matlach, P. and Schwarz, K. (2025) *Mapping the Germanosphere: A Pilot Study*. SCRIPTS Working Paper No. 57. Berlin: Cluster of Excellence 2055 'Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)'. P. 38. ; Interviews with DISSENS and VPN; for an overview of the online and offline anti-LGBTQA+ landscape, see ISD (Fiennes, G. & Matlach, P.) (2025) *Investigation. Five-year overview of the online and offline anti-LGBTQI+ landscape*. Available at: https://www.isdglobal.org/digital_dispatches/five-year-overview-of-the-online-and-offline-anti-LGBTQI-landscape/ (Accessed: 24 November 2025).
- ¹⁵⁶ Çağlar, G., Hammer, D., Drath, C., Matlach, P. and Schwarz, K. (2025) *Mapping the Germanosphere: A Pilot Study*. SCRIPTS Working Paper No. 57. Berlin: Cluster of Excellence 2055 'Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)'.
- ¹⁵⁷ Ganesh, B. (2025) 'The Western Far-right and Digital Technology: Fuzzy Collectivity From Translocal Whiteness to Networked Metapolitics', *Sociology Compass*, 19: e70038. [<https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.70038>]; Markhof, Y., Rügauer, J. & Stuve, O. (2025). '(Libertär-)Autoritäre Männlichkeiten in deutschen YouTube- und TikTok-Videos'. In: *Journal für Entwicklungspolitik*. XXXXI (3-4), pp. 117-137.



¹⁵⁸ Globalwitness (2025) *X and TikTok algorithms push pro-AfD content to non-partisan German users: New Analysis*. Available at: <https://globalwitness.org/en/press-releases/x-and-tiktok-algorithms-push-pro-afd-content-to-non-partisan-german-users-new-analysis/> (Accessed: 9 December 2025).

¹⁵⁹ See also Sauer, B. (2023) 'Rechtspopulismus und Geschlecht im Internet: Wie rechtspopulistische Parteien Geschlecht und Sexualität verhandeln', in Dorer, J., Geiger, B., Hipfl, B. and Ratković, V. (eds) *Handbuch Medien und Geschlecht*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS. doi: 10.1007/978-3-658-20707-6_38.

¹⁶⁰ See also Blackwell, L. (2025) *Content Moderation Futures*. Available at: <https://arxiv.org/abs/2509.09076> (Accessed: 25 November 2025).

¹⁶¹ Tomczyk, S., Pielmann, D. & Schmidt, S. More Than a Glance: Investigating the Differential Efficacy of Radicalizing Graphical Cues with Right-Wing Messages. *Eur J Crim Policy Res* 28, 245–267 (2022). [<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10610-022-09508-8>]

¹⁶² See also Goetz, J. (2022) 'Echte Männer und Frauen' – Zur Bedeutung von Gender in der Rechtsextremismusprävention', in Goetz, J., Reitmair-Juárez, S. and Lange, D. (eds) *Handlungsstrategien gegen Rechtsextremismus. Citizenship. Studien zur Politischen Bildung*. Springer VS, Wiesbaden.

¹⁶³ On different masculinity types in the German 'Manosphere', including 'Sigma' and 'Alpha Males', see Çağlar, G., Hammer, D., Drath, C., Matlach, P. and Schwarz, K. (2025) *Mapping the Germanosphere: A Pilot Study*. SCRIPTS Working Paper No. 57. Berlin: Cluster of Excellence 2055 'Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)'; see also Ging, D. (2019). 'Alphas, Betas, and Incels: Theorizing the Masculinities of the Manosphere'. *Men and Masculinities*, 22(4), pp. 638-657.

¹⁶⁴ See also Lehnert, E. (2024) Die extreme Rechte und Gender. In: Virchow, F., Hoffstadt, A., Heß, C. & Häusler, A. (eds) *Handbuch Rechtsextremismus*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 1–16.

¹⁶⁵ See also Lehnert, E. & Radvan, H. (2012) 'Gender als wesentlicher Bestandteil des modernen Rechtsextremismus. Konsequenzen und Herausforderungen für das pädagogische Handeln', *Offene Jugendarbeit*, 4, pp. 34–50.

¹⁶⁶ See also Bitzan, R. (2016) 'Geschlechterkonstruktionen und Geschlechterverhältnisse in der extremen Rechten'. In: Virchow, F., Langebach, M., & Häusler, A. (eds) *Handbuch Rechtsextremismus. Edition Rechtsextremismus*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 339–340.

¹⁶⁷ See also Rückgauer, J. & Stuve, O. (2025). '(Libertär-)Autoritäre Männlichkeiten in deutschen YouTube- und TikTok-Videos'. In: *Journal für Entwicklungspolitik*. XXXI (3-4), pp. 117-137.

¹⁶⁸ Markhof, Y., Rückgauer, J. & Stuve, O. (2025). '(Libertär-)Autoritäre Männlichkeiten in deutschen YouTube- und TikTok-Videos. In: *Journal für Entwicklungspolitik*. XXXI (3-4), pp. 117-137.

¹⁶⁹ On different masculinity types in the German 'Manosphere', including 'Sigma' and 'Alpha Males', see Çağlar, G., Hammer, D., Drath, C., Matlach, P. and Schwarz, K. (2025) *Mapping the Germanosphere: A Pilot Study*. SCRIPTS Working Paper No. 57. Berlin: Cluster of Excellence 2055 'Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)'; see also Ging, D. (2019). 'Alphas, Betas, and Incels: Theorizing the Masculinities of the Manosphere'. *Men and Masculinities*, 22(4), pp. 638-657.

¹⁷⁰ Forster, E. (2006) 'Männliche Resouveränisierungen', *Feministische Studien*, 2(06), pp. 194–207

¹⁷¹ Mellea, J. & Düker, J. (2024) Eine neue Generation von Neonazis: Mobilisierungen gegen CSD-Veranstaltungen im Jahr 2024 durch rechtsextreme Jugendgruppen im Internet. CeMAS Research Paper, November 2024. Available at: <https://cemas.io/publikationen/neue-generation-neonazis-mobilisierung-gegen-csd-veranstaltungen/> (Accessed: 2 November 2025).



- ¹⁷² CeMAS (2023) *Chronologie einer Radikalisierung: Wie Telegram zur wichtigsten Plattform für Verschwörungsideologien und Rechtsextremismus wurde*. Available at: https://cemas.io/publikationen/telegram-chronologie-einer-radikalisierung/2023-03-22_CeMAS_Telegram_Chronologie_einer_Radikalisierung.pdf (Accessed: 02.11.2025). P. 24; ISD (Fiennes, G, & Matlach, P.) (2025) Investigation | Five-year overview of the online and offline anti-LGBTQI+ landscape. Available at: https://www.isdglobal.org/digital_dispatches/five-year-overview-of-the-online-and-offline-anti-LGBTQI-landscape/ (Accessed: 24 November 2025).
- ¹⁷³ Amadeu Antonio Stiftung (2020) *Alternative Wirklichkeiten. Monitoring rechts-alternativer Medienstrategien*. Available at: https://www.belltower.news/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/01/Monitoring_2020_web.pdf (Accessed: 04.03.2026).
- ¹⁷⁴ Global Network on Extremism & Technology (2025) *Youth Radicalisation in the Gaming Sphere: An Exploration of Identity-Based Hate and Extremist Content on Roblox*. Available at: <https://gnet-research.org/2025/10/28/youth-radicalisation-in-the-gaming-sphere-an-exploration-of-identity-based-hate-and-extremist-content-on-roblox/> (Accessed: 1 December 2025); Global Network on Extremism & Technology (2025) *Playing with Hate: How Far-Right Extremists Use Minecraft to Gamify Radicalisation*. Available at: <https://gnet-research.org/2025/07/02/playing-with-hate-how-far-right-extremists-use-minecraft-to-gamify-radicalisation/> (Accessed: 1 December 2025).
- ¹⁷⁵ Trzeciak, M. F. and Schäfer, J. (2020) 'Aggressive Refugees, Violent Hooligans, Concerned Citizens': Reinterpreting Multiple Processes of Difference-Making in Mediatizations of Migration and Conflict in East Germany in the German Media', *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 19(1), pp. 55–67. doi: 10.1080/15562948.2020.1856995; Dietze, G. (2016) 'Das Ereignis Köln', *Femina Politica* 1, pp. 93-102.
- ¹⁷⁶ CeMas (2022): Q VADIS? Zur Verbreitung von QAnon im deutschsprachigen Raum. Available at: https://cemas.io/publikationen/q-vadis-zur-verbreitung-von-qanon-im-deutschsprachigen-raum/CeMAS_Q_Vadis_Zur_Verbreitung_von_QAnon_im_deutschsprachigen_Raum.pdf (Accessed: 2 December 2015).
- ¹⁷⁷ Alin, S. (2025) 'Ostmullen': Wie junge Frauen zum rechten Lifestyle-Phänomen werden', Amadeu Antonio Stiftung. Available at: <https://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/ostmullen-wie-junge-frauen-zum-rechten-lifestyle-phaenomen-werden-146889/> (Accessed: 30 December 2026). P. 23
- ¹⁷⁸ Amadeu Antonio Stiftung, Fachstelle Gender, Gruppenbezogene Menschenfeindlichkeit und Rechtsextremismus (2024): *(R)echte Männer und Frauen. Analysen zu Geschlecht und Rechtsextremismus*. Berlin: Amadeu Antonio Stiftung. Available at: <https://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/publikationen/rechte-maenner-und-frauen/> (Accessed: 04.03.2026).
- ¹⁷⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁸⁰ See also Markhof, Y., Rückgauer, J. & Stuve, O. (2025). (Libertär-)Autoritäre Männlichkeiten in deutschen YouTube- und TikTok-Videos. In: *Journal für Entwicklungspolitik*. XXXI (3-4), pp. 117-137.
- ¹⁸¹ Mellea, J. & Düker, J. (2024) Eine neue Generation von Neonazis: Mobilisierungen gegen CSD-Veranstaltungen im Jahr 2024 durch rechtsextreme Jugendgruppen im Internet. CeMAS Research Paper, November 2024. Available at: <https://cemas.io/publikationen/neue-generation-neonazis-mobilisierung-gegen-csd-veranstaltungen/> (Accessed: 2 November 2025).
- ¹⁸² Habib, H., Srinivasan, P. & Nithyanand, R. (2022) Making a Radical Misogynist: How online social engagement with the Manosphere influences traits of radicalization. Available at: <https://arxiv.org/pdf/2202.08805> (Accessed: 3 December 2025); Aiolfi, I., Palena, N., Ó Ciardha, C. et al. (2024) 'The incel phenomenon: A systematic scoping review', *Current Psychology*, 43, pp. 26264–26278.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



¹⁸³ Lang, J. (2025) '10 Jahre nach dem NSU: Vom Reden über Frauenhass und rechten Terror', in *Rechtsextremismus und Geschlecht im Wandel*, Edition Rechtsextremismus. Wiesbaden: Springer VS. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-48009-7_8 (Accessed: 9 December 2025).

¹⁸⁴ Blum, R. (2021) 'Rechter Terror in Deutschland', in Nobrega, O. S., Quent, M. and Zipf, J. (eds) *Rassismus. Macht. Vergessen. Von München über den NSU bis Hanau: Symbolische und materielle Kämpfe entlang rechten Terrors*. Bielefeld: transcript, pp. 161–174; Lang, J. (2025) '10 Jahre nach dem NSU: Vom Reden über Frauenhass und rechten Terror', in *Rechtsextremismus und Geschlecht im Wandel*, Edition Rechtsextremismus. Wiesbaden: Springer VS. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-48009-7_8 (Accessed: 9 December 2025).

¹⁸⁵See also Ging, D. (2019). 'Alphas, Betas, and Incels: Theorizing the Masculinities of the Manosphere'. *Men and Masculinities*, 22(4), pp. 638-657.

¹⁸⁶ Wodak, R. (2020) *The Politics of Fear: The Shameless Normalization of Far-Right Discourse*. London: Sage.

¹⁸⁷ Lang, J. (2025) '10 Jahre nach dem NSU: Vom Reden über Frauenhass und rechten Terror', in *Rechtsextremismus und Geschlecht im Wandel*, Edition Rechtsextremismus. Wiesbaden: Springer VS. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-48009-7_8 (Accessed: 9 December 2025). P. 7.

Hungary

¹⁸⁸ Batory, A. (2016): Populists in government? Hungary's 'system of national cooperation', *Democratization*, 23 (2): 283–303. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2015.1076214>; Bogaards, M. (2018). 'De-democratization in Hungary: Diffusely Defective Democracy.' *Democratization* 25(8): 1481–99.

¹⁸⁹ Batory, A. (2016): Populists in government? Hungary's 'system of national cooperation', *Democratization*, 23 (2): 283–303. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2015.1076214>; Bogaards, M. (2018). 'De-democratization in Hungary: Diffusely Defective Democracy.' *Democratization* 25(8): 1481–99; Bozóki, A., and Hegedűs, D. (2018) 'An Externally Constrained Hybrid Regime: Hungary in the European Union.' *Democratization* 25(7): 1173–89; Greskovits, B. (2015). The hollowing and backsliding of democracy in East Central Europe. *Global Policy*, 6, 28–37; Krekó, P., & Enyedi, Z. (2018). Explaining Eastern Europe: Orbán's laboratory of illiberalism. *Journal of Democracy*, 29(3), 35–51.

¹⁹⁰ As opposed to the everyday meaning of the term, we here use the social science concept of a 'regime' as the relatively stable set of formal and informal institutions, rules, and power relations that structure how political authority is exercised, accessed, and constrained within a given society. It is not constrained to individual politicians, nor does it imply a

¹⁹¹ Bozóki, A. and Fleck, Z. (2024) *Embedded Autocracy: Hungary in the European Union*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA; Buzogány, A., and Varga, M. (2018). 'The Ideational Foundations of the Illiberal Backlash in Central and Eastern Europe: The Case of Hungary.' *Review of International Political Economy* 25(6): 811–28; Gerő, M. and Szabó, A. (2024). Political integration mechanisms in Hungary (2010–2022). *Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics*. 9, 4 (Mar. 2024), 26–52. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17356/ieejsp.v9i4.1158>.

¹⁹² Csanádi, M., Gerő, M., Tóth, I. J., Kovách, I., & Hajdu, M; Laki, M. (2022). *Dynamics of an Authoritarian System: Hungary, 2010-2021*. Budapest: Central European University Press. <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/100042>; Csillag, T., and I. Szelényi. 2015. 'Drifting from Liberal Democracy: Neo-conservative Ideology of Managed Illiberal Democratic Capitalism in Post-Communist Europe.' *Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics* 1(1): 18–48. doi:10.17356/ieejsp.v1i1.28; Fazekas, M., and Tóth, I. J. (2016). 'From Corruption to State Capture: A New Analytical Framework with Empirical Applications from Hungary.' *Political Research Quarterly* 69(2): 320–34. doi:10.1177/1065912916639137; Magyar, B., and Vásárhelyi, M., eds. (2017). *Twenty-Five Sides of a Post-Communist Mafia State*. Budapest: Central European University Press; Scheiring, G. (2020). *The Retreat of Liberal Democracy: Authoritarian Capitalism and the Accumulative State in Hungary*. London-New York:



Palgrave; Scheiring, G. and Szombati, K. (2020) 'From neoliberal disembedding to authoritarian re-embedding: The making of illiberal hegemony in Hungary', *International Sociology*, 35(6), pp. 721–738; Szabó, K., and Reiff, Á. (2025). Mobilizing rural support: Targeted government spending and democratic backsliding in Hungary. *Politics and Governance*, 13, Article 9542. <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.9542>.

¹⁹³ Fodor, É. (2022) *The Gender Regime of Anti-Liberal Hungary*. Cham: Palgrave Pivot; Szikra, D. (2018). Welfare for the Wealthy: The Social Policy of the Orbán-Regime, 2010–2017. Budapest: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. <https://collections.fes.de/publikationen/ident/fes/14209>; Szombati, K. (2021): The Consolidation of Authoritarian Rule in Rural Hungary: Workfare and the Shift from Punitive Populist to Illiberal Paternalist Poverty Governance, *EuropeAsia Studies*, 73 (9): 1703–1725. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2021.1990861>.

¹⁹⁴ Bozóki, A. and Fleck, Z. (2024) *Embedded Autocracy: Hungary in the European Union*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA; Enyedi, Z. (2020) 'Right-wing authoritarian innovations in Central and Eastern Europe', *East European Politics*, 36(3), pp. 363–377; Geva, D. (2024) 'A new typology of parties of the populist radical-right: Fidesz's radicalized conservatism and gender inequality in comparison to the Rassemblement National', *European Journal of Politics and Gender*, pp. 1–26; Palonen, E. (2025). *The Birth and Death of Liberal Democracy in Hungary: The Populist Logic of Polarisation as Hegemony*. Helsinki University Press; Szikra, D., & Autischer, L. (2025). Illiberal social policy in Europe: When policy implementation meets welfare ideas. *Politics and Governance*, 13, Article 9707. <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.9707>.

¹⁹⁵ Golder, M. (2016) 'Far-right Parties in Europe', *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 19 pp. 477–497.

¹⁹⁶ Caiani, M., della Porta, D., and Wagemann, C. (2012). *Mobilizing on the Extreme Right. Germany, Italy, and the United States*, Oxford University Press; Kakavand, A. (2024) 'Far-Right Social Media Communication in the Light of Technology Affordances: A Systematic Literature Review', *Annals of the International Communication Association*, Volume 48, Issue 1, pp. 37–56.

¹⁹⁷ Mudde, C. (1996). The war of words defining the extreme right party family, *West European Politics*, Vol. 19, pp. 225–248.

¹⁹⁸ Mudde, C. (2019). *The Far-right Today*. Polity Press.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Zulianello, M. (2025). 'The 'far-right' label and the study of party systems: problems, limitations – and a way out.' *Italian Political Science*.

²⁰² See, for example: Bozóki, A. (2016) 'Mainstreaming the Far-right: Cultural politics in Hungary' *Revue d'études comparatives Est-Ouest*, Vol. 47, No. 4, pp. 87–116; Varga, M. (2014). 'Hungary's 'anti-capitalist' far-right: Jobbik and the Hungarian Guard.' *Nationalities Papers*, 42(5), pp. 791–807.

²⁰³ Franz, B. (2023) 'Youth extremism in Hungary: Relevant issues and trends', *Quarterly on Refugee Problems-AWR Bulletin*, 62(3), pp. 225–250.

²⁰⁴ Barát, E. (2021) 'Reclaiming hegemonic masculinity in the context of populism', in *Anti-Genderismus in Europa, Allianzen von Rechtspopulismus und religiösem Fundamentalismus. Mobilisierung-Vernetzung-Transformation* (Vol. 100). Strube, S. A., Perintfalvi, R., Hemet, R., Metze, M., & Sahbaz, C. (Eds.). (2021). Transcript Verlag. pp. 65–76; Fazekas, R. and Korkut, U. (2023) Mainstreaming, Gender and Communication: Hungary Country Report. Horizon: De-Radicalisation in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Re-integrate; Geva, D. (2021). Orbán's ordonationalism as post-neoliberal hegemony. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 38(6), 71–93.



- ²⁰⁵ Political Capital (2022) 'Anti-gender and Anti-LGBTQI mobilisation in Hungary: Evolution, actors, networks'. Available at: https://politicalcapital.hu/news.php?article_read=1&article_id=3037.
- ²⁰⁶ <https://telex.hu/english/2025/02/28/in-2015-orban-was-grateful-to-the-gay-community-but-now-his-government-plans-to-ban-pride>. Accessed on February 3, 2026.
- ²⁰⁷ For more on these developments, see for instance: Takács, J. and Motakef, M. (2025) '»This year the Pride represented a tipping point« – the 2025 Pride Parade in Budapest, the restrictions of LGBTQI+ rights and gender, and queer studies in Hungary', *Feministische Studien* 2/25; DOI 10.1515/fs-2025-0036.
- ²⁰⁸ Barát, E. (2021) 'Reclaiming hegemonic masculinity in the context of populism', in *Anti-Genderismus in Europa, Allianzen von Rechtspopulismus und religiösem Fundamentalismus. Mobilisierung-Vernetzung-Transformation* (Vol. 100). Strube, S. A., Perintfalvi, R., Hemet, R., Metze, M., & Sahbaz, C. (Eds.). (2021). Transcript Verlag. pp. 65–76; Fazekas, R. and Korkut, U. (2023) Mainstreaming, Gender and Communication: Hungary Country Report. Horizon: De-Radicalisation in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Re-integrate; Krizsán, A. and Roggeband, C. (2021) *Politicizing Gender and Democracy in the Context of the Istanbul Convention*. Cham: Palgrave Pivot.
- ²⁰⁹ Barát, E. (2021) 'Reclaiming hegemonic masculinity in the context of populism', in *Anti-Genderismus in Europa, Allianzen von Rechtspopulismus und religiösem Fundamentalismus. Mobilisierung-Vernetzung-Transformation* (Vol. 100). Strube, S. A., Perintfalvi, R., Hemet, R., Metze, M., & Sahbaz, C. (Eds.). (2021). Transcript Verlag. pp. 65–76; Geva, D. (2024) 'A new typology of parties of the populist radical-right: Fidesz's radicalized conservatism and gender inequality in comparison to the Rassemblement National', *European Journal of Politics and Gender*, pp. 1–26; Kováts, E. and Pető, A. (2017) 'Anti-gender movements in Hungary. A discourse without a movement?', in Kuhar, R. and Paternotte, D. (eds) *Anti-gender Campaigns in Europe*. London and Paris: Rowman & Littlefield, pp. 117–131; Takács, J., Fobear, K. and Schmitsek, S. (2022). 'Resisting genderphobia in Hungary', *Politics and Governance*, 10(4), pp. 38–48; Tamássy, R., Vancsó, A. and Bocskor, Á. (2025). 'Media discourses about Hungarian anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation in the summer of 2021', *Social Compass*, 00377686251368743.
- ²¹⁰ Kovacs, B. (2024): The Hungarian right's new class theory: socialist managers, liberal ideologues and the betrayal of the democratic transition. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2024.2366810>; Ádám, Z. and Bozóki, A. (2016): State and Faith: Right-wing Populism and Nationalized Religion in Hungary. *Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics*. 2 (1) <https://doi.org/10.17356/ieejsp.v2i1.143>.
- ²¹¹ Feischmidt, M. and Szombati, K. (2017) 'Understanding the rise of the far-right from a local perspective: Structural and cultural conditions of ethno-traditionalist inclusion and racial exclusion in rural Hungary', *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, 24(3), pp. 313–331.
- ²¹² LeBor, A. (2008). Marching Back to the Future: Magyar Garda and the Resurgence of the Right in Hungary. *Dissent*55(2), 34-38. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/dss.2008.0094>.
- ²¹³ See, for instance, Rakovics, Z. and Barna, I. (2025): Jobbik's journey from radicalism to mainstream politics: Analyzing the parliamentary speeches of Jobbik and the dynamic network of its politicians between 2010 and 2020. *Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics*. 10, 4 (Feb. 2025), 82–105. <https://doi.org/10.17356/ieejsp.v10i4.1246>.
- ²¹⁴ Kondor, K., & Littler, M. (2020). Invented nostalgia: the search for identity among the Hungarian far-right. In *Nostalgia and Hope: Intersections between politics of culture, welfare, and migration in Europe*. Cham: Springer International Publishing. 119-134.
- ²¹⁵ Franz, B. (2023) 'Youth extremism in Hungary: Relevant issues and trends', *Quarterly on Refugee Problems-AWR Bulletin*, 62(3), pp. 225–250.



-
- ²¹⁶ Political Capital (2022) 'Anti-gender and Anti-LGBTQI mobilisation in Hungary: Evolution, actors, networks'. Available at: https://politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/bejegyzesek/Zinc%20gender%202022/Full%20Report_Anti-gender%20and%20anti-LGBTQI%20mobilisation%20in%20Hungary_PolCap_2022-07-21.pdf.
- ²¹⁷ Borbáth, E., and Gessler, T. (2023). How do populist radical-right parties differentiate their appeal? Evidence from the Media Strategy of the Hungarian Jobbik Party. *Government and Opposition*, 58(1), 84-105; Caiani, M., and Susánszky, P. (2020). Radical-right political activism on the web and the challenge for European democracy: A perspective from Eastern and Central Europe. In *Democracy and fake news*. Routledge. 173-187; Karl, Philipp (2019) Creating a New Normal: The Mainstreaming of Far-Right Ideas Through Online and Offline Action in Hungary. In: Maik Fielitz, Nick Thurston (Hg.): *Post-Digital Cultures of the Far-right: Online Actions and Offline Consequences in Europe and the US*. Bielefeld: transcript, S. 67-78. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25969/mediarep/12375>.
- ²¹⁸ Szabó, H.D. (2025) 'Queer youth online: Negotiating identity amid anti-gender movements'. *First Monday*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (April), doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.5210/fm.v30i4.13710>.
- ²¹⁹ Uszkiewicz, E. (2021): Anomalies in the application of law related to hate crimes. *Hungarian Journal of Legal Studies*, 61(3), 325-341. <https://doi.org/10.1556/2052.2020.00344>; Dombos, T. and Udvari, M. (2014): Hate crimes in Hungary-Problems, recommendations, good practices. *Másság Alapítvány*.
- ²²⁰ Vidra, Z. and Félix, A. (2023) 'Measures against right-wing extremism in an illiberal populist country: The case of Hungary', *Politics in Central Europe*, 19(2), pp. 325-351.
- ²²¹ Barát, E. (2021) 'Reclaiming hegemonic masculinity in the context of populism', in *Anti-Genderismus in Europa, Allianzen von Rechtspopulismus und religiösem Fundamentalismus. Mobilisierung-Vernetzung-Transformation* (Vol. 100). Strube, S. A., Perintfalvi, R., Hemet, R., Metze, M., & Sahbaz, C. (Eds.). (2021). Transcript Verlag. pp. 65-76; Fazekas, R. and Korkut, U. (2023) Mainstreaming, Gender and Communication: Hungary Country Report. Horizon: De-Radicalisation in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Re-integrate; Fejós, A., Zentai, V. (eds) and Bladini, et al. (2021) Anti-gender hate speech in populist right-wing social media communication. Available at: https://ddd.uab.cat/pub/infpro/2021/250923/Anti-Gender_Hate_Speech_in_Populist_Right-Wing_Social_Media_Communication.pdf; Geva, D. (2024) 'A new typology of parties of the populist radical-right: Fidesz's radicalized conservatism and gender inequality in comparison to the Rassemblement National', *European Journal of Politics and Gender*, pp. 1-26.
- ²²² Franz, B. (2023) 'Youth extremism in Hungary: Relevant issues and trends', *Quarterly on Refugee Problems-AWR Bulletin*, 62(3), pp. 225-250.
- ²²³ Rédei, D. (2024). Lesbian resistance through fairytales. The story of a children's book clashing with an authoritarian anti-gender regime in Hungary. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 28(3), 443-459. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10894160.2023.2255044>.
- ²²⁴ Barát, E. (2021) 'Reclaiming hegemonic masculinity in the context of populism', in *Anti-Genderismus in Europa, Allianzen von Rechtspopulismus und religiösem Fundamentalismus. Mobilisierung-Vernetzung-Transformation* (Vol. 100). Strube, S. A., Perintfalvi, R., Hemet, R., Metze, M., & Sahbaz, C. (Eds.). (2021). Transcript Verlag. pp. 65-76.
- ²²⁵ Barát, E. (2021) 'Reclaiming hegemonic masculinity in the context of populism', in *Anti-Genderismus in Europa, Allianzen von Rechtspopulismus und religiösem Fundamentalismus. Mobilisierung-Vernetzung-Transformation* (Vol. 100). Strube, S. A., Perintfalvi, R., Hemet, R., Metze, M., & Sahbaz, C. (Eds.). (2021). Transcript Verlag. pp. 65-76.
- ²²⁶ Sayan-Cengiz, F. and Akyüz, S. (2021) 'Performances of populist radical-right and political masculinities: A comparative study of Orbán and Wilders', *Moving the Social*, 65, pp. 37-59; Takács, J.,



Fobear, K. and Schmitsek, S. (2022). 'Resisting genderphobia in Hungary', *Politics and Governance*, 10(4), pp. 38–48.

²²⁷ Sauer, B. (2020). 'Authoritarian Right-Wing Populism as Masculinist Identity Politics: The Role of Affects'. In G. Dietze, & J. Roth (Eds.), *Right-Wing Populism and Gender: European Perspectives and Beyond*. Transcript Verlag. pp. 23-40.

²²⁸ Szebeni, Z. and Salojärvi, V. (2022) 'Authentically' maintaining populism in Hungary – Visual analysis of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Instagram', *Mass Communication and Society*, 25(6), pp. 812–837.

²²⁹ Sayan-Cengiz, F. and Akyüz, S. (2021) 'Performances of populist radical-right and political masculinities: A comparative study of Orbán and Wilders', *Moving the Social*, 65, pp. 37–59.

²³⁰ Szebeni, Z. and Salojärvi, V. (2022) 'Authentically' maintaining populism in Hungary – Visual analysis of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Instagram', *Mass Communication and Society*, 25(6), pp. 812–837.

²³¹ Szebeni, Z. and Salojärvi, V. (2022) 'Authentically' maintaining populism in Hungary – Visual analysis of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Instagram', *Mass Communication and Society*, 25(6), pp. 812–837.

²³² Political Capital et al. (2024). Fidesz & Co. flooded social media with anti-Western hostile disinformation in Hungary's election campaign, reaching EU spending records.

²³³ Fazekas, R. and Korkut, U. (2023) *Mainstreaming, Gender and Communication: Hungary Country Report*. Horizon: De-Radicalisation in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Re-integrate; Heil, A. (2024) *What The Fall Of Hungary's President Says About Orban's Grip On The Country*. Radio Free Europe/Radio Libert Hungarian Service. [What The Fall Of Hungary's President Says About Orban's Grip On The Country](#).

²³⁴ Barát, E. (2021) 'Reclaiming hegemonic masculinity in the context of populism', in *Anti-Genderismus in Europa, Allianzen von Rechtspopulismus und religiösem Fundamentalismus. Mobilisierung-Vernetzung-Transformation* (Vol. 100). Strube, S. A., Perintfalvi, R., Hemet, R., Metze, M., & Sahbaz, C. (Eds.). (2021). Transcript Verlag. pp. 65–76.

²³⁵ Barát, E. (2021) 'Reclaiming hegemonic masculinity in the context of populism', in *Anti-Genderismus in Europa, Allianzen von Rechtspopulismus und religiösem Fundamentalismus. Mobilisierung-Vernetzung-Transformation* (Vol. 100). Strube, S. A., Perintfalvi, R., Hemet, R., Metze, M., & Sahbaz, C. (Eds.). (2021). Transcript Verlag. pp. 65–76.

²³⁶ Lehotai, O. (2024). 'Gender, militarized masculinity, and Hungarian illiberalism', *Nationalities Papers*, 52(5), pp. 984–1004.

²³⁷ Lehotai, O. (2024). 'Gender, militarized masculinity, and Hungarian illiberalism', *Nationalities Papers*, 52(5), pp. 984–1004.

²³⁸ Barát, E. (2021) 'Reclaiming hegemonic masculinity in the context of populism', in *Anti-Genderismus in Europa, Allianzen von Rechtspopulismus und religiösem Fundamentalismus. Mobilisierung-Vernetzung-Transformation* (Vol. 100). Strube, S. A., Perintfalvi, R., Hemet, R., Metze, M., & Sahbaz, C. (Eds.). (2021). Transcript Verlag. pp. 65–76.

²³⁹ Lehotai, O. (2024). 'Gender, militarized masculinity, and Hungarian illiberalism', *Nationalities Papers*, 52(5), pp. 984–1004.

²⁴⁰ Franz, B. (2023) 'Youth extremism in Hungary: Relevant issues and trends', *Quarterly on Refugee Problems-AWR Bulletin*, 62(3), pp. 225–250.



²⁴¹ Szebeni, Z. and Salojärvi, V. (2022) 'Authentically' maintaining populism in Hungary – Visual analysis of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Instagram', *Mass Communication and Society*, 25(6), pp. 812–837.

²⁴² Barát, E. (2021) 'Reclaiming hegemonic masculinity in the context of populism', in *Anti-Genderismus in Europa, Allianzen von Rechtspopulismus und religiösem Fundamentalismus. Mobilisierung-Vernetzung-Transformation* (Vol. 100). Strube, S. A., Perintfalvi, R., Hemet, R., Metze, M., & Sahbaz, C. (Eds.). (2021). Transcript Verlag. pp. 65–76.

²⁴³ Horányi, H.Z. (2025) 'How Viktor Orbán legitimises his regime through 'petro-masculinity''. Available at: <https://theloop.ecpr.eu/how-viktor-orban-legitimises-his-regime-through-petro-masculinity/>.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Political Capital (2022) 'Anti-gender and Anti-LGBTQI mobilisation in Hungary: Evolution, actors, networks'. Available at: https://politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/bejegyzesek/Zinc%20gender%202022/Full%20Report_Anti-gender%20and%20anti-LGBTQI%20mobilisation%20in%20Hungary_PolCap_2022-07-21.pdf.

²⁴⁶ Fazekas, R. and Korkut, U. (2023) Mainstreaming, Gender and Communication: Hungary Country Report. Horizon: De-Radicalisation in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Re-integrate.

²⁴⁷ Fazekas, R. and Korkut, U. (2023) Mainstreaming, Gender and Communication: Hungary Country Report. Horizon: De-Radicalisation in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Re-integrate; Drath, C. and Hevesi, E.F. (2025) Toxic Tips: Misogynistic Narratives on TikTok in Hungary. Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD).

²⁴⁸ Feischmidt, M. and Pulay, G. (2017). 'Rockin' the Nation'. *The Popular Culture of Neo-Nationalism, Nations and Nationalism* 23, no. 2 309–26.

²⁴⁹ Feischmidt, M. and Pulay, G. (2017). 'Rockin' the Nation'. *The Popular Culture of Neo-Nationalism, Nations and Nationalism* 23, no. 2 309–26; Szele, Á. (2016). 'Nemzeti Rock: the Radical-right and Music in Contemporary Hungary', *mJOMEC Journal* 9, 'Expressive Culture and Populist Radical-right Parties in Europe', eds. Benjamin De Cleen and Torgeir Uberg Nærland. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18573/j.2016.10040>.

²⁵⁰ Vansteenbergh, J., (2022) 'Prince Csaba, Lead Your People Once More: Hungarian Nationalist Rock and Performance of Place in Szekler Land', *Music & Politics* 16(2): 4. <https://doi.org/10.3998/mp.3111>.

²⁵¹ Political Capital (2022) 'Anti-gender and Anti-LGBTQI mobilisation in Hungary: Evolution, actors, networks'. Available at: https://politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/bejegyzesek/Zinc%20gender%202022/Full%20Report_Anti-gender%20and%20anti-LGBTQI%20mobilisation%20in%20Hungary_PolCap_2022-07-21.pdf.

²⁵² Simmons, C., Kuchta, R., Hammer, D., Craanen, A., Matlach, P.-C. (2026) Landscape Briefing: Mapping Online Male Supremacist Activity in Central and Eastern Europe, Institute for Strategic Dialogue, <https://www.isdglobal.org/publication/landscape-briefing-mapping-online-male-supremacist-activity-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>

²⁵³ The European Federation of Journalists also estimates a share of 80% for government-owned or -influenced media for the whole media market: 'Independent research shows that nearly 80 percent of the market for political and public affairs news is 'financed by sources decided by the ruling party.' (European Federation of Journalists, 2019)

²⁵⁴ European Federation of Journalists (2019): Hungary dismantles media freedom and pluralism, Country Report, Available at: <https://europeanjournalists.org/blog/2019/12/03/new-report-hungary->



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



[dismantles-media-freedom-and-pluralism/](#)(Accessed: December 22nd 2025); Bátorfy, A., & Urbán, Á. (2020): State advertising as an instrument of transformation of the media market in Hungary. *East European Politics*, 36(1), 44–65. ; Bajomi-Lázár, P. (2012): The Party Colonisation of the Media: The Case of Hungary: The Case of Hungary. *East European Politics and Societies*, 27(1), 69-89. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325412465085>.

²⁵⁵ Júlia Bakó, Hungary's first female president is hardly a win for women in Open Democracy, online under <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/hungary-first-female-president-hardly-a-win-for-women/>

²⁵⁶ Vidra, Z. and Félix, A. (2023) 'Measures against right-wing extremism in an illiberal populist country: The case of Hungary', *Politics in Central Europe*, 19(2), pp. 325–351.

²⁵⁷ https://hvg.hu/elet/20190715_Bayer_Zsolt_nem_gyoz_i_bizonygatni_hogy_o_egeszseges_heteroszexuális_ferfi

²⁵⁸ <https://444.hu/2021/12/15/rakay-philipet-most-fekete-gyor-andras-fotoja-boritotta-ki-amin-a-momentum-volt-elnoke-magara-kototte-a-gyereket>

²⁵⁹ https://www.instagram.com/magyar_peter_official_the_man/?hl=en

²⁶⁰ <https://hang.hu/koffein/rezsi-szilard-konyhaja-142217>

²⁶¹ Borbáth, E., and Gessler, T. (2023). How do populist radical-right parties differentiate their appeal? Evidence from the Media Strategy of the Hungarian Jobbik Party. *Government and Opposition*, 58(1), 84-105; Franz, B. (2023) 'Youth extremism in Hungary: Relevant issues and trends', *Quarterly on Refugee Problems-AWR Bulletin*, 62(3), pp. 225–250; Allchorn, W., & Kondor, K. (2026). Policing of the Far-Right Online: The Cases of the UK and Hungary. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 49(1), 25–42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2023.2195063>.

²⁶² Bene, M., and Szabó, G. (2021). Discovered and Undiscovered fields of digital politics: Mapping online political communication and online news media literature in Hungary. *Intersections. EEJSP* 7(1): 1–21. DOI: 10.17356/ieejsp.v7i1.868; Caiani, M., and Susánszky, P. (2020). Radical-right political activism on the web and the challenge for European democracy: A perspective from Eastern and Central Europe. In *Democracy and fake news*. Routledge. 173-187; Karl, Philipp (2019) Creating a New Normal: The Mainstreaming of Far-Right Ideas Through Online and Offline Action in Hungary. In: Maik Fielitz, Nick Thurston (Hg.): *Post-Digital Cultures of the Far-right: Online Actions and Offline Consequences in Europe and the US*. Bielefeld: transcript, S. 67 78. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25969/mediarep/12375>.

²⁶³ NapoleonCat (n.d.) [Social Media Users in Hungary - 2025 | NapoleonCat](#).

²⁶⁴ Datareportal (2025) Digital 2025: Hungary. <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-hungary?rq=Hungary>.

²⁶⁵ BeSocial (n.d.) [Instagram, Influencer Dreams, ChatGPT – The Digital World of Hungarian Teens in 2025](#).

²⁶⁶ Fazekas, R. and Korkut, U. (2023) Mainstreaming, Gender and Communication: Hungary Country Report. Horizon: De-Radicalisation in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Re-integrate; Political Capital et al. (2024). Fidesz & Co. flooded social media with anti-Western hostile disinformation in Hungary's election campaign, reaching EU spending records.

²⁶⁷ Szebeni, Z. and Salojärvi, V. (2022) 'Authentically' maintaining populism in Hungary – Visual analysis of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Instagram', *Mass Communication and Society*, 25(6), pp. 812–837.



²⁶⁸ Drath, C. and Hevesi, E.F. (2025) Toxic Tips: Misogynistic Narratives on TikTok in Hungary. Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD).

²⁶⁹ Drath, C. and Hevesi, E.F. (2025) Toxic Tips: Misogynistic Narratives on TikTok in Hungary. Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD).

²⁷⁰ Munger, K., and Phillips, J. (2022). Right-wing YouTube: A supply and demand perspective. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 27(1), 186–219. doi:10.1177/1940161220964767; <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1940161220964767>; Knüpfer, C. B., Schwemmer, C., & Heft, A. (2023). Politicization and right-wing normalization on YouTube: A topic-based analysis of the 'Alternative Influence Network'. *International Journal of Communication*, 17, 23. 6718–6740. <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/20369/4381>

²⁷¹ <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-ZBFbpGZvEVSAGaNsxgKQ>

²⁷² <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-hungary>

²⁷³ <https://pestisracok.hu/>

²⁷⁴ <https://betyarsereg.hu/>

²⁷⁵ <https://www.atv.hu/belfold/20250813/harcosok-klubja-fidesz-digitalis-kor/>

²⁷⁶ Drath, C. and Hevesi, E.F. (2025) Toxic Tips: Misogynistic Narratives on TikTok in Hungary. Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD).

²⁷⁷ Barát, E. (2021) 'Reclaiming hegemonic masculinity in the context of populism', in *Anti-Genderismus in Europa, Allianzen von Rechtspopulismus und religiösem Fundamentalismus. Mobilisierung-Vernetzung-Transformation* (Vol. 100). Strube, S. A., Perintfalvi, R., Hemet, R., Metze, M., & Sahbaz, C. (Eds.). (2021). Transcript Verlag. pp. 65–76; Fazekas, R. and Korkut, U. (2023) Mainstreaming, Gender and Communication: Hungary Country Report. Horizon: De-Radicalisation in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Re-integrate; Franz, B. (2023) 'Youth extremism in Hungary: Relevant issues and trends', *Quarterly on Refugee Problems-AWR Bulletin*, 62(3), pp. 225–250; Lehotai, O. (2024). 'Gender, militarized masculinity, and Hungarian illiberalism', *Nationalities Papers*, 52(5), pp. 984–1004.

²⁷⁸ Allchorn, W., & Kondor, K. (2026). Policing of the Far-Right Online: The Cases of the UK and Hungary. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 49(1), 25–42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2023.2195063>.

²⁷⁹ Szebeni, Z. and Salojärvi, V. (2022) 'Authentically' maintaining populism in Hungary – Visual analysis of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Instagram', *Mass Communication and Society*, 25(6), pp. 812–837; Franz, B. (2023) 'Youth extremism in Hungary: Relevant issues and trends', *Quarterly on Refugee Problems-AWR Bulletin*, 62(3), pp. 225–250; Drath, C. and Hevesi, E.F. (2025) Toxic Tips: Misogynistic Narratives on TikTok in Hungary. Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD).

²⁸⁰ Szebeni, Z. and Salojärvi, V. (2022) 'Authentically' maintaining populism in Hungary – Visual analysis of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Instagram', *Mass Communication and Society*, 25(6), pp. 812–837; Drath, C. and Hevesi, E.F. (2025) Toxic Tips: Misogynistic Narratives on TikTok in Hungary. Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD);

²⁸¹ Franz, B. (2023) 'Youth extremism in Hungary: Relevant issues and trends', *Quarterly on Refugee Problems-AWR Bulletin*, 62(3), pp. 225–250; Lehotai, O. (2024). 'Gender, militarized masculinity, and Hungarian illiberalism', *Nationalities Papers*, 52(5), pp. 984–1004; Allchorn, W., & Kondor, K. (2026). Policing of the Far-Right Online: The Cases of the UK and Hungary. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 49(1), 25–42. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1057610X.2023.2195063> Bajomi-Lázár, P.



(2012): The Party Colonisation of the Media: The Case of Hungary: The Case of Hungary. *East European Politics and Societies*, 27(1), 69-89. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325412465085>.

²⁸² Fazekas, R. and Korkut, U. (2023) Mainstreaming, Gender and Communication: Hungary Country Report. Horizon: De-Radicalisation in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Re-integrate; Rédei, D. (2024). Lesbian resistance through fairytales. The story of a children's book clashing with an authoritarian anti-gender regime in Hungary. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 28(3), 443-459. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10894160.2023.2255044>.

²⁸³ Drath, C. and Hevesi, E.F. (2025) Toxic Tips: Misogynistic Narratives on TikTok in Hungary. Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD).

²⁸⁴ Szebeni, Z. and Salojärvi, V. (2022) 'Authentically' maintaining populism in Hungary – Visual analysis of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Instagram', *Mass Communication and Society*, 25(6), pp. 812-837.

²⁸⁵ See, for instance, Szabó, H.D. (2025) 'Queer youth online: Negotiating identity amid anti-gender movements'. *First Monday*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (April), doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.5210/fm.v30i4.13710>; Takács, J. and Motakef, M. (2025) '»This year the Pride represented a tipping point« – the 2025 Pride Parade in Budapest, the restrictions of LGBTIQ+ rights and gender, and queer studies in Hungary', *Feministische Studien* 2/25; DOI 10.1515/fs-2025-0036; Takács, J., Fobear, K. and Schmitsek, S. (2022). 'Resisting genderphobia in Hungary', *Politics and Governance*, 10(4), pp. 38-48.

²⁸⁶ Takács, J. and Motakef, M. (2025) '»This year the Pride represented a tipping point« – the 2025 Pride Parade in Budapest, the restrictions of LGBTIQ+ rights and gender, and queer studies in Hungary', *Feministische Studien* 2/25; DOI 10.1515/fs-2025-0036.

Ireland

²⁸⁷ Brennan, C. (2025). CSO records 149,000 immigrants in 12 months, the highest number in 16 years. *Irish Examiner*. Online at: <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-41685672.html>

²⁸⁸ Ó Ceallaigh, D., Martin, L., Timmons, S., Robertson, D. & Lunn, P. (2025). *The response of low-income households to the cost-of-living crisis in Ireland*. ESRI Research Series, No. 206. Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute. <https://doi.org/10.26504/RS206>

Burke-Kennedy, E. (2026). *Three multinational companies paid close to 50% of State's corporate tax in 2024*. The Irish Times. <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/economy/2026/02/19/three-multinational-companies-paid-close-to-50-of-states-corporate-tax-in-2024/>

²⁸⁹ Central Statistics Office (CSO) (2024). Measuring Ireland's Progress 2022. Online at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-mip/measuringirelandsprogress2022/society/>

Central Statistics Office (CSO) (2024). COVID-19 - Our Lives Five Years On: Social Impact. Online at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/fp/fp-c19si/covid-19-ourlivesfiveyearsonsocialimpact/keyfindings/>

McGrath, L. (2024). Analysing the interplay of regional economic structures and COVID-19's impact on Irish regions. *Regional Studies, Regional Science*, 11(1), pp. 542-557. DOI 10.1080/21681376.2024.2382341.

²⁹⁰ Economic and Social Research Institute (2025). *Are community characteristics linked to people's attitudes to immigration in Ireland?* Online at: <https://www.esri.ie/system/files/publications/RB202510.pdf>

²⁹¹ Far-right ideology in Ireland is defined in line with Mudde's (2019) definition of parties which tend to view social inequalities, particularly class, gender and racial inequalities, as 'natural and positive, [which] should be either defended or left alone by the state'. This definition is in line with that of the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, which defines the far-right as a collection of ideologies including



resistance to migration, abortion law, same-sex marriage, LGBT+ rights, NGOs, OMudde, C. (2019). *The Far-right Today*. Cambridge UK and Medford, MA: Polity

²⁹² McDermott, S. (2020). Far-right parties barely register after polling less than 1% in most constituencies. *TheJournal.ie*. <https://www.thejournal.ie/far-right-parties-ireland-election-2020-5001966-Feb2020>

²⁹³ RTÉ News. (2023, November 23). *How the chaos unfolded as hundreds riot in Dublin city*. <https://www.rte.ie/news/dublin/2023/1123/1418245-dublin-rioting/>

²⁹⁴ Gallagher, C., & Bray, J. (2024, January 6). Surge in arson threats on rumoured asylum seeker locations as gardai step up patrols. *The Irish Times*. <https://www.irishtimes.com/crime-law/2024/01/06/surge-in-arson-threats-on-rumoured-asylum-seeker-locations-as-gardai-step-up-patrols/>

²⁹⁵ Europol (2025) European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, *Publications Office of the European Union*, Luxembourg. Online at:

https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/EU_TE-SAT_2025.pdf;

O'Keefe, C. (2025) Ireland's first Islamist-inspired knife attack raises urgent questions about extremist threats. *Irish Examiner*. Online: <https://www.irishexaminer.com/opinion/commentanalysis/arid-41625148.html>

²⁹⁶ Gallagher, A. and O'Connor, C. (2021). Layers of lies: A first look at Irish far-right activity on Telegram. *Institute for Strategic Dialogue*. Online at: <https://www.isdglobal.org/isd-publications/layers-of-lies/>

Gallagher, A., O'Connor, C., Visser, F. (2023). Uisce Faoi Thalamh: An investigation into the online mis- and disinformation ecosystem in Ireland. *Institute for Strategic Dialogue*. Online at: <https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Uisce-Faoi-Thalamh-Summary-Report.pdf>

²⁹⁷ English, R. (2003). *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*. Oxford University Press.

²⁹⁸ Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL). (n.d.). *State of Emergency? 52 years of the Special Criminal Court*.

Retrieved from <https://www.iccl.ie/police-justice-reform/special-criminal-court-state-of-emergency/>
Lynch, O. (2022). Counter Extremism in Ireland: An Overview of the Landscape. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 39(1), pp. 58-74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10439862221138673>

²⁹⁹ Europol (2024) European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, *Publications Office of the European Union*, Luxembourg. Online at:

<https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/TE-SAT%202024.pdf>

³⁰⁰ Europol (2024) European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, *Publications Office of the European Union*, Luxembourg. Online at:

<https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/TE-SAT%202024.pdf>

³⁰¹ Manzi, Z. (2024). *Northern Ireland Related Terrorism*. ISD Global.

<https://www.isdglobal.org/explainers/northern-ireland-related-terrorism/>

³⁰² Reilly, P. (2021). *Digital contention in a divided society: Social media, parades and protests in Northern Ireland*. Manchester University Press. ISBN: 9780719087073

³⁰³ Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD). (2025, June 20). *'Get them out, keep them out': How social media fuelled violent attacks against migrants in Northern Ireland*. ISD Digital Dispatches.

https://www.isdglobal.org/digital_dispatches/get-them-out-keep-them-out-how-social-media-fuelled-violent-attacks-against-migrant-communities-in-northern-ireland/



³⁰⁴ Europol (2020). European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report. *Publications Office of the European Union*, Luxembourg. Online at: https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/european_union_terrorism_situation_and_trend_report_te-sat_2020_0.pdf

³⁰⁵ O'Keefe, C. (2025) Ireland's first jihadist attack officially confirmed by gardaí in EU terror report. *Irish Examiner*. Online at: <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-41657018.html>

³⁰⁶ Europol (2025) European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, *Publications Office of the European Union*, Luxembourg. Online at: https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/EU_TE-SAT_2025.pdf

³⁰⁷ Garner, S. (2007). Ireland and immigration: Explaining the absence of the far-right. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 41(2), pp.109-130 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313220701265486>

O'Malley, E. (2008). Why is there no Radical-right Party in Ireland? *West European Politics*, 31(5), pp. 960–977. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402380802234631>

McGuigan, P. (2014). An Examination of the 'far-right' and 'populist politics' in contemporary Ireland. *Rising Populism and European Elections Collection of selected contributions*, Institute of European Democrats, 55(4), pp.1-31. Online at: <https://www.iedonline.eu/download/2014/bratislava/IED-2014-Radical-Right-and-Populism-In-Contemporary-Ireland-Peter-McGuigan.pdf>

³⁰⁸ Counter Extremism Project (2025). Ireland: Extremism and Terrorism. Online at: <https://www.counterextremism.com/countries/ireland-extremism-and-terrorism>

³⁰⁹ Garner, S. (2007). Ireland and immigration: Explaining the absence of the far-right. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 41(2), pp.109-130 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313220701265486>

³¹⁰ Tynan, J. (2023). Ireland and Transnational Right-Wing Extremism: Steadfast Resilience or Blind Vulnerability? *Journal Of Military History and Defence Studies*, 4(1), pp. 40–78. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33232/JMHDS.4.1.79>

³¹¹ QAnon is a conspiracy movement that emerged in 2017, alleging that Donald Trump is fighting satanic cannibalistic paedophiles in the democratic party and Hollywood, which spread globally via social media, contributing to protests and episodes of violence. Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2026). *QAnon*. Online at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/QAnon>

³¹² Fattibene, G. *et al.* (2024). 'The online exchange of conspiracy theories within an Irish extreme right wing Telegram group during the COVID-19 pandemic'. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, pp. 1–19. DOI: 10.1080/19434472.2024.2409185.

³¹³ Cannon, B., King, R., Joseph, M., el-Moslemany, R. (2022). *Resisting the Far-right Funded by Civil Society Strategies for Countering the Far-right in Ireland*. Online at: <https://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/id/eprint/18814/1/Stopfarright%20Final%20Report.pdf>

³¹⁴ Kirk, N. (2024). Ireland: Emerging Right-Wing Populism. In: Herkman, J., Palonen, E. (eds) *Populism, Twitter and the European Public Sphere*, pp.177-207. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-41737-5_7

³¹⁵ Gallagher, A., O'Connor, C., Visser, F. (2023). Uisce Faoi Thalamh: An investigation into the online mis- and disinformation ecosystem in Ireland. *Institute for Strategic Dialogue*. Online at: <https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Uisce-Faoi-Thalamh-Summary-Report.pdf>



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



³¹⁶ Dunne, S. A., Siapera, E. (2025). *Narrative Connections: Using Narrative concept Mapping to Understand the Irish Far-Right*. University College Dublin. Online at: <https://digitalpolicy.ie/blog-series-narrative-connections-using-narrative-concept-mapping-to-understand-the-irish-far-right/>

³¹⁷ Darcy & Clay J. (2019) "We Don't Really Give a Fiddlers About Anything': The Ambiguity, Contradiction and Fluidity of Irish Masculinities.," *Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies*. 19(1), Article 3. pp.16-32. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21427/aa58-qr67>

Available at: <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/ijass/vol19/iss1/3>

Garcia, F. (2016). *Coping and Suicide Amongst the Lads: Expectations of Masculinity in Post-Traditional Ireland*. Palgrave Macmillan New York. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137530332>

Hanlon, N., Lynch, K. (2011). Care-Free Masculinities in Ireland. In: Ruspini, E., Hearn, J., Pease, B., Pringle, K. (eds) *Men and Masculinities Around the World. Global Masculinities*. Pp. 45-57 Palgrave Macmillan, New York. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230338005_4

Ralph, D. (2020). 'The Unsung Heroes of Ireland': Masculinity, Gender, and Breadwinning among Ireland's 'Euro-Commuters'. *Men and Masculinities*, 23(3-4), pp. 702-724. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X18787588>

³¹⁸ Negra, D. (2014). Adjusting Men and Abiding Mammies: Gendering the Recession in Ireland. In: Holohan, C., Tracy, T. (eds) *Masculinity and Irish Popular Culture*, pp. 223-237. Palgrave Macmillan, London. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137300249_17

³¹⁹ Ging, D. (2009). All-consuming images: New gender formations in post Celtic Tiger Ireland. In D. Ging, M. Cronin and P. Kirby (Eds.) *Transforming Ireland – challenges, critiques, and resources*. Pp. 52-70. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

³²⁰ McLaughlin, N., McLoone, M. (2014). From Men to Boys: Masculinity, Politics and the Irish Boy Band. In: Holohan, C., Tracy, T. (eds) *Masculinity and Irish Popular Culture*, pp. 61-74. Palgrave Macmillan, London. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137300249_5

³²¹ Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept. *Gender & Society*, 19(6), 829-859. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243205278639> (Original work published 2005)

³²² Hanlon, N., Lynch, K. (2011). Care-Free Masculinities in Ireland. In: Ruspini, E., Hearn, J., Pease, B., Pringle, K. (eds) *Men and Masculinities Around the World. Global Masculinities*. Pp. 45-57 Palgrave Macmillan, New York. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230338005_4

³²³ Phelan, D., & Kerrigan, P. (2024). 'Ireland for the Irish': Far-Right Populism and Geopolitical Imaginaries of Ireland on Social Media during the 2020 Irish General Election. *Irish Geography*, 56(1), pp.1-20. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55650/igj.2023.1479>

³²⁴ Phelan, D., & Kerrigan, P. (2024). 'Ireland for the Irish': Far-Right Populism and Geopolitical Imaginaries of Ireland on Social Media during the 2020 Irish General Election. *Irish Geography*, 56(1), pp.1-20. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55650/igj.2023.1479>

³²⁵ <https://x.com/TheNotoriousMMA?sessionguid=6a0cbad0-5932-9ad8-83c9-d902bc9993ce&websyncid=4db1c776-20c8-9a0c-e46e-9e6ec7a49dab>

³²⁶ Walsh, A. (2025). *Over half of McGregor's presidential campaign posts on X filled with false claims and threats*. The Journal. <https://www.thejournal.ie/mcgregor-presidential-election-misinformation-x-6817314-Sep2025/>



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



³²⁷ McIntyre, A. P. (2024). "Ireland, We Are at War': Conor McGregor, Crisis Populism, & Transnational Flows of Digital Discontent.' *Irish Humanities Alliance*. Online at: <https://researchrepository.ucd.ie/server/api/core/bitstreams/a24167f4-2d12-4fa2-a164-f0b89fa591ac/content>

³²⁸ Cumiskey, N. (2023). Russell Brand claims Conor McGregor has 'reasonable chance' of becoming president. *Sunday World*. Online at: <https://www.sundayworld.com/showbiz/irish-showbiz/russell-brand-claims-conor-mcgregor-has-reasonable-chance-of-becoming-president/a1361026975.html>

³²⁹ Fetherstonhaugh, N. (2024). Andrew Tate's brother Tristan hails Conor McGregor a 'boss' in one-word salute. *Sunday World*. Online at: <https://www.sundayworld.com/showbiz/irish-showbiz/andrew-tates-brother-tristan-hails-conor-mcgregor-a-boss-in-one-word-salute/a640616744.html>

³³⁰ Humphreys, Joe (2002). 'Barrett admits he attended far-right meeting'. *The Irish Times*. p. 9. [The mystery of the far-right National Party's €400,000 gold: where could it have come from?](#). *The Irish Times*; Rooney, E. (2025, September 30). *Ireland's Far-Right Problem*. Tribune Magazine. <https://tribunemag.co.uk/2025/09/irelands-far-right-problem>

³³¹ McDowell, Lindy (2018). 'Hermann Kelly: I believe Ireland, both North and South, is better off outside the European Union'. *Belfast Telegraph*. Online at: <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/life/features/hermann-kelly-i-believe-ireland-both-north-and-south-is-better-off-outside-the-european-union/a115625118.html>

³³² McCarthy, B. (2023). *Far-right protesters aren't just in it for the cause – there's also money to be made*. TheJournal.ie. <https://www.thejournal.ie/far-right-money-making-5986480-Feb2023/>; Raymond, S. (2023, November 15). *Anti-immigration groups use Israel–Gaza violence to push antisemitism and Islamophobia online*. TheJournal.ie. <https://www.thejournal.ie/antisemitism-and-islamophobia-in-irish-anti-immigration-telegram-groups-6216029-Nov2023/>

³³³ Lyons, E. (2023, December 5). Elon Musk's X platform fueled far-right riots in Ireland, experts say. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/elon-musk-ireland-x/twitter-far-right-dublin-immigration>

³³⁴ McCarthy, B. (2023). *Far-right protesters aren't just in it for the cause – there's also money to be made*. TheJournal.ie. <https://www.thejournal.ie/far-right-money-making-5986480-Feb2023/>

³³⁵ Gargano, D. V., & Lim, T. H. (n.d.). *Abortion Rights in Ireland: The Eighth Amendment and the Path to Repeal*. Oxford University Press. Retrieved from <https://oxcon.ouplaw.com/page/705>

³³⁶ Europol (2025) European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, *Publications Office of the European Union*, Luxembourg. Online at: https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/EU_TE-SAT_2025.pdf

Slovakia

³³⁷ OSCE/ODIHR (2024). Slovakia, Early Parliamentary Elections, 30 September 2023: Final Report. Warsaw: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. <https://odhr.osce.org/odhr/elections/slovakia/563625>.

³³⁸ Reuters. (2023a.) 'New Slovak government rejects final military aid package for Ukraine'; Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/new-slovak-government-rejects-final-military-aid-package-ukraine-2023-11-08/> 2023b. 'Fico will not support more military aid to Ukraine.' Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/slovakias-fico-will-not-support-more-military-aid-ukraine-eu-summit-slovak-media-2023-10-26/>



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



³³⁹ AP. (2025). 'Thousands rally in Slovakia to mark the 2018 slayings of an investigative journalist and his fiancée.' AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/slovakia-anti-government-protests-fico-2018-killings-4bbc9e4963ad29e79f0a5a5e07769692>.

³⁴⁰ Valkovičová, V., & Zuzana M. (2019). 'From weirdoes to political actors – the journey of Slovak 'gender ideology' rhetoric.' Heinrich Böll Stiftung / Gunda Werner Institute. <https://www.gwi-boell.de/en/2019/05/03/weirdoes-political-actors-journey-slovak-gender-ideology-rhetoric>.

³⁴¹ Valkovičová, V., & Zuzana M. (2019). 'From weirdoes to political actors – the journey of Slovak 'gender ideology' rhetoric.' Heinrich Böll Stiftung / Gunda Werner Institute. <https://www.gwi-boell.de/en/2019/05/03/weirdoes-political-actors-journey-slovak-gender-ideology-rhetoric>.

³⁴² Nadal, L. & Jančárik, P. (2024). 'Beyond the deepfake hype: AI, democracy, and 'the Slovak case'.' HKS Misinformation Review 5(4). doi:10.37016/mr-2020-153.

³⁴³ Kuchta, R. (2021). Online Extremism in Slovakia: Actors, Topics, Platforms & Strategies. London: Institute for Strategic Dialogue / Strong Cities Network. <https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Online-Extremism-in-Slovakia-Actors-Topics-Platforms-Strategies.pdf>.

³⁴⁴ Ružičková, M., Dubóczy, P., and Haleková, L. (2024). Disinformation and Propaganda as a Business. Infosecurity. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.22732.73604>

³⁴⁵ Drábik, J. (2022). 'With courage against the system.' The ideology of the people's party our Slovakia. Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe. doi:10.1080/25739638.2022.2164119

³⁴⁶ Nociar, T. (2012). Right-Wing Extremism in Slovakia. Bonn: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325678418_Right-Wing_Extremism_in_Slovakia;
Drábik, J. (2022). 'With courage against the system.' The ideology of the people's party our Slovakia. Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/366899278_With_courage_against_the_system_The_ideology_of_the_people's_party_our_Slovakia.

³⁴⁷ Valkovičová, V., & Zuzana M. (2019). 'From weirdoes to political actors – the journey of Slovak 'gender ideology' rhetoric.' Heinrich Böll Stiftung / Gunda Werner Institute. <https://www.gwi-boell.de/en/2019/05/03/weirdoes-political-actors-journey-slovak-gender-ideology-rhetoric>.

³⁴⁸ Institute for Strategic Dialogue. (2022). 'Accelerationism'. ISD Explainers. <https://www.isdglobal.org/isd-explainer/accelerationism/>

³⁴⁹ Institute for Strategic Dialogue. (2024). 'Beyond the Collective: Understanding Terrorgram's efforts to infiltrate the mainstream on Telegram'. Digital Dispatches. <https://www.isdglobal.org/digital-dispatch/beyond-the-collective-understanding-terrorgrams-efforts-to-infiltrate-the-mainstream-on-telegram-2/>.

³⁵⁰ Rose, H. (2022). 'The Bratislava Attacks: Insights from the Shooter's Manifesto.' GNET. <https://gnet-research.org/2022/10/14/the-bratislava-shooting-and-manifesto-initial-insights-and-learnings/>.

³⁵¹ Milo, D. (2024). 'Russia and the Far-Right 8: Slovakia.' The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT). <https://icct.nl/publication/russia-and-far-right-insights-ten-european-countries>.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



³⁵² Kosnáč, P., Lane, J. E., Toft, M. D., & Shults, F. L. (2023). Paramilitaries, parochialism, and peace: The moral foundations and personality traits of Slovenskí Branci. *PLOS ONE*, 18(3).

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0281503>.

³⁵³ Ružičková, M., Dubóczy, P., and Haleková, L. (2024). Disinformation and Propaganda as a Business. *Infosecurity*. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.22732.73604>.

³⁵⁴ Hajdu, D., Klingová, K., Kazaz, J., and Dobo, B. (2025). *GLOBSEC Trends 2025: Ready for a New Era?*.

<https://www.globsec.org/what-we-do/publications/globsec-trends-2025-ready-new-era>.

³⁵⁵ Valkovičová, V., & Zuzana M. (2019). 'From weirdoes to political actors – the journey of Slovak 'gender ideology' rhetoric.' Heinrich Böll Stiftung / Gunda Werner Institute. <https://www.gwi-boell.de/en/2019/05/03/weirdoes-political-actors-journey-slovak-gender-ideology-rhetoric;>

Hajdu, D., Klingová, K., Kazaz, J., and Dobo, B. (2025). *GLOBSEC Trends 2025: Ready for a New Era?*.

<https://www.globsec.org/what-we-do/publications/globsec-trends-2025-ready-new-era>.

³⁵⁶ Zvada, L. (2022). 'On Gender and Illiberalism: Lessons from Slovak Parliamentary Debates.' *Politics & Governance* 10(4): 108-120.

<https://www.cogitatiopress.com/politicsandgovernance/article/view/5536>; Maďarová, Z., and

Pavol H. (2022). 'In the Name of the Conservative People: Slovakia's Gendered Illiberal Transformation.' *Politics & Governance* 10(4).

<https://www.cogitatiopress.com/politicsandgovernance/article/view/5538>.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Milo, D. (2024). 'Russia and the Far-Right 8: Slovakia.' The Hague: International Centre for Counter-

Terrorism (ICCT). <https://icct.nl/publication/russia-and-far-right-insights-ten-european-countries>.

³⁵⁹ Rose, H. (2022). 'The Bratislava Attacks: Insights from the Shooter's Manifesto.' GNET. <https://gnet-research.org/2022/10/14/the-bratislava-shooting-and-manifesto-initial-insights-and-learnings/>.

³⁶⁰ Kuchta, R. (2021). *Online Extremism in Slovakia: Actors, Topics, Platforms & Strategies*. London:

Institute for Strategic Dialogue / Strong Cities Network. isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Online-Extremism-in-Slovakia-Actors-Topics-Platforms-Strategies.pdf.

³⁶¹ Nadal, L., and Jančárik, P. (2024). 'Beyond the deepfake hype: AI, democracy, and 'the Slovak case.''

HKS Misinformation Review 5(4). doi:10.37016/mr-2020-153.

Sweden

³⁶² Rydgren, J. (2002) 'Radical-right Populism in Sweden: Still a Failure, But for How Long?,' *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 25(1), pp. 27–56. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9477.00062>; Rydgren, J. and

Van Der Meiden, S. (2019) 'The radical-right and the end of Swedish exceptionalism,' *European Political Science*, 18(3), pp. 439–455. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41304-018-0159-6>.

³⁶³ Rydgren, J. (2002) 'Radical-right Populism in Sweden: Still a Failure, But for How Long?,' *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 25(1), pp. 27–56. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9477.00062>.



³⁶⁴ Ekström, M., Patrona, M. and Thornborrow, J. (2020) 'The normalization of the populist radical-right in news interviews: a study of journalistic reporting on the Swedish democrats,' *Social Semiotics*, 30(4), pp. 466–484. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2020.1762984>.

³⁶⁵ Jupskås, Anders (2021) 'Sweden: The difficult adaptation of the Moderates to the silent counter-revolution,' in T Bale and C Rovira Kaltwasser (eds.) *Riding the populist wave: Europe's mainstream right in crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 246–268; The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (2024) *Increased gun violence in Sweden: A Study of gun violence trends in the criminal milieu since the mid-2000s. English summary of Brå Report 2024:7*. 2024:7. Available at: https://bra.se/download/18.132c5c8c193ded1d2769631c/1737727135312/2024_7_Increas%7BCitation%7Ded%20gun%20violence%20in%20Sweden.pdf; Sverigedemokraterna (2025) *För att Sverige ska kunna kännas som hemma igen*. Available at: <https://www.sd.se/vad-vi-vill/fangsla-och-utvisa/> (Accessed: October 1, 2025).

³⁶⁶ Ekström, M., Patrona, M. and Thornborrow, J. (2020) 'The normalization of the populist radical-right in news interviews: a study of journalistic reporting on the Swedish democrats,' *Social Semiotics*, 30(4), pp. 466–484. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2020.1762984>; Karlberg, E., Korolczuk, E. and Sältenberg, H. (2025) 'Insidious de-democratization: conceptualizing anti-gender politics in Sweden,' *Journal of Gender Studies*, 34(5), pp. 732–748. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2024.2446345>.

³⁶⁷ Finnsjö, Morgan *et al.* (2025) *Svensk rasideologisk miljö 2024: Normaliserade idéer - extrema metoder*. Expo Foundation. Available at: <https://expo.se/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Svensk-rasideologisk-miljo-2024.pdf>.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

³⁷¹ Säkerhetspolisen (2021) *Årsbok 2021*. Available at: https://www.sakerhetspolisen.se/download/18.650ed51617f9c29b552287/1649683389251/Sakerhetspolisen_arsbok%202021.pdf (Accessed: May 20, 2025); Säkerhetspolisen (2025) *Säkerhetspolisen 2024-2025*. Available at: <https://sakerhetspolisen.se/download/18.328c5ae9195250d81d04ad/1741953348924/L%C3%A4gesbild%202024-2025.pdf> (Accessed: November 20, 2025).

³⁷² Centrum mot våldsbejakande extremism (2025) *Årsbok 2024-2025*. Available at: <https://cve.se/download/18.567150fd196f11b3663116/1747834465743/%C3%85rsbok%20CVE%202024-205.pdf> (Accessed: June 25, 2025); Säkerhetspolisen (2025) *Säkerhetspolisen 2024-2025*. Available at: <https://sakerhetspolisen.se/download/18.328c5ae9195250d81d04ad/1741953348924/L%C3%A4gesbild%202024-2025.pdf> (Accessed: November 20, 2025).

³⁷³ Centrum mot våldsbejakande extremism (2025) *Årsbok 2024-2025*. Available at: <https://cve.se/download/18.567150fd196f11b3663116/1747834465743/%C3%85rsbok%20CVE%202024-205.pdf> (Accessed: June 25, 2025).

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Ibid.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



- ³⁷⁶ Säkerhetspolisen (2025) *Säkerhetspolisen 2024-2025*. Available at: <https://sakerhetspolisen.se/download/18.328c5ae9195250d81d04ad/1741953348924/L%C3%A4gesbild%202024-2025.pdf> (Accessed: November 20, 2025).
- ³⁷⁷ Centrum mot våldsbejakande extremism (2025) *Årsbok 2024-2025*. Available at: <https://cve.se/download/18.567150fd196f11b3663116/1747834465743/%C3%85rsbok%20CVE%202024-2025.pdf> (Accessed: June 25, 2025).
- ³⁷⁸ Löw, H (2015) *Nazism i sverige 2000-2014*. Ordfront.
- ³⁷⁹ Säkerhetspolisen (2025) *Säkerhetspolisen 2024-2025*. Available at: <https://sakerhetspolisen.se/download/18.328c5ae9195250d81d04ad/1741953348924/L%C3%A4gesbild%202024-2025.pdf> (Accessed: November 20, 2025).
- ³⁸⁰ Bjørge, Tore and Ravndal, Jacob (2020) 'Why the Nordic Resistance Movement restrains its use of violence,' *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 14(6), pp. 37-48.
- ³⁸¹ U.S. Department of State (2024) 'Terrorist designations of Nordic Resistance Movement and three leaders.' Available at: <https://2021-2025.state.gov/terrorist-designations-of-nordic-resistance-movement-and-three-leaders/> (Accessed: October 3, 2025).
- ³⁸² Finnsjö, Morgan *et al.* (2025) *Svensk rasideologisk miljö 2024: Normaliserade idéer - extrema metoder*. Expo Foundation. Available at: <https://expo.se/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Svensk-rasideologisk-miljo-2024.pdf>.
- ³⁸³ Säkerhetspolisen (2025) *Säkerhetspolisen 2024-2025*. Available at: <https://sakerhetspolisen.se/download/18.328c5ae9195250d81d04ad/1741953348924/L%C3%A4gesbild%202024-2025.pdf> (Accessed: November 20, 2025).
- ³⁸⁴ Centrum mot våldsbejakande extremism (2025) *Årsbok 2024-2025*. Available at: <https://cve.se/download/18.567150fd196f11b3663116/1747834465743/%C3%85rsbok%20CVE%202024-2025.pdf> (Accessed: June 25, 2025); Säkerhetspolisen (2025) *Säkerhetspolisen 2024-2025*. Available at: <https://sakerhetspolisen.se/download/18.328c5ae9195250d81d04ad/1741953348924/L%C3%A4gesbild%202024-2025.pdf> (Accessed: November 20, 2025).
- ³⁸⁵ Gelin, Gustav (2022) 'Engström döms till rättspsykiatrisk vård för Almedalen-mordet,' *ETC*, 6 December. Available at: <https://www.etc.se/inrikes/engstroem-doems-till-livstids-faengelse-foer-terrorbrott-foer-mordet-i-almedalen> (Accessed: September 14, 2025).
- ³⁸⁶ See: Almedalsveckan (2025) 'Almedalsveckan in English.' Available at: <https://almedalsveckan.info/rg/almedalsveckan/om-almedalsveckan/det-har-ar-almedalsveckan/almedalsveckan-in-english> (Accessed: November 18, 2025).
- ³⁸⁷ Barajas, Hector (2022) 'DOKUMENT: Theodor Engström sökte gemenskap i nazismen – men förblev en ensamvarg,' *Barometern*, 4 November. Available at: <https://www.barometern.se/kalmar/dokument-theodor-engstrom-sokte-gemenskap-i-nazismen-men-forblev-en-ensamvarg/> (Accessed: October 2, 2025); Westin, Adam (2022) 'Theodor Engström döms för mord – och terrorbrott mot Annie Lööf,' *Aftonbladet*, 6 December. Available at: <https://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/a/4oOMXe/nu-faller-domen-mot-theodor-engstrom> (Accessed: July 10, 2025).
- ³⁸⁸ Mattsson, T (2024) 'Experten: Därför döms Theodor Engström till rättspsykiatrisk vård,' *Göteborgs Posten*, 19 March. Available at: <https://www.gp.se/nyheter/sverige/experten-darfor-doms-theodor-engstrom-till-rattpsykiatrisk-var-d-f7e593da-0742-4c4d-a932-1a567ec7d13f> (Accessed: July 10, 2025).



- ³⁸⁹ Gelin, Gustav (2022) 'Engström döms till rättspsykiatrisk vård för Almedalen-mordet,' *ETC*, 6 December. Available at: <https://www.etc.se/inrikes/engstroem-doems-till-livstids-faengelse-foer-terrorbrott-foer-mordet-i-almedalen> (Accessed: September 14, 2025).
- ³⁹⁰ Zangana, Beri *et al.* (2025) 'Tio mördade – här är vad vi vet om dem,' *Aftonbladet*, 13 February. Available at: <https://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/a/RzXgw8/skolskjutningen-i-orebro-det-har-vet-vi-om-personerna-som-mordades> (Accessed: August 29, 2025); Jönsson, Linn (2025) 'Polisen presenterar sin utredning efter skolskjutningen i Örebro,' *Dagens Nyheter*, 16 May. Available at: <https://www.dn.se/sverige/polisen-presenterar-sin-utredning-efter-skolskjutningen-i-orebro/> (Accessed: October 1, 2025).
- ³⁹¹ Rosell, R and Dragic, M (2025) 'Hon var Rickard Anderssons lärare: 'Obehagligt och väldigt sorgligt',' *SVT Nyheter*, 15 February. Available at: <https://www.svt.se/nyheter/inrikes/hon-var-rickard-anderssons-larare-obehagligt-och-valdigt-sorgligt>.
- ³⁹² Quintana Melin, Mariela (2025) 'Planerade massmord på Eurovision – svensk terrorist döms i Luxemburg,' *Aftonbladet*, 27 November. Available at: <https://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/a/GxlXwV/planerade-massmord-pa-eurovision-svensk-doms-i-luxemburg> (Accessed: November 27, 2025).
- ³⁹³ Norberg, J and Quintana Melin, M (2025) 'Svensk planerade giftattack mot Eurovision – tidigare dömd för fascistiskt dåd,' *Aftonbladet*, 22 July. Available at: <https://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/a/aV2dO/svensk-planerade-giftattack-mot-eurovision> (Accessed: December 1, 2025).
- ³⁹⁴ Expo Foundation (2024) 'Nordiska motståndsrörelsen (NMR),' 15 June. Available at: <https://expo.se/lar-dig-mer/wiki/nordiska-motstandsrörelsen-nmr/> (Accessed: June 3, 2025).
- ³⁹⁵ Expo Foundation (2025b) 'Det fria Sverige (DFS),' 17 September. Available at: <https://expo.se/lar-dig-mer/wiki/det-fria-sverige/> (Accessed: June 15, 2025).
- ³⁹⁶ Expo Foundation (2025a) 'Active Clubs och Aktivklubb Sverige (AKS),' 4 July. Available at: <https://expo.se/lar-dig-mer/wiki/active-clubs-och-aktivklubb-sverige-aks/> (Accessed: November 20, 2025).
- ³⁹⁷ Glaad, Erik (2024) 'Där inga liv spelar roll,' *Expo Foundation*, 20 September. Available at: <https://expo.se/fordjupning/dar-inga-liv-spelar-roll/> (Accessed: August 20, 2025); Haglund, Amelie (2025) 'Svenska knivdåd kopplas till sadistisk nätgrupp,' *Svenska Dagbladet*, 10 January. Available at: <https://www.svd.se/a/wgb5n1/knivdad-i-boras-och-hasselby-kopplas-till-natgruppen-764> (Accessed: August 30, 2025).
- ³⁹⁸ Institute for Strategic Dialogue (2025) 'ISD Explainers: Overviews of issues, trends, narratives, platforms and actors: 764,' 17 March. Available at: <https://www.isdglobal.org/explainers/764/> (Accessed: October 4, 2025).
- ³⁹⁹ Hearn, J. *et al.* (2012) 'Hegemonic Masculinity and Beyond: 40 Years of Research in Sweden,' *Men and Masculinities*, 15(1), pp. 31–55. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X11432113>.
- ⁴⁰⁰ Hearn, J. *et al.* (2012) 'Hegemonic Masculinity and Beyond: 40 Years of Research in Sweden,' *Men and Masculinities*, 15(1), pp. 31–55. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X11432113>; Hansson, K. (2021) 'A Man in Crisis or Crisis of Men? Masculinity and Societal Challenge in the 1970s in Sweden,' *Culture Unbound*, 12(3), pp. 550–568. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3384/cu.v12i3.3273>.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



-
- ⁴⁰¹ Lagerman, J. (2023) 'Neo-Nazi Heteroactivism and the Swedish Nationalist Contradiction,' *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 1093-1114 Pages. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.14288/ACME.V22I3.2150>.
- ⁴⁰² Lagerman, J. (2023) 'Neo-Nazi Heteroactivism and the Swedish Nationalist Contradiction,' *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 1093-1114 Pages. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.14288/ACME.V22I3.2150>; Almedalsveckan (2025) 'Almedalsveckan in English.' Available at: <https://almedalsveckan.info/rg/almedalsveckan/om-almedalsveckan/det-har-ar-almedalsveckan/almedalsveckan-in-english> (Accessed: November 18, 2025).
- ⁴⁰³ Askanius, T *et al.* (2024) 'Time to abandon Swedish women': Discursive connections between misogyny and white supremacy in Sweden.,' *International Journal of Communication*, 17, pp. 1–18.
- ⁴⁰⁴ Kølvråa, C. (2019) 'Embodying 'the Nordic race': imaginaries of Viking heritage in the online communications of the Nordic Resistance Movement,' *Patterns of Prejudice*, 53(3), pp. 270–284. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0031322X.2019.1592304>.
- ⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰⁶ Mattsson, C. and Johansson, T. (2023) 'Neo-Nazi Violence and Ideology: Changing Attitudes toward Violence in Sweden's Skinhead and Post-Skinhead Eras,' *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 35(1), pp. 104–117. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2021.1871898>.
- ⁴⁰⁷ Anesten, O and Farran-Lee, Lydia (2011) 'Jordan B Petersons svenska fans: 'Han säger det man tänker',', *SVT Nyheter*, 28 June. Available at: <https://www.svt.se/kultur/jordan-b-peterson> (Accessed: September 15, 2025).
- ⁴⁰⁸ Peterson, Jordan (2018) 'The gender scandal: Part One (Scandinavia) and Part Two (Canada).', 7 September. Available at: <https://www.jordanbpeterson.com/political-correctness/the-gender-scandal-part-one-scandinavia-and-part-two-canada/> (Accessed: November 15, 2025).
- ⁴⁰⁹ Burnett, S., Borba, R. and Hiramoto, M. (2025) 'Hailing, Voicing, and Masturbation Abstention: NoFap's Role in Socializing Young Men into the Right-Wing Politics of Ressentiment,' *Journal of Right-Wing Studies*, 2(2). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5070/RW3.1623>.
- ⁴¹⁰ Nordfront (2016) 'RN#78: Träning och metapolitik med Marcus Follin: 'Alla ägg är inte lika mycket värda',', 7 October. Available at: <https://nordfront.se/rn78-marcus-follin-traning-och-metapolitik.smr> (Accessed: June 10, 2025).
- ⁴¹¹ Baas, David and Eriksson, Carl-Fredrik (2018) 'Skolmördaren fick inspiration från hatvideor på Youtube,' *Expressen*, 19 March. Available at: <https://www.expressen.se/nyheter/skolmordaren-fick-inspiration-fran-hatvideor-pa-youtube/> (Accessed: August 17, 2025).
- ⁴¹² Darwish, M. and Gottzén, L. (2025) 'The contemplative man: 'positive' affect and masculinity in ecofascist visual communication,' *Journal of Gender Studies*, pp. 1–14. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2025.2479797>.
- ⁴¹³ Fernquist, J *et al.* (2020) *Hope, cope & rope: Incels i digitala miljöer*. FOI. Available at: <https://www.foi.se/rest-api/report/FOI%20Memo%207040>.
- ⁴¹⁴ Askanius, T *et al.* (2024) 'Time to abandon Swedish women': Discursive connections between misogyny and white supremacy in Sweden.,' *International Journal of Communication*, 17, pp. 1–18.



This project is funded by the European Union under grant agreement no. 101177204. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



⁴¹⁵ Fernquist, J *et al.* (2020) *Hope, cope & rope: Incels i digitala miljöer*. FOI. Available at: <https://www.foi.se/rest-api/report/FOI%20Memo%207040>.

⁴¹⁶ O'Connor, C *et al.* (2023) *Active Clubs: The Growing Threat of 'White Nationalism 3.0' across the United States*. Institute for Strategic Dialogue. Available at: <https://www.isdglobal.org/isd-publications/active-clubs-the-growing-threat-of-white-nationalism-3-0-across-the-united-states/>; Expo Foundation (2025a) 'Active Clubs och Aktivklubb Sverige (AKS),' 4 July. Available at: <https://expo.se/lar-dig-mer/wiki/active-clubs-och-aktivklubb-sverige-aks/> (Accessed: November 20, 2025).

⁴¹⁷ Röstlund Jonsson, C, Söderin, E, and Asp, V (2025) 'Unik kartläggning: Nazisterna bakom den nya våldsvågen,' *Dagens ETC*, 18 September. Available at: <https://www.etc.se/story/unik-kartlaeggning-nazisterna-bakom-den-nya-vaaldsvaagen>.

⁴¹⁸ Finnsjö, Morgan *et al.* (2025) *Svensk rasideologisk miljö 2024: Normaliserade idéer - extrema metoder*. Expo Foundation. Available at: <https://expo.se/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Svensk-rasideologisk-miljo-2024.pdf>.

⁴¹⁹ Röstlund Jonsson, C, Söderin, E, and Asp, V (2025) 'Unik kartläggning: Nazisterna bakom den nya våldsvågen,' *Dagens ETC*, 18 September. Available at: <https://www.etc.se/story/unik-kartlaeggning-nazisterna-bakom-den-nya-vaaldsvaagen>.

⁴²⁰ Finnsjö, Morgan *et al.* (2025) *Svensk rasideologisk miljö 2024: Normaliserade idéer - extrema metoder*. Expo Foundation. Available at: <https://expo.se/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Svensk-rasideologisk-miljo-2024.pdf>.

⁴²¹ Glaad, Erik (2024) 'Där inga liv spelar roll,' *Expo Foundation*, 20 September. Available at: <https://expo.se/fordjupning/dar-inga-liv-spelar-roll/> (Accessed: August 20, 2025); Palm Ekspång, Ida and Gertten, Ebba (2025) 'Johan Forssell bemöter kritiken i TV4 - sitter kvar som minister,' *SVT Nyheter*, 10 July. Available at: <https://www.svt.se/nyheter/inrikes/forssell-bryter-tystnaden-i-nyhetsmorgon> (Accessed: September 15, 2025).

⁴²² Ekström, M., Patrona, M. and Thornborrow, J. (2020) 'The normalization of the populist radical-right in news interviews: a study of journalistic reporting on the Swedish democrats,' *Social Semiotics*, 30(4), pp. 466–484. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2020.1762984>.

⁴²³ Álvarez-Benjumea, A. and Winter, F. (2020) 'The breakdown of antiracist norms: A natural experiment on hate speech after terrorist attacks,' *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 117(37), pp. 22800–22804. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2007977117>.

⁴²⁴ Kølvråa, C. (2019) 'Embodying 'the Nordic race': imaginaries of Viking heritage in the online communications of the Nordic Resistance Movement,' *Patterns of Prejudice*, 53(3), pp. 270–284. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0031322X.2019.1592304>; Burnett, S., Borba, R. and Hiramoto, M. (2025) 'Hailing, Voicing, and Masturbation Abstinence: NoFap's Role in Socializing Young Men into the Right-Wing Politics of Resentment,' *Journal of Right-Wing Studies*, 2(2). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5070/RW3.1623>; Mattsson, C. and Johansson, T. (2023) 'Neo-Nazi Violence and Ideology: Changing Attitudes toward Violence in Sweden's Skinhead and Post-Skinhead Eras,' *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 35(1), pp. 104–117. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2021.1871898>.