

Manifestations of xenophobia and right-wing populism and extremism: The German case



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Outline

1. “Fragile center –hostile conditions” (2014)
2. The PEGIDA phenomenon
3. German hysteria: Burning refugee accommodations vs.
“Willkommenskultur”
4. Strategies against xenophobia

1. “Fragile center –hostile conditions” (2014)

- extreme right-wing attitudes decreased significantly
- BUT: national-chauvinism (12%) and xenophobic (7.5%) opinions persist
- In former Eastern Germany the support for extreme right-wing ideology is stronger

1. “Fragile center –hostile conditions” (2014)

- Stereotypical statements:
 - 44 % against asylum seekers
 - 27 % against Sinti and Roma
 - and 18 % against Muslims
- Extreme right-wing orientation = distrust towards democracy, political elites and the EU

2. The PEGIDA phenomenon



2. Study „Who joins PEGIDA and why?“



Who?

- Age: ~47,6 years
- Sex: 74,6 percent male, 24,9 percent female
- Education: **the share of academics among the PEGIDA participants is two times higher compared to German society**
- Job: 47,6 percent worker or employee, **only 2 % is seeking work**
- Income: **higher than average**

2. Study „Who joins PEGIDA and why?“



- Party Alliance: 62.1 percent do not have any party-alliance
→ **we find many who distrust political parties. AfD is clearly overrepresented.**
 - **Motivation:** dissatisfaction with politics (53.5%). Islam and Islamism is only mentioned by 24.2 %
- Current situation: **the recurrence of PEGIDA?**

3. German hysteria: Burning refugee accommodations vs. “Willkommenskultur”



3. German hysteria: Burning refugee accommodations vs. “Willkommenskultur”

- In 2015 many arson attacks on refugees
- 500 attacks on refugees

→ The minister of the interior de Maizière speaks of a „massive increase“

→ BKA speaks of „new quantity and quality“

3. German hysteria: Burning refugee accommodations vs. “Willkommenskultur”



- **BUT:**
 - Thousands of Germans help refugees: 44% are engaged actively
 - Many full stocks
 - Many demonstrations against right-wing extremism and PEGIDA
 - App for refugee support
 - etc.

4. Strategies against xenophobia: What should the **German government** do?

- Solve social problems
- especially unemployment
- Stop deterioration of the middle class
- Shortterm: have a clear(er) stance against right-wing populism
- Longterm: More political education, EU exchange program for all young people, create more transparent and democratic procedures

4. Strategies against xenophobia: What can society, what can you do?

Short-term:

- online: petitions, use media-compatible strategies
- daily-life: do not look away if you hear xenophobic rhetoric
- mark people as racist or anti-semitists etc., ask them why they fear such groups

4. Strategies against xenophobia

Long-term:

- vote for the parties who fight racist and right-wing populism and extremism
- Join existing social groups/organisations against right-wing extremism
- Try to replace state failure and pressure politicians