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 accomodations 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 here xenophobic rhetoric

• mark people as rassist or anti-semitists etc., ask them why they fear such groups
4. Strategies against xenophobia

Long-term:

• vote for the parties who fight rassist and right-wing populism and extremism

• Join existing social groups/organisations against right-wing extremism

• Try to replace state failure and pressure politicians