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Right-Wing Populism and Extremism in Germany: Root Causes, Manifestations and Challenges

Capacity Building 'How to Counter Right-Wing Populism and Extremism
in Europe', 12-16 October 2015

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Structure

- 1.** The Rise of Populist and Extremist Parties/Movements/Tendencies in Germany
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 - Root causes
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 - Alternative Party for Germany (AfD)
 - PEGIDA
 - The CSU and the Refugee Debate
- 2.** Comparison and Correlation
- 3.** Manifestations
- 4.** Challenges
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The Rise of Right-Wing Populist and Extremist Parties/Movements/Tendencies in Germany

Three Waves

- I. wave (immediate post-war period): Dictatorial Third Reich
- II. wave (1960s/1970s): NPD in West Germany
- III. wave (1980s and onward): Revival of Radical Right and Politics of Xenophobia
→ New Radical Right

Root Causes.

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- 1)** culturally motivated anti-immigration sentiments
 - 2)** economically motivated anti-immigration sentiments
 - 3)** the effect of proportional systems



Examples:

1: Ronald Schill, founder of the
Party for a Rule of Law Offensive ("Schill Party")



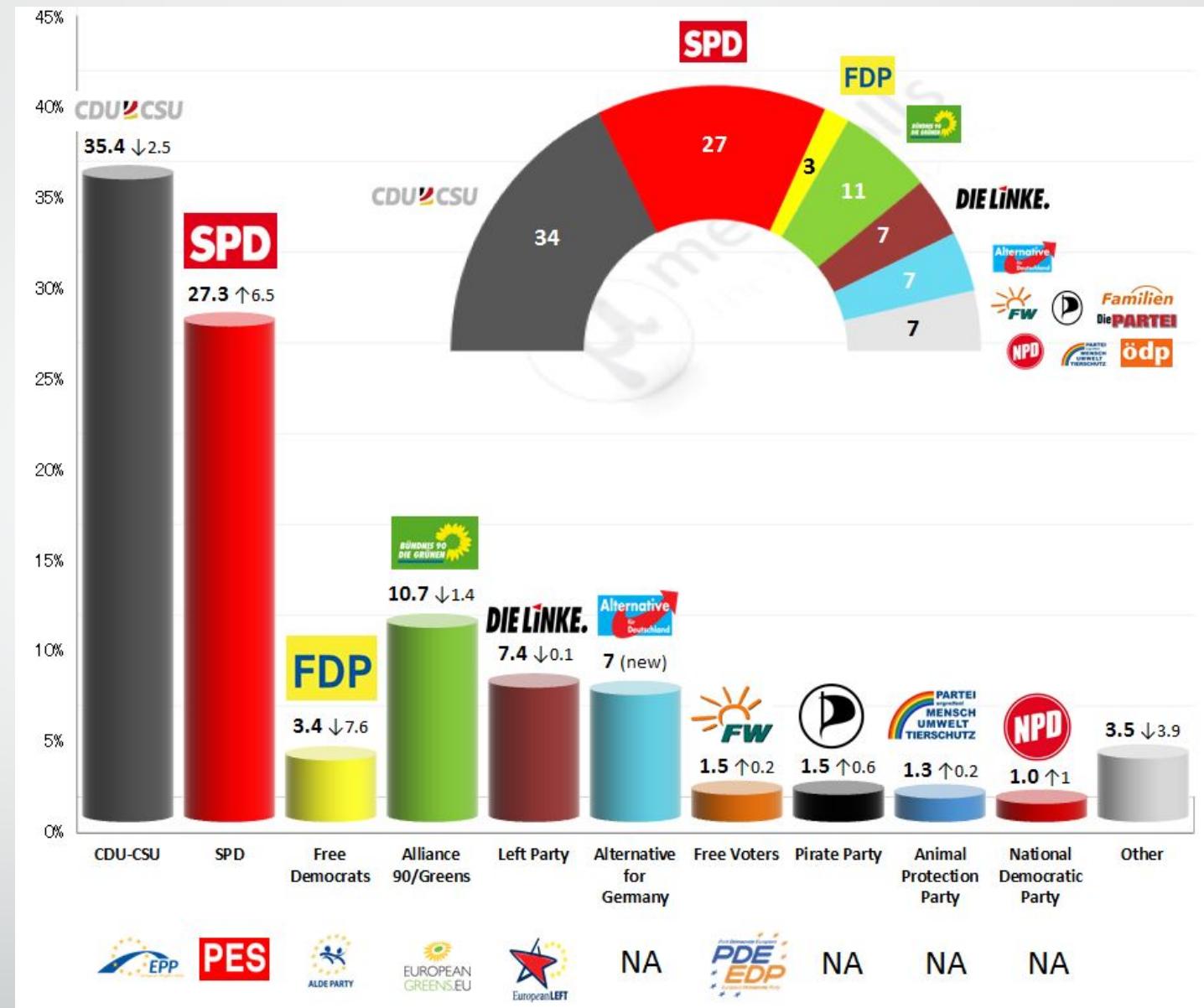
2: Pro NRW depicting a caricature of the Prophet
Mohammed with a bomb in his turban



NPD: 1%
→ 1 seat in EP

AfD: 7%
→ 7 seats in EP

The (Political) Party: 0,6%
→ 1 seat in EP



3: Results of German Political Parties in the EP Election 2014

NDP*

(National Democratic Party of Germany)



4: Udo Voigt, NPD's member of the EP



5: Frank Franz, NPD's president

- Ideology:

- German nationalism
- anti-immigration
- anti-globalism

- Recent election results:

- EP elections 2014: 1%
 - → 1/96 of German seats in the EP
- representation in one German state parliament: Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (5/51)

AfD*

(Alternative for Germany)

- Ideology:
 - morally conservatism
 - national liberalism
 - nationalist EU-scepticism
 - welfare chauvinism
 - anti-feminism
- Recent election results:
 - federal election 2013: 4,7%
 - EP elections 2014: 7,1%
 - 7/96 of German seats in EP
 - regional elections in Saxony, Brandenburg, Thuringia: more than 10%
 - representation in five German state parliaments:
Saxony (14/126), Thuringia (11/91), Brandenburg (11/88), Hamburg (8/121), Bremen (4/83)



6: AfD's Chairpersons: Jörg Meuthen (left) and Frauke Petry (right)

PEGIDA

(Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident)



7: Media spokeswoman Kathrin Oertel



8: Founder and then-leader Lutz Bachmann



9: Lutzmann posing as Hitler

- Some of PEGIDA's theses:

"PEGIDA is not xenophobic and not against the Islam as such. Only against the Islamisation."

"The poor pensioners in Germany sit in their flats without electricity and can't even afford a piece of stollen while the state provides fully-equipped accommodation for asylum seekers."*

"We are not against refugees. Refugees fleeing war can come, but not economic refugees."

* German: Patriotische Europäer Gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes

** sweet German bread with raisins and icing sugar

The CSU* and the Refugee Debate

- the government of Angela Merkel → policy of open borders
- CSU → tightening of asylum and refugee laws
 - reasons of this radical measure?
 - aggressive rhetoric as in the 1990s



**“Chancellor Merkel criticises Pegida,
the AfD defends Pegida,
the CSU sounds like Pegida.”**



Comparison and Correlation.

NPD	AfD	PEGIDA	CSU
demand for more referendums	mobilisation of the people	tensions and disagreements with sister party CDU	
Euro-scepticism, Islamophobia, profound contempt for existing political classes/elite stigmatisation of asylum seekers, Roma and Sinti, Muslims	focus on asylum and migration policies	demand of the acceleration of the asylum procedure	
Aim: tightening of German Immigration Act	succeeded in overshadowing the NPD prevented of NPD's re-entry in Saxony		



10: Campaign posters by the NPD (left) and the AfD (right)



Manifestations.



11: Google map of racist agitations against immigrants and arson attacks of refugee camps and homes by (local) anti-asylum initiatives (which dates back to 25 August 2015)



12: Google map displaying refugee homes made by German neo-Nazi group The Third Way ('Der III. Weg')



13-16: Advertisement posters at bus stops in Freital created by artist group Dies Arae



17-18: razor blades glued behind anti-Islam stickers that remind of the "don't give aids a chance"-campaign.





Challenges.

- shift of far-right extremist attitudes from the margins to the centre
- freedom of expression ← → hate speech and expression of discrimination
- pressure and influence on a national and European level
- investigation of the NSU crimes



Everyday Racism.

^{19:} **Natalia Drechsler**, 56, German instructor
for integration courses, Hanover



^{20:} **Aziza Janah, 40, housewife, Hamburg**



^{21:} **Omid Nouripour**, member of German parliament for the Green Party, Berlin





**The End
(of the presentation)**

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