

National Democratic Party of Germany

Name: National Democratic Party of Germany

Type of Organization:

- Political party

Ideologies and Affiliations:

- Neo-fascist
- neo-Nazi
- ultranationalist

Place of Origin:

Hanover, Germany

Year of Origin:

1964

Founder(s):

Heinrich Fassbender, Friedrich Thielen, Adolf von Thadden, Wilhelm Gutmann

Places of Operation:

Germany

Overview

Executive Summary:

Germany's National Democratic Party (*Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* or NPD) is a far-right political party that advocates racist, anti-Semitic, and anti-Muslim views. According to the German intelligence service, the NPD rejects the concept of liberal democracy.¹ The NPD is hostile towards both the United States and Israel. The party is opposed to multiculturalism and is concerned about the "foreign infiltration" (*Überfremdung*) of Germany, namely the perceived Americanization and Islamization of German society.² The NPD considers the presence of immigrants in Germany—regardless of whether they hold German citizenship—to be an attack on the German ethnic community (*Volksgemeinschaft*) and advocates deporting immigrants to their respective countries of origin.³

The NPD was founded in 1964. Despite some initial popularity among voters during the 1960s, the party was not able to sustain its success and became a marginalized political force for the subsequent three decades, during which time the group experienced financial difficulties and a steep decline in membership. Following German reunification in 1990, the NPD grew its support base in many of the regions of former East Germany, entering several state parliaments in the late-1990s. During this time, the NPD strategically repositioned itself by opening the party up to neo-Nazis and becoming more overtly radicalized.⁴ According to 2017 statistics from Germany's domestic intelligence service (*Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz* or BfV), the NPD has a membership of 4,500 people.⁵

According to the German intelligence service, the NPD opposes liberal democracy and appears to support an authoritarian state. Though the NPD officially rejects violence, racist gangs have reportedly carried out violence on behalf of the group.⁶ The NPD claims to pursue change through Germany's democratic process but ultimately, according to the German Interior Ministry, the party's intention is to systematically combat Germany's democratic constitutional state.⁷ Although German authorities have charged the NPD with violating constitutional bans on Nazi symbols and propaganda, several attempts to ban the party have failed.⁸

German authorities attempted to ban the NPD first in 2003, following a perceived rise in far-right crimes. The investigation collapsed, however, after it was revealed that many key party members were undercover law enforcement officers or paid informants.⁹ Following the discovery of

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the neo-Nazi terrorist cell National Socialist Underground (*Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund* or NSU), which reportedly murdered at least 10 people (mostly of Turkish origin) between 2000 and 2007, the German Federal Council (*Bundesrat*), a legislative body representing Germany's 16 states, made a second attempt to ban the party in 2013.¹⁰

The German Federal Council renewed their bid to make the party unconstitutional in March 2016, amidst a surge in anti-migrant rhetoric from the NPD and its followers, and a rise in far-right violence. In an unprecedented move, Germany's top constitutional court opened a hearing into banning the group. On January 17, 2017, the Federal Constitutional Court (*Bundesverfassungsgericht*) rejected the proposed ban on the NPD. The court noted that the NPD resembles the Nazi party and its objectives were unconstitutional, but ruled that the NPD did not have enough political weight to pose any actual threat to Germany's democratic system.¹¹ The NPD criticized the ruling but did not alter its ideological positions and, instead, reaffirmed its nationalist beliefs.¹²

However, in June 2017, the German government passed legislation to deny federal funding to any political party with aims hostile to the German constitution in a move specifically intended to target the NPD and incapacitate it by other legal means.¹³ In early 2018, Germany's constitutional bodies filed their applications with the Federal Constitutional Court, which ultimately decides whether the new legislation is applicable to the NPD. In response, however, the NPD submitted its complaint, stating that the new legislation itself was unconstitutional. The court's decision is expected for 2019.¹⁴

Though the party saw an upswing in support in the mid-2010s, the NPD has been losing voters to the competing far-right group Alternative for Germany (*Alternative für Deutschland* or AfD). In the September 2016 regional parliamentary elections for the state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, the NPD's proportion of votes fell below the 5 percent of votes needed to maintain a seat.¹⁵ As such, the NPD is no longer represented in any parliament in Germany, and was slated to lose about 1.3 million euros in state funding.¹⁶ Despite having faced a constitutional ban, major electoral setbacks, and a loss of federal funding, the group has retained substantial influence in parts of German civil society, and group's leaders retained a degree of influence in Germany and in Europe.¹⁷ Former NPD chair [Udo Voigt](#), for example, has served as an NPD representative in the European Parliament since 2014 and will run for re-election in May 2019. Before being elected as a Member of the European Parliament (MEP), Voigt had received a 10-month suspended sentence for incitement and expressing support for Hitler's Schutzstaffel (SS).¹⁸

In June 2018, the NPD began conducting street patrols in the cities of Berlin and Cottbus to establish so-called "safe zones" (*Schutzzonen*).¹⁹ The NPD claimed that small groups of volunteers were going to patrol city centers and subway stations to help ensure public safety due to "highly overburdened authorities [that] can no longer guarantee [it]."²⁰ However, critics argued that the NPD campaign was merely an attempt to regain influence and recruit voters, as the volunteers left the premises quickly after posting pictures on social media.²¹ In January 2019, NPD party members launched street patrols in the Bavarian town of Amberg in response to a series of violent attacks perpetrated by asylum seekers. The assailants were aged between 17 and 19 and from Afghanistan, Syria, and Iran. The NPD posted pictures to social media of its members patrolling the town in vests labeled "We're creating safe zones." An NPD statement on Facebook declared, "When we say we will create protection zones in Amberg, we mean it."²²

Doctrine:

The NPD is a far-right extremist political party and has been described by the German intelligence service as "racist, anti-Semitic and revisionist."²³ In the 1990s, the NPD radicalized further to the point of neo-Nazism.²⁴ The NPD spreads militant racism, anti-Semitism, and hostility toward the United States, which the NPD considers to be "Jewish controlled."²⁵ According to its official 2010 policy "Work. Family. Fatherland." (*Arbeit. Familie. Vaterland*), the NPD opposes multiculturalism due to concerns about the perceived "foreign infiltration" (*Überfremdung*) of Germany, in particular so-called Americanization and Islamization.²⁶ The NPD also opposes same-sex marriage, which was legalized in Germany in June 2017.²⁷

The NPD promotes a nationalist form of "socialism" in an effort to resist immigration and the economic effects of globalization.²⁸ According to the German intelligence service, the NPD opposes liberal democracy and appears to support an authoritarian state.²⁹

The NPD calls for reversing the post-World War II shift of the German-Polish border and restoring Germany's borders to their status at the end of 1937.³⁰ In addition, several NPD members have praised leading members of the Nazi party while seeking to revise the history of the Nazi period.³¹ In the course of the party's radicalization since the 1990s, several militant neo-Nazis, among them individuals with previous criminal convictions, have become members of the NPD's executive committee.³²

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The NPD has also promoted anti-Muslim populist rhetoric. Party members have exaggerated or fabricated criminal offences committed by Muslims in order to fuel racism and anti-immigrant sentiments, as well as justify violence against refugees in Germany. For example, in December 2017, an Afghan refugee fatally stabbed his 15-year-old ex-girlfriend. The NPD responded on social media, falsely claiming that an increasing number of German women have become victims of “crimigrants” (*Krimigranten*), an invented defamatory compound word of criminals and immigrants. The NPD blamed the government’s open asylum policies, condemning that ruling “pro-immigration fanatics have opened the doors for killers and other criminals to Germany.”³³ In August 2018, two refugees fatally stabbed a German man in Chemnitz. In response to false rumors that the German man was defending a woman from sexual assault, right-wing protestors—including NPD party members—took to the streets, leading to violent clashes with the police.³⁴ In January 2019, NPD members launched street patrols to establish so-called “safe zones” in the Bavarian town of Amberg. The patrols were formed in response to a series of violent attacks by asylum seekers, aged between 17 and 19 from Afghanistan, Syria, and Iran.³⁵

German neo-Nazis continue to perpetuate racist ideas, including by saying that “members of other races always remain physically, mentally and spiritually a foreign body.”³⁶ The NPD considers the presence of immigrants in Germany—regardless of whether they hold German citizenship—to be an attack on the German ethnic community (*Volksgemeinschaft*). Therefore, the NPD advocates deporting immigrants to their respective countries of origin.³⁷ The NPD also advocates Germany’s exit from the European Union and NATO.³⁸

In June 2021, the *Jerusalem Post* noted that members of the NPD had supported the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions campaign against Israel. The campaign was declared antisemitic by the German parliament in 2019.³⁹

Organizational Structure:

The NPD is organized similarly to mainstream German political parties, in accordance with the German Political Parties Act. The group has a federal executive board and 16 state chapters, as well as several county- and regional-level entities. Udo Pastörs, a known hardliner,⁴⁰ stepped down as interim chairman in November 2014. He was replaced by Frank Franz, who reportedly belongs to a more moderate wing of the NPD.⁴¹

The party had a membership of 4,500 as of 2017, a considerable reduction compared to the party’s 1968 peak of approximately 28,000 members.⁴² In 1994, political scientist Jürgen W. Falter determined that three factors—namely dissatisfaction with the political elite, feelings of social disadvantage, and a general far-right extremist attitude—drive voters to elect far-right political parties in Germany. According to Falter, younger men from rural areas in Eastern Germany therefore represent the majority of NPD voters.⁴³

The NPD has four sub-groups, the Young Nationalists (*Junge Nationalisten* or JN; formerly known as Young Nationalist Democrats), the Circle of National Women (*Ring Nationaler Frauen* or RNF), the Local Politics Union of the NPD (*Kommunalpolitische Vereinigung der NPD* or KPV), and the German Voice Publishing Company (*Deutsche Stimme Verlagsgesellschaft mbH* or DS Verlag).⁴⁴

The NPD’s political work is based on what it calls a “four pillar strategy.” As part of its first pillar, “Fight for Hearts and Minds” (*Kampf um die Köpfe*), the NPD seeks to acquire public acceptance by means of “nationalrevolutionary [sic] grass-roots work.” Secondly, under the “Fight for the Street” (*Kampf um die Straße*) pillar, the party aims to spread its ideology and influence public opinion. Under the third pillar, “Fight for the Parliaments” (*Kampf um die Parlamente*), the NPD endeavors to win seats in federal and regional parliamentary elections. Fourthly, the “Fight for the Organised Will” (*Kampf um den organisierten Willen*) pillar involves cooperating with various like-minded stakeholders to form a “comprehensive national opposition movement” under NPD leadership.⁴⁵ The NPD primarily communicates and networks with supporters and recruits through the Internet. According to the Verfassungsschutzbericht, NPD continues to focus their demonstrations and campaigns against migrants.⁴⁶

In September and December 2022, the NPD attempted to establish more of a cross-organizational collection movement with other groups across the extreme right wing when they organized “Deustestimme” (German Voice) days filled with networking events. The event failed to attract large numbers of attendees. Furthermore, according to the Verfassungsschutzbericht, low event attendance is only one of the NPD’s ongoing problems. The group also struggles with an internal factional struggle between “preservers” and “reformers” and limited financial opportunities.⁴⁷

Financing:

Germany’s political party legislation mandates that each political party receives 0.85 euros in public funding for every valid vote it gets in European, federal, or regional elections until a party receives four million votes, after which it receives 0.70 euros per vote. In order to be eligible, parties must

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secure 0.5 percent of the vote in European or federal elections, and 1.0 percent in regional elections. Parties also receive 0.38 euros in public matching funds for every euro they receive in donations, up to 3,300 euros.⁴⁸

As a result of losing state parliamentary seats in the September 2016 regional elections in the northeastern state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania the NPD lost about 1.3 million euros in annual funding from the state.⁴⁹ In addition, the NPD received only 0.4 percent of votes in the 2017 federal parliamentary elections, which further deteriorated the party's financial situation. However, the NPD still received 852,000 euros from the state for 2017 and remained eligible for several tax benefits.⁵⁰

After the proposal to ban the NPD failed, the German parliament (*Bundestag*) voted to amend Article 21 of the German constitution and end financing for "anti-constitutional" parties on June 22, 2017. The measure was clearly targeted at the NPD. In early 2018, all three of Germany's constitutional bodies—council, government, and parliament—filed their applications with the Federal Constitutional Court, which ultimately decides if the new legislation applies to the NPD.⁵¹ In response, the NPD submitted its complaint, stating that the new legislation itself was unconstitutional.⁵²

Oral proceedings were held at the Federal Constitutional Court on July 4, 2023, to determine whether the NPD could be excluded from state party funding. A decision was not immediately released.⁵³ Financial figures from 2022 were not released, but in 2020, the NPD received 350,000 euros of taxpayers' money and was scheduled to receive the same amount in 2021.⁵⁴

Since May 2014, the NPD is represented in the European Parliament with one member, Udo Voigt, and receives EU funding.⁵⁵ The NPD is determined to keep its seat in the upcoming European election in May 2019.⁵⁶ The NPD also received significant financial support from neo-Nazi Jürgen Rieger, who belonged to the party from 2006 until his death in May 2010.⁵⁷ In 2017, the NPD received 757,000 euros from three NPD sympathizers, according to a report in the *Spiegel*.⁵⁸

In November 2013, the German Federal Constitutional Court fined the NPD 1.27 million euros due to errors in the party's financial accounting. The fines were deducted from the NPD's public funding.⁵⁹

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² Torsten Oppelland, "Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands," Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, June 5, 2017, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/grundfragen/parteien-in-deutschland/kleinparteien/42205/npd>.

³ "Verfassungsschutzbericht 2013," Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 95, accessed November 29, 2014, <http://www.verfassungsschutz.de/embed/vsbericht-2013-kurzzusammenfassung.pdf>.

⁴ "Verfassungsschutzbericht 2013," Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, accessed November 29, 2014, 100-101, <http://www.verfassungsschutz.de/embed/vsbericht-2013.pdf>.

⁵ "Right-wing Extremist Membership (Overall View)," Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BfV), accessed December 15, 2016, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/en/fields-of-work/right-wing-extremism/figures-and-facts-right-wing-extremism/right-wing-extremist-following-2015>.

⁶ Madeline Chambers, "German treads cautiously in court case to ban far-right party," Reuters, August 18, 2016, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-mpd-insight-idUSKCN10T14W>.

⁷ "Verfassungsschutzbericht 2013," Bundesministerium des Innern, 101, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/embed/vsbericht-2013.pdf>.

⁸ "Germany's highest court to rule on nationalist NPD party ban," Deutsche Welle, November 11, 2016, <http://www.dw.com/en/germanys-highest-court-to-rule-on-nationalist-mpd-party-ban/a-36252425>.

⁹ "Germany's highest court to rule on nationalist NPD party ban," Deutsche Welle, November 11, 2016, <http://www.dw.com/en/germanys-highest-court-to-rule-on-nationalist-mpd-party-ban/a-36252425>.

¹⁰ "Germany's top court rules against ban on far-right NDP," Guardian, January 17, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/17/germany-s-top-court-rules-against-ban-on-far-right-ndp>; Ben Knight "A guide to Germany's far-right groups," Deutsche Welle, June 17, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/en/a-guide-to-germanys-far-right-groups/a-39124629>.

¹¹ "Germany's top court rules against ban on far-right NDP," *Guardian*, January 17, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/17/germany-s-top-court-rules-against-ban-on-far-right-ndp>; Ben Knight "A guide to Germany's far-right groups," Deutsche Welle, June 17, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/en/a-guide-to-germanys-far-right-groups/a-39124629>.

¹² "Brief summary, 2017 Report on the Protection of the Constitution, Facts and Trends," Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, accessed April 1, 2019, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/embed/annual-report-2017-summary.pdf>.

¹³ Jefferson Chase, "Bundestag cancels German government funding of non-democratic parties," Deutsche Welle, June 22, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/en/bundestag-cancels-german-government-funding-of-non-democratic-parties/a-39372750>; "German ends state funding for far-right NPD party," *The Local*, June 23, 2017, <https://www.thelocal.de/20170623/germany-ends-state-funding-for-far-right-mpd-party>.

¹⁴ "Ausschluss der NPD von staatlicher Parteienfinanzierung beschlossen," Deutscher Bundestag, April, 26, 2018, <https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2018/kw17-de-mpd-551138>; "Bundesländer wollen NPD den Geldhahn zudrehen," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, February 2, 2018, <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/parteienfinanzierung-mpd-bundesrat-1.3851027>; "Keine Staatliche Finanzierung für NPD," Bundesministerium des Innern, April 18, 2018, <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/pressemitteilungen/DE/2018/04/npd-finanzierung.html>; "Übersicht für das Jahr 2019 - 2 BvE 1/17," Bundesverfassungsgericht, accessed April 2, 2019, https://www.bundesverfassungsgericht.de/DE/Verfahren/Jahresvorausschau/vs_2019/vorausschau_2019_node.html; Frank Bräutigam, "Noch einmal nach

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Key Leaders



Udo Voigt

Former Party Chairman, Member of European Parliament (MEP)



Frank Franz

Party Chairman



Frank Schwerdt

Former Deputy Party Chairman
(Deceased)



Sascha Rossmüller

Board Member



Arne Schimmer

Party Committee Member for Economic Policy



Andreas Storr

Former Federal Treasurer, former Member of the State Parliament in Saxony



David Petereit

Deputy Head of the NPD
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania



Jürgen Gansel

Former Member of the State Parliament in Saxony

National Democratic Party of Germany



Patrick Wieschke

Former Head of the NPD Thuringia



Jörg Hänel

Former Head of the NPD Berlin



Udo Pastörs

Former Interim Party Chairman,
former Member of the State
Parliament in Mecklenburg-
Western Pomerania



Ronny Zasowk

Deputy Party Chair



Karl Richter

Former Deputy Chairman, former
Head of the NPD Bavaria



Thorsten Heise

Deputy Chairman



Stefan Köster

Deputy Chairman, Head of the
NPD Mecklenburg-Western
Pomerania



Christian Häger

Head of Young Nationalists

National Democratic Party of Germany

History:

- **July 4, 2023:** Oral proceedings are held at the Federal Constitutional Court to determine whether the NPD can be excluded from state party funding.
A decision is not immediately released. Source: “Karlsruhe, Germany. 04th July, 2023...,” Alamy, July 4, 2023, <https://www.alamy.com/karlsruhe-germany-04th-july-2023-a-nameplate-with-the-inscription-franz-stands-on-a-table-in-the-hearing-room-the-oral-proceedings-at-the-federal-constitutional-court-are-looking-into-the-question-of-whether-the-npd-can-be-excluded-from-state-party-funding-credit-uwe-anspachdpaalamy-live-news-image557280481.html>.
- The NPD attempts to establish more of a cross-organizational collection movement with other groups across the extreme right wing by organizing a “Deutschestimme” (German Voice) day filled with networking events.
The event fails to attract large numbers of attendees from the extreme-right wing scene. Source: “Verfassungsschutzbericht 2022,” Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, June 20, 2023, https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/SharedDocs/publikationen/DE/verfassungsschutzberichte/2023-06-20-verfassungsschutzbericht-2022-startseitenmodul.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3.
- The NPD holds another “Deutschestimme” (German Voice) networking event that is not well attended.
The specific location and date of the event are not available. Source: Verfassungsschutzbericht 2022,” Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, June 20, 2023, https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/SharedDocs/publikationen/DE/verfassungsschutzberichte/2023-06-20-verfassungsschutzbericht-2022-startseitenmodul.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3.
- The NPD meets at a federal party conference in Altenstadt.
The Federal Board attempts to rename the group to “Die Heimat” (The Man) to demonstrate a new orientation of the party. However, the motion fails. The name change is meant to align with several reform steps, including organizational streamlining, connectivity, and increased work in the pre-political space. They also seek to network more and collaborate with other actors in the right-wing extremist spectrum as the movement increasingly considers itself as a partner in a broad right-wing extremist movement alliance. Source: “Verfassungsschutzbericht 2022,” Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, June 20, 2023, https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/SharedDocs/publikationen/DE/verfassungsschutzberichte/2023-06-20-verfassungsschutzbericht-2022-startseitenmodul.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3.
- According to *Deutsche Welle*, a group of German far-right extremists are participating in paramilitary training provided by Russian fight club, Rezerv/Partizan at a military facility on the outskirts of St. Petersburg.
Partizan is the military training arm of the Russian Imperial Movement, a neo-Nazi, monarchist, white supremacist group. Among the participants are members of the Young Nationalists, the youth wing of the NPD. Source: Hans Pfeifer, Mikhail Bushuev, Vladimir Esipov, “Why are German neo-Nazis training in Russia?,” *Deutsche Welle*, June 6, 2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/why-are-german-neo-nazis-training-in-russia/a-53702613>.
- **December 22, 2019:** The NPD attempts to hold a rally in the village of Eschede, northwestern Germany.
Around 650 counter protesters prevent the march from continuing, blocking a road into the village from a location reportedly hosting NPD supporters. The NPD members reportedly intended to rally with torches, flags, and protest signs under the motto, “Eschede’s beautiful side—give home and culture a place.” Source: Leah Carter, “Demonstrators stop neo-Nazi NPD gathering,” *Deutsche Welle*, December 22, 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/650-demonstrators-stop-neo-nazi-npd-gathering-in-lower-saxony/a-51768279>.
- **April 1, 2019:** NPD sympathizers and known NPD politicians, including party chairman Frank Franz and MEP Udo Voigt, participate in an anti-immigrant campaign on Twitter, called #Abschiebechallenge.
They post pictures of themselves with a sign indicating individuals who should be deported, including German political opponents of foreign descent. Source: “#Abschiebechallenge: Rechte Hasskampagne sorgt für Empörung,” *Der Standard*, April 3, 2019, <https://www.derstandard.de/story/2000100758008/abschiebechallenge-rechte-twitter-kampagne-sorgt-fuer-empoeerung>.
- **March 18, 2019:** Former NPD politician Rigolf Henning receives a 20-month suspended prison sentence for repeatedly denying the Holocaust.
Source: “20 Monate auf Bewährung für Holocaust-Leugner,” *Bild Zeitung*, March 19, 2019, <https://www.bild.de/regional/bremen/bremen-aktuell/rigolf-hennig-83-verurteilt-20-monate-auf-bewaehrung-fuer-holocaust-leugner-60744480.bild.html>.
- **January 2, 2019:** NPD party members launch street patrols in the Bavarian town of Amberg in response to a series of violent attacks by asylum seekers.
The assailants are aged between 17 and 19 and are reportedly from Afghanistan, Syria, and Iran. The NPD posts pictures on social media of its members patrolling the town in vests labeled “We’re creating safe zones.” An NPD statement on Facebook declares, “When we say we will create protection zones in Amberg, we mean it.” Sources: Isolde Stöcker-Gietl, “Die NPD patrouilliert in Amberg,” *Mittelbayerische Zeitung*, January 2, 2019, <https://www.mittelbayerische.de/bayern-nachrichten/die-npd-patrouilliert-in-amberg-21705-art1735157.html>; Chase Winter, “Police refute claims of far-right patrols after migrant attacks,” *Deutsche Welle*, January 3, 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/police-refute-claims-of-far-right-patrols-after-migrant-attacks/a-46944468>.
- **August 26, 2018:** Two refugees fatally stab a German man in Chemnitz.
In response to false rumors that the German man was defending a woman from sexual assault, right-wing protestors—including NPD party members—take to the streets, leading to violent clashes with the police. Source: Katharina Meyer zu Eppendorf and Max Holscher, “Der Schauer marsch,” *Spiegel Online*, September 1, 2018, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/chemnitz-afd-pegida-und-pro-chemnitz-schiessen-sich-bei-demo-zusammen-a-1226122.html>.
- **August 18, 2018:** Approximately 680 far-right extremists—including NPD members—march through Berlin to commemorate the 31st anniversary of the death of Hitler’s deputy, Rudolf Heß.
They request the release of governmental files, believing he was murdered by British soldiers and his death was declared suicide as a cover-up. Source: “Gedenkundgebung von Rechtsextremisten zum 31. Todestag des Hitler-Stellvertreters Rudolf Heß in Berlin,” Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, accessed April 3, 2019, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/de/oeffentlichkeitsarbeit/newsletter/newsletter-archiv/bfv-newsletter-archiv/bfv-newsletter-2018-03-archiv/bfv-newsletter-2018-03-thema-01>.
- The NPD launches street patrols to establish so-called “safe zones” (*Schutzzonen*) in several cities throughout Germany.
Critics believe the campaign is merely an attempt to regain relevance and recruit voters. Sources: Robert Wagner, “Vorbefragte Neonazis sorgen für rassistische ‚Schutzzonen‘;” *Belltower.News*, December 7, 2018, <https://www.belltower.news/die-schutzzonen-der-npd-vorbefragte-neonazis-fuer-rassistische-sicherheit-78609/>; “13. September 2018: Die NPD und ihre „Schutzzonen“-Kampagne,” *Register Berlin*, accessed April 4, 2019, <https://berliner-register.de/artikel/lichtenberg->

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- **June 8, 2018 - June 9, 2018:** The NPD organizes the "Days of National Movement," a two-day event in Thuringia with music and speeches. The event attracts 2,250 visitors. Source: "Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD)," Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, accessed April 1, 2019, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/de/arbeitsfelder/af-rechtsextremismus/zahlen-und-fakten-rechtsextremismus/rechtsextremistische-parteien-2017/nationaldemokratische-partei-deutschlands-npd-2017>.
- **April 26, 2018:** The German parliament decides, with 548 out of 627 members voting in favor, to file an application with the Federal Constitutional Court to exclude the NPD from state financing and tax benefits for six years. Source: "Ausschluss der NPD von staatlicher Parteienfinanzierung beschlossen," *Deutscher Bundestag*, April, 26, 2018, <https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2018/kw17-de-npd-551138>.
- **April 21, 2018 - April 22, 2018:** The NPD organizes a two-day festival in Saxony under the slogan "Reconquista Europa – creating counterculture." The festival features white power music and martial art events, and attracts approximately 1,900 attendees. Sources: "Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD)," Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, accessed April 1, 2019, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/de/arbeitsfelder/af-rechtsextremismus/zahlen-und-fakten-rechtsextremismus/rechtsextremistische-parteien-2017/nationaldemokratische-partei-deutschlands-npd-2017>; "Ostritz bleibt friedlich," *Der Sonntag*, April 23, 2018, <https://www.sonntag-sachsen.de/ostritz-bleibt-friedlich>.
- **April 18, 2018:** The German government decides to file an application with the Federal Constitutional Court to exclude the NPD from state financing and tax benefits for six years. Source: "Keine Staatliche Finanzierung für NPD," Bundesministerium des Innern, April 18, 2018, <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/pressemitteilungen/DE/2018/04/npd-finanzierung.html>.
- **February 2, 2018:** The German Federal Council is the first constitutional body to file an application with the Federal Constitutional Court to exclude the NPD from state financing and tax benefits for six years. Source: "Bundesländer wollen NPD den Geldhahn zudrehen," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, February 2, 2018, <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/parteienfinanzierung-npd-bundesrat-1.3851027>.
- **July 15, 2017:** Known neo-Nazis and NPD politicians Tommy Frenck, Patrick Schröder, and Steffen Richter organize the Rock against Foreign Infiltration (*Rock gegen Überfremdung*) festival in the city of Themar, Thuringia. According to the German intelligence service, the festival is the biggest event of its kind to date, drawing approximately 6,000 attendees. Police file 43 criminal complaints for intimidation, assault, and arms violations among other offences committed at the festival. Sources: "Neonazi-Konzert mit 6.000 Besuchern am 15. Juli in Themar, Auswertung: Gelder, Strukturen und der Umgang der Behörden," *thuringenrechtsausen.wordpress.com*, 2017/07/26/26/neonazi-konzert-mit-6-000-besuchern-am-15-juni-in-themar-auswertung-gelder-strukturen-und-der-umgang-der-behoerden/; "6000 Besucher bei Neonazi-Konzert in Themar," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, July 16, 2017, <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/news/politik/extremismus-6000-besucher-bei-neonazi-konzert-in-themar-dpa-urn-newsml-dpa-com-20090101-170716-99-261129>; "Verfassungsschutzbericht 2017," Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, July 24, 2018, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/download/vsbericht-2017.pdf>.
- **June 22, 2017:** In a move specifically intended to target and incapacitate the NPD, the German parliament amends Article 21 of the German constitution to deny funding to any "anti-constitutional" political party. The new law could deny the NPD access to federal funding for at least six years. Sources: Jefferson Chase, "Bundestag cancels German government funding of non-democratic parties," *Deutsche Welle*, June 22, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/en/bundestag-cancels-german-government-funding-of-non-democratic-parties/a-39372750>; Robert Roßmann, "Das Ende der Millionen für die NPD," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, June 22, 2017, <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/parteienfinanzierung-das-ende-der-millionen-fuer-die-npd-1.3554452>.
- **June 13, 2017:** Former NPD member and lawyer Horst Mahler is extradited to Germany, after having fled to Hungary in April in an effort to avoid imprisonment. In 2009, Mahler was sentenced to 10 years in prison for repeated incitement to racial hatred and for denying the Holocaust. He was temporarily released in 2015 due to a serious illness, but his release was rescinded in late-2016 and he was obligated to return to prison. Source: "Hungary hands over Holocaust denier Horst Mahler to Germany," *Deutsche Welle*, June 13, 2017, <https://www.dw.com/en/hungary-hands-over-holocaust-denier-horst-mahler-to-germany/a-39236515>.
- **January 17, 2017:** Germany's Federal Constitutional Court rejects a ban on the NPD, filed by Germany's Federal Council. Although the court confirms the party's anti-constitutional nature, it argues that the NPD does not hold enough political weight to pose a serious threat to Germany's democratic system. Sources: "German top court blocks ban on far right NPD," *BBC News*, January 17, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38649188>; Patrick Costello, "Germany's top court rejects bid to ban neo-Nazi party," *USA Today*, January 17, 2017, <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2017/01/17/germanys-highest-court-rejects-bid-outlaw-far-right-npd-party/96658102/>; Ben Knight "A guide to Germany's far-right groups," *Deutsche Welle*, June 17, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/en/a-guide-to-germanys-far-right-groups/a-39124629>; Torsten Oppeland, "Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands," Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, June 5, 2017, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/grundfragen/parteien-in-deutschland/kleinparteien/42205/npd>.
- **November 8, 2016:** After seeking an appeal of his six-month suspended sentence from a district court, NPD politician Marcel Zech receives a sentence of eight months in prison for exposing a tattoo on his back depicting a Nazi concentration camp. Source: "German far-right politician sentenced to jail for Nazi death camp tattoo," *Deutsche Welle*, November 8, 2016, <http://www.dw.com/en/german-far-right-politician-sentenced-to-jail-for-nazi-death-camp-tattoo/a-36300642>.
- **October 27, 2016:** The European Court of Human Rights dismisses NPD claims that it is facing discrimination, citing legal options available to NPD members in Germany. Source: "European judges rule against German neo-Nazi NPD in discrimination case," *Deutsche Welle*, October 27, 2016, <http://www.dw.com/en/european-judges-rule-against-german-neo-nazi-npd-in-discrimination-case/a-36175723>.

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- In the regional parliamentary election of the state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, the NPD gains less than the 5 percent of the vote that it needs to maintain a seat, meaning that it is no longer represented in any German parliament.
Source: Ben Knight, "The rise and fall of Germany's 'neo-Nazi' NPD," Deutsche Welle, September 7, 2016, <http://www.dw.com/en/the-decline-and-fall-of-germanys-neo-nazi-npd/a-19532536>.
- **March 1, 2016:** Germany's Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe opens a hearing to ban the NPD.
Germany's Federal Council makes the request and argues that the party is racist and anti-Semitic and "constitutes a threat to Germany's democratic order." The hearing is a historical rarity, only the court is able to declare a party unconstitutional if its goals or actions undermine democracy or threaten the Federal Republic's existence. Sources: Cas Mudde, "Germany wants to ban the neo-Nazis of NPD again, but why now?" Guardian (London), March 4, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/commentisfree/2016/mar/04/germany-ban--neo-nazi-npd-refugees-far-right>; Ruth Bender, "Germany's Top Court is Urged to Ban Extreme-Right Party NPD," Wall Street Journal, March 2, 2016, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/germanys-top-court-is-urged-to-ban-extreme-right-party-npd-1456862021>; "NPD-Verbotsverfahren: Verhandlungstermine am 1., 2. und 3. März 2016 jeweils um 10.00 Uhr," Bundesverfassungsgericht, December 7, 2015, <https://www.bundesverfassungsgericht.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/DE/2015/bvg15-090.html>.
- **December 22, 2015:** Marcel Zech, an NPD party member and town councilman, receives a six-month suspended sentence for his tattoo that depicts a Nazi concentration camp with the entrance slogan "To each his own" (*Jedem das Seine*).
Zech had faced up to five years of imprisonment for racial hatred and incitement. Source: Agence France-Presse, "German far-right politician avoids jail in Auschwitz tattoo trial," Guardian (London), December 22, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/22/german-far-right-politician-marcel-zech-auschwitz-tattoo-trial-sentence>.
- **September 28, 2015:** The NPD wins an injunction filed in August, effectively overturning the previous ban against an NPD visit with refugees.
Five NPD politicians visit the refugee facility in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, also a site of violent skirmishes between right-wing extremists and security forces. Upon seeing the camp, former NPD interim chairman Udo Pastörs criticizes the "abundance" of the camp and comments on the lack of pork served during lunch, claiming people who eat pork were discriminated against, despite most of the refugees being Muslim. Source: "German right-wingers push through with controversial refugee home visit," Deutsche Welle, September 28, 2015, <http://www.dw.com/en/german-right-wingers-push-through-with-controversial-refugee-home-visit/a-18746923>.
- During Chancellor Angela Merkel's visit to a refugee center in Heidenau, near Dresden, anti-immigrant protests erupt.
Several hundred neo-Nazis and members of the NPD throw stones and bottles at the police while yelling, "Heil Hitler!" Head of NPD Saxony, Jens Baur, views the Heidenau protests as a "great success" for his party, claiming he and his men organized the protests and demonstrations against the recent influx of refugees. Sources: Melissa Eddy, "German Leaders Seek to Ease Tensions Over Migrant Crisis," New York Times, August 26, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/27/world/europe/heidenau-merkel-refugee-germany.html?_r=0; "Das Neonazi-Netz hinter den Flüchtlingsangriffen," Die Welt, August 30, 2015, <http://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article145789205/Das-Neonazi-Netz-hinter-den-Fluechtlingsangriffen.html>.
- **August 13, 2015:** German officials deny NPD representatives' requests to talk to refugees and asylum-seekers housed in the northern German state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.
The party persists and files an injunction that would force the government to allow a visit, stating their right to be informed as lawmakers. Source: "German far-right legislators push to 'inspect' a refugee center," Deutsche Welle, August 13, 2015, <http://www.dw.com/en/german-far-right-legislators-push-to-inspect-a-refugee-center/a-18648473>.
- Berlin's Constitutional Court overturns a prohibition on an NPD march in Gelsenkirchen, where the FIFA World Cup games are being held.
This overturns a state court decision in North Rhine-Westphalia to ban the event, since the march would pose "an immediate threat to public security." Police accuse the NPD of organizing the march to denigrate dark-skinned soccer players. The NPD goes on to hold multiple additional marches around this time. Source: "Soccer-World-German court clears far-right march," ABC News, June 9, 2015, <http://abcnews.go.com/Sports/soccer-world-german-court-clears-march/story?id=31473674>.
- **April 7, 2015:** Germany ramps up the debate on whether or not to ban the NPD following the resignation of Tröglitz's mayor and recent attack on an asylum housing complex.
Deutsche Welle notes that it is unclear whether an investigation will be able to provide the necessary evidence for a ban in Germany, which would require that the party both approves of xenophobia and is actively engaged in propagating xenophobia and racism in the country. Source: "'Tröglitz is everywhere,' says Saxony-Anhalt state premier," Deutsche Welle (Berlin), April 7, 2015, <http://www.dw.com/en/tr%C3%B6glitz-is-everywhere-says-saxony-anhalt-state-premier/a-18364185>.
- A complex meant to house approximately 40 individuals granted asylum in Tröglitz is burned down.
Media reports connect the incident to NPD anti-immigrant protests in Tröglitz a month prior. Source: "Asylum seekers' accommodation set on fire in suspected far-right arson attack in Germany," Independent (London), April 4, 2015, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/asylum-seekers-accommodation-set-on-fire-in-suspected-far-right-arson-attack-in-germany-10156058.html>.
- Mayor Markus Nierrth of Tröglitz resigns due to security concerns after the NPD plans to protest his immigration policies.
The NPD cancels the protest, scheduled to take place in front of the mayor's home. Source: Louise Osborne, "German village's mayor quits over neo-Nazi protest permitted outside his home," Guardian (London), March 9, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/09/german-village-troglitz-mayor-quits-neo-nazi-protest>.
- The NPD cancels a protest in Freiburg after members fail to board the correct train.
The demonstration was to protest alleged discrimination against an NPD member. Source: Ben Knight, "German neo-Nazi party cancels protest after boarding wrong train," Guardian (London), February 2, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/02/german-neo-nazi-party-cancels-protest-boarding-wrong-train>.
- **December 16, 2014:** The NPD loses its case against German politician Manuela Schwesig (Social Democratic Party), whom the party accuses of failing to remain neutral during a political campaign.
These accusations are borne from statements such as, "The number one goal is that the NPD does not make it into the parliament." According to the Federal Constitutional Court, Schwesig was merely stating her political opinion and did not damage "the NPD's right to a level playing field." Source: "Far-right NPD party loses case over German minister's opinion," Deutsche Welle (Berlin), December 16, 2014, <http://www.dw.com/en/far-right-npd-party-loses-case-over-german-ministers-opinion/a-18134279>.
- **November 1, 2014:** Frank Franz becomes the new chairman of the NPD. He reportedly belongs to the moderate wing of the party and seeks to make it more "modern."
Interim Chairman Pastörs supports his candidacy. Source: Christina Hebel, "Neuer NPD-Chef Frank Franz: Pastörs' Erbe setzt sich durch," Der Spiegel, November 1, 2014, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/npd-parteitag-rechtsextremisten-waehlen-frank-franz-zum-vorsitzenden-a-1000556.html>.

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- **August 31, 2014:** During the Saxony state election, the NPD loses its representation in the Saxon state parliament, receiving only 4.9 percent of the vote.
The NPD is now represented in only one (of the 16) state parliaments, namely in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. Sources: "Landtagswahlen Sachsen 2014," wahl.tagesschau.de, accessed November 29, 2014, <http://wahl.tagesschau.de/wahlen/2014-08-31-LT-DE-SN/index.shtml>; "NPD scheitert knapp," *Die Zeit*, August 31, 2014, <http://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2014-08/sachsen-landtagswahl-npd>.
- **August 30, 2014:** Former NPD candidate Steffen Richter reportedly threatens Katharina König, a member of the far-left party *Die Linke*, while she is campaigning.
Richter references an earlier beating König had suffered by a group of right-wing extremists. Source: Andres Speit, "'Wir klären das wie in den 90ern,'" *taz.de*, September 2, 2014, <http://www.taz.de/1145205/>.
- **May 22, 2014:** In European Parliament elections, the NPD receives 1 percent of the vote in Germany, translating into one MEP, former NPD Chairman Udo Voigt.
Like other neo-Nazi and neo-fascist parties, the NPD fails to join a parliamentary faction in the European Parliament. However, Voigt receives a seat on the Civil Liberties Committee, outraging other MEPs and anti-racism campaigners. Source: The National Democratic Party earned 1.3 percent in the last federal elections (2014) and remained without a deputy in the Bundestag because of the 5 percent election threshold; Frank Jansen, "Flaute fuer Deutschlands Rechtsextreme," *Der Tagesspiegel*, May 26, 2014, <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/europawahl-2014-flaute-fuer-deutschlands-rechtsextreme/9952142.html>; James Crisp, "Neo-Nazi takes seat on Parliament Civil Liberties Committee, Schulz furious (updated)," EurActive, July 7, 2014, <http://www.euractiv.com/sections/eu-elections-2014/nazi-takes-seat-parliament-civil-liberties-committee-schulz-furious>.
- **April 7, 2014:** The NPD's federal executive committee ousts neo-Nazi Thomas Wulff from his role as head of the Hamburg NPD section, following an incident in which Wulff described himself as a national socialist during a regional party conference.
The committee's move occurs against the backdrop of a looming decision by the German Constitutional Court on whether to allow new proceedings to ban the NPD. Wulff had been a member of the NPD since 2004 and is thought to have been responsible for recruiting new NPD members from among militant neo-Nazis. Source: Christina Hebel, "Verbotsverfahren: NPD-Spitze wirft Neonazi Wulff aus dem Amt," *Spiegel Online*, April 7, 2014, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/npd-wirft-neonazi-thomas-wulff-aus-amt-a-962821.html>.
- **January 10, 2014:** Udo Pastörs, a known supporter of neo-Nazism, becomes the interim leader of the NPD.
Source: Antonie Rietzschel, "Extrem nach innen und aussen," *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, January 10, 2014, <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/udo-pastoers-als-npd-chef-extrem-nach-innen-und-aussen-1.1858845>.
- **December 19, 2013:** Holger Apfel steps down as chair of the NPD and leader of the NPD parliamentary group in the Saxon parliament citing health reasons.
It is later reported that he had also resigned his membership in the NPD after rumors surfaced that a young male NPD member felt harassed by him. Sources: Justus Bender, "NPD-Chef Holger Apfel tritt zurueck," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, December 12, 2013, <http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/inland/rechtsextremismus/burn-out-syndrom-mpd-chef-holger-afpel-tritt-zurueck-12718526.html>; "Ex-Parteichef: Apfel tritt aus NPD aus," *Spiegel Online*, December 24, 2013, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/holger-afpel-tritt-aus-mpd-aus-a-940800.html>.
- **December 3, 2013:** The German Federal Council applies for the German Constitutional Court to open proceedings to ban the NPD due to the party's "degrading racism" and "recognizable affinity" for the Nazis.
Sources: "Länder reichen NPD-Verbotsantrag ein," *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, December 3, 2013, <http://www.sz-online.de/nachrichten/laender-reichen-mpd-verbotsantrag-ein-2722026.html>; Michelle Martin, "German party accused of neo-Nazi traits set for EU parliament," Reuters, May 21, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/21/us-eu-election-germany-neonazis-idUSBREA4K0DY20140521>.
- **November 13, 2011:** Holger Apfel becomes the new chairman of the NPD.
His attempts to transform the NPD into a more moderate party do not succeed in the face of huge internal opposition. Source: "Ex-NPD-Chef erklärt Partei für unreformierbar," *Die Zeit*, May 21, 2014, <http://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2014-05/holger-afpel-mallorca-mpd>.
- During municipal elections in the city of Trier, the head of the local NPD, Safet Babic, reportedly takes part in an attack on a 21-year-old student who had ripped down NPD election posters.
Babic is convicted and his appeals fail. Following his conviction, he is barred from serving on the city council. Source: Lisa Erdmann, Christina Hebel, Björn Hengst, "Debatte über NPD-Verbot: Partei der Schläger," *Der Spiegel*, February 23, 2012, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/debatte-ueber-mpd-verbot-partei-der-schlaeger-a-815695-2.html>.
- **June 4, 2010:** NPD party chairman Udo Voigt attempts to temper the party's thuggish image to appeal to a broader spectrum of voters. The party's neo-Nazi faction successfully blocks Voigt's efforts.
Sources: "Weniger Ideologie, mehr Populismus," *Die Zeit*, June 4, 2010, <http://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2010-06/npd-parteitag-bamberg>; Robert Ackermann, *Warum die NPD keinen Erfolg haben kann: Organisation, Programm und Kommunikation einer rechtsextremen Partei* (Opladen Budrich: Unipress, 2012), 116-128.
- **August 30, 2009:** The NPD fails to build on its previous strong election results in Saxony, earning just 5.6 percent of the vote and barely maintaining a presence in the state parliament.
Source: "Landtagswahlen Sachsen 2009," wahl.tagesschau.de, accessed November 29, 2014, <http://wahl.tagesschau.de/wahlen/2009-08-30-LT-DE-SN/>.
- NPD city council member Axel Thieme hits a student demonstrator in Dortmund in the face, smashing his glasses and injuring his eye.
A court convicts Thieme in February 2011 for assault and orders him to pay a fine. Source: Lisa Erdmann, Christina Hebel, Björn Hengst, "Debatte über NPD-Verbot: Partei der Schläger," *Der Spiegel*, February 23, 2012, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/debatte-ueber-mpd-verbot-partei-der-schlaeger-a-815695-2.html>.
- **February 1, 2009:** State authorities renew their attempts to ban the NPD.
Source: "Aufregung um V-Leute," *Die Zeit*, February 24, 2009, <http://www.zeit.de/online/2009/09/NPD-Verbot-Verfassungsschutz-Koerting>.

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- **September 17, 2006:** The NPD earns representation in the state parliament of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania for the first time, securing 7.3 percent of the vote and six seats.
Source: "Landtagswahlen Mecklenburg Vorpommern 2006," wahl.tagesschau.de, accessed November 29, 2014, <http://wahl.tagesschau.de/wahlen/2006-09-17-LT-DE-MV/>.
- **September 19, 2004:** The NPD secures 9.2 percent of the vote in state elections in Saxony, Eastern Germany, entering the state parliament for the first time by winning 12 seats.
Source: "Landtagswahlen Sachsen 2004," wahl.tagesschau.de, accessed November 29, 2014, <http://wahl.tagesschau.de/wahlen/2004-09-19-LT-DE-SN/>.
- **September 1, 2004:** To avoid competition, the NPD forms a pact with the German People's Union (*Deutsche Volkunion* or DVU). The less extreme Republicans, another German right-wing party, refuse to cooperate with the NPD, arguing that they respect the German constitution and reject the "systemic changes" that the NPD advocates. Source: "German Far-right Aims for National Alliance," *Deutsche Welle*, September 23, 2004, <http://www.dw.de/german-far-right-aims-for-national-alliance/a-1336150-1>.
- Together with other NPD members, then-deputy head of the NPD in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Stefan Köster, beats a young woman during a demonstration.
He is convicted for the attack in 2006. Source: Lisa Erdmann, Christina Hebel, Björn Hengst, "Debatte über NPD-Verbot: Partei der Schläger," *Der Spiegel*, February 23, 2012, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/debatte-ueber-npd-verbot-partei-der-schlaeger-a-815695-2.html>.
- **March 1, 2003:** The German Constitutional Court announces its decision to stop proceedings to ban the NPD.
The court argues that it could not differentiate which of the NPD's problematic activities (which German institutions had raised in their applications to ban the party) had been initiated by the NPD itself and which ones government moles had initiated. Source: Joachim Wolf, "Die NPD Verbotsdebatte 2000-2006," *Bundeszentrale fuer politische Bildung*, November 8, 2006, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/rechtsextremismus/41472/die-npd-verbotsdebatte-2000-2006>; "Warum das NPD-Verbotsverfahren scheiterte," *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, May 17, 2010, <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/hintergrund-warum-das-npd-verbotsverfahren-scheiterte-1.827456>.
- - : During judicial proceedings, the German government has to admit to the existence of a large number of government moles and informants in the ranks of the NPD.
Source: Joachim Wolf, "Die NPD Verbotsdebatte 2000-2006," *Bundeszentrale fuer politische Bildung*, November 8, 2006, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/rechtsextremismus/41472/die-npd-verbotsdebatte-2000-2006>.
- **March 30, 2001:** The German Constitutional Court receives the applications of the German parliament and the Federal Council to open proceedings to ban the NPD.
Source: Joachim Wolf, "Die NPD Verbotsdebatte 2000-2006," *Bundeszentrale fuer politische Bildung*, November 8, 2006, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/rechtsextremismus/41472/die-npd-verbotsdebatte-2000-2006>.
- **March 29, 2001:** Presenting the annual report of Germany's domestic intelligence service, then-Interior Minister Otto Schilly highlights the NPD's aggressive tactics in opposing the German constitution. He outlines involvement in right-wing crimes by many NPD members and officials and the NPD's open confirmation of its cooperation with violent neo-Nazis. Source: Joachim Wolf, "Die NPD Verbotsdebatte 2000-2006," *Bundeszentrale fuer politische Bildung*, November 8, 2006, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/rechtsextremismus/41472/die-npd-verbotsdebatte-2000-2006>.
- **January 30, 2001:** The German Constitutional Court receives the German government's application to open judicial proceedings to ban the NPD.
Source: Joachim Wolf, "Die NPD Verbotsdebatte 2000-2006," *Bundeszentrale fuer politische Bildung*, November 8, 2006, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/rechtsextremismus/41472/die-npd-verbotsdebatte-2000-2006>.
- - : Several leading politicians from Germany's major political parties, including then-Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, speak in support of opening judicial proceedings to ban the NPD.
Source: Joachim Wolf, "Die NPD Verbotsdebatte 2000-2006," *Bundeszentrale fuer politische Bildung*, November 8, 2006, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/rechtsextremismus/41472/die-npd-verbotsdebatte-2000-2006>.
- - : Right-wing extremists attack a Turkish kebab shop.
Among them is Patrick Wieschke, a future member of the NPD's federal executive committee, who is sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison. Source: Birger Menke, "Neonazis und NPD: Unter Kameraden," *Der Spiegel*, November 23, 2011, <http://www.spiegel.de/panorama/justiz/neonazis-und-npd-unter-kameraden-a-799340.html>; "Personen," Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD), accessed November 29, 2014, <http://www.npd.de/html/3471/artikel/partei-vorstand/>.
- - : The German government is alarmed by the growing number of violent crimes with a potential right-wing extremist background following the murder of a man from Mozambique by neo-Nazis in June, a bomb attack on a group of Jewish immigrants from Russia in July, and an arson attack on a synagogue in October. Though the bomb attack against the group of Jewish immigrants was never solved and the arson attack was committed by two Arabs, at the time the events appear to confirm a worrying rise in the number of crimes with a potential far-right background. At the same time, the NPD, functioning as the political branch of the far right, appears to grow more confident. Source: Joachim Wolf, "Die NPD Verbotsdebatte 2000-2006," *Bundeszentrale fuer politische Bildung*, November 8, 2006, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/rechtsextremismus/41472/die-npd-verbotsdebatte-2000-2006>.
- **February 13, 1999:** A group of young right-wing extremists chase asylum-seeker Omar Ben Noui through the small town of Guben in Brandenburg.
In his panic, Noui kicks in a glass door, injures himself, and bleeds to death. One of the men involved in the pursuit is Alexander Bode, who is sentenced to two years in prison. During Bode's trial, he allegedly damages a memorial marker to Omar Ben Noui. Nine years later, Bode becomes an NPD candidate in a municipal election in Guben. Source: Sandra Dassler, "Guben fürchtet wieder um seinen Ruf," *Der Tagesspiegel*, September 11, 2008, <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/berlin/brandenburg/kommunalwahlen-guben-fuerchtet-wieder-um-seinen-ruf/1321874.html>.
- Udo Voigt takes over the NPD leadership.
While he does not explicitly abandon Deckert's thematic priorities, he distances himself from the traditional principle of anti-communism and instead advocates for the party to focus more on socio-economic themes, culminating in a call for a "national socialism." Voigt opens the party to militant, younger neo-Nazis, who have since risen in the

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party's ranks, and explicitly addresses East Germans. The party's membership subsequently grows. Sources: Armin Pfahl-Traughber, *Der "zweite Frühling" der NPD* (Berlin: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2008), 24, http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_14498-544-1-30.pdf; Torsten Oppelland, "Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands," Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, June 5, 2017, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/grundfragen/parteien-in-deutschland/kleinparteien/42205/npd>.

- **Former NPD deputy national chairman Günter Deckert becomes party leader.**
He tries to reposition the party by focusing on xenophobic issues and playing down the crimes of the Nazis. Deckert also lends support to Holocaust deniers and is later sentenced to prison. Under his leadership, the NPD loses a substantial amount of members (decreasing from 6,500 members in 1990 to just 3,500 members in 1996) and accumulates further debt. Sources: Armin Pfahl-Traughber, *Der "zweite Frühling" der NPD* (Berlin: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2008), 19, http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_14498-544-1-30.pdf; "Holocaust-Lüge: NPD-Mann muss in Haft," *merkur-online*, February 3, 2012, <http://www.merkur-online.de/aktuelles/politik/holocaust-luege-mpd-mann-muss-wieder-haft-1587354.html>.
- **January 5, 1976:** The first edition of the NPD party newspaper *Deutsche Stimme* (German Voice) is published.
Sources: Deutsche Stimme Verlags GmbH, last modified April 14, 2008, <http://www.netz-gegen-nazis.de/artikel/deutsche-stimme-verlags-gmbh>; "Verfassungsschutzbericht 2013," Bundesministerium des Inneren, accessed November 29, 2014, 91, <http://www.verfassungsschutz.de/embed/vsbericht-2013.pdf>.
- **- :** Poor election results usher in a period of increased infighting within the NPD, leading to the development of two main factions within the party.
The first faction favors illegal activities and reportedly forms the origin of violent neo-Nazi groups (*Kampftruppen*) operating outside the party, including the Action Front National Socialists (*Aktionsfront Nationaler Sozialisten* or ANS), the People's Socialist Movement of Germany (*Volkssozialistische Bewegung Deutschlands* or VSBD), the German Action Groups (*Deutsche Aktionsgruppen*), and the Military Sport Group Hoffmann (*Wehrsportgruppe Hoffmann*), all of which were reportedly involved in terrorist activities. A second faction dominated by intellectuals seeks to build on the ideas of the "New Nationalism" of the 1950s. Source: Richard Stoess, *Rechtsextremismus im vereinten Deutschland* (Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2000), 51-52.
- **November 21, 1971:** Party chairman Adolf von Thadden resigns and hands over the office to Martin Mußgnug, who will remain party chairman until 1991.
Source: "NPD: Raus aus dem Mief," *Spiegel*, November 29, 1971, <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-44914420.html>; "Die Geschichte der NPD," NPD, accessed March 29, 2019, <https://npd.de/geschichte-der-mpd/>.
- **November 11, 1970:** Following the formation of a strong center-right opposition to the new federal coalition government, popular support for the NPD diminishes.
In state elections in Bavaria, the NPD secures just 2.9 percent of the vote. Sources: Richard Stoess, *Rechtsextremismus im vereinten Deutschland* (Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2000), 51; "Landtagswahlen Bayern 1970," wahl.tagesschau.de, accessed November 29, 2014; <http://wahl.tagesschau.de/wahlen/1970-11-22-LT-DE-BY/>.
- **September 28, 1969:** The NPD fails to translate its recent municipal and state electoral successes into seats in the German parliament, securing only 4.3 percent of the vote in national elections.
(In Germany, parties are required to secure 5 percent of the vote in order to win seats in parliament.) Source: "Election to the 6th German Bundestag on 28 September 1969," The Federal Returning Officer, accessed November 29, 2014, http://www.bundeswahlleiter.de/en/bundestagswahlen/fruehere_bundestagswahlen/btw1969.html.
- **The NPD enjoys the support of 28,000 members.**
Between 1965 and 1969, the NPD secures a total of 61 seats in seven state parliaments as well as 600 electoral offices on the municipal and regional levels. Sources: "Die Geschichte der NPD," MDR, February 21, 2013, http://www.mdr.de/nachrichten/rechtsextremismus160_zc-e9a9d57e_zs-6c4417e7.html; Richard Stoess, *Rechtsextremismus im vereinten Deutschland* (Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2000), 51.
- **April 28, 1968:** The NPD wins an unprecedented 9.8 percent of the vote in state elections in Baden-Wuerttemberg.
Source: "Landtagswahlen Baden Wuerttemberg," wahl.tagesschau.de, last modified November 22, 2012, <http://www.wahlen-in-deutschland.de/blBawue.htm>.
- **The NPD wins 5.8 percent of the vote in state elections in Schleswig-Holstein, 6.9 percent in Rhineland-Palatinate, 7.0 percent in Lower Saxony, and 8.8 percent in Bremen.**
Source: Torsten Oppelland, "Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands," Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, June 5, 2017, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/grundfragen/parteien-in-deutschland/kleinparteien/42205/npd>.
- **November 11, 1967:** Party chairman Friedrich Thielen is overthrown and replaced by his deputy Adolf von Thadden, an informant for the British intelligence service, according to media reports in 2002.
Sources: Marianne Quoirin, "Der braune Schlapput," *Kölner Stadt Anzeiger*, March 14, 2002, <https://www.ksta.de/der-braune-schlapput-14380266>; Torsten Oppelland, "Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands," Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, June 5, 2017, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/grundfragen/parteien-in-deutschland/kleinparteien/42205/npd>; John Hooper, "Neo-Nazi leader 'was MI6 agent'," *Guardian*, August 12, 2002, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/aug/13/johnhooper>.
- **November 20, 1966:** In state elections in Bavaria, the NPD secures 7.4 percent of the vote.
Source: "Landtagswahlen Bayern 1966," wahl.tagesschau.de, accessed November 29, 2014, <http://wahl.tagesschau.de/wahlen/1966-11-20-LT-DE-BY/>.
- **November 6, 1966:** Fueled by an emerging economic downturn and a "grand coalition" government (coalition of the two major parties) that essentially eliminated an effective opposition, the NPD rides its growing appeal among voters to its first significant electoral showing at the state election in Hesse, winning 7.9 percent of the vote. Sources: Richard Stoess, *Rechtsextremismus im vereinten Deutschland* (Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2000), 50.; "Landtagswahlen Hessen 1966," wahl.tagesschau.de, accessed November 29, 2014, <http://wahl.tagesschau.de/wahlen/1966-11-06-LT-DE-HE/>.
- **September 19, 1965:** The NPD secures only 2 percent of the vote in federal parliamentary elections, and thus missed the entry into the German parliament.
Source: "Election to the 5th German Bundestag on 19 September 1965," The Federal Returning Officer, http://www.bundeswahlleiter.de/en/bundestagswahlen/fruehere_bundestagswahlen/btw1965.html.
- **November 28, 1964:** The NPD is founded in an attempt to coalesce fragmented far-right factions in Germany.

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Its first party chairman is Friedrich Thielen, an entrepreneur and former Christian Democrat, who wants to overcome the image of far-right parties as die-hards and "old Nazis." Sources: Richard Stoess, *Rechtsextremismus im vereinten Deutschland* (Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2000), 49; Torsten Oppelland, "Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands," *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, June 5, 2017, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/grundfragen/parteien-in-deutschland/kleinparteien/42205/npd>; „BONN / NPD: Wotans Wähler," *Spiegel*, April 4, 1966, <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-46266294.html>.

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Violent history:

- **August 26, 2018:** Two refugees fatally stab a German man in Chemnitz. In response to false rumors that the German man was defending a woman from sexual assault, right-wing protestors—including NPD party members—take to the streets, leading to violent clashes with the police.⁶⁰
- **August 2015:** During Chancellor Angela Merkel’s visit to a refugee center in Heidenau, near Dresden, anti-immigrant protests erupt. Several hundred neo-Nazis and members of the NPD throw stones and bottles at the police while yelling “Heil Hitler!” Head of NPD Saxony, Jens Baur, views the Heidenau protests as a “great success” for his party, claiming he and his men organized the protests and demonstrations against the recent influx of refugees.⁶¹
- **April 2015:** A building complex in Tröglitz meant to house approximately 40 individuals who are granted asylum is burned down. Media reports connect the incident to NPD anti-immigrant protests in Tröglitz a month prior.⁶²
- **August 30, 2014:** Former NPD candidate Steffen Richter threatens Katharina König, a member of the far-left party *Die Linke*, while she is campaigning. Richter references an earlier beating König had suffered by a group of right-wing extremists.⁶³
- **December 2010:** During municipal elections in the city of Trier, the local NPD head Safet Babic participates in an attack on a 21-year-old student who had ripped down NPD election posters. Babic is convicted and loses his appeals. Following his conviction, he is barred from serving on the city council.⁶⁴
- **August 2009:** NPD city council member Axel Thieme hits a student demonstrator in the face in Dortmund, smashing his glasses and injuring his eye. A court convicts Thieme in February 2011 for assault and orders him to pay a fine.⁶⁵
- **2004:** Together with other NPD members, then-deputy head of the NPD in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Stefan Koester, beats a young woman during a demonstration. He is convicted for the attack in 2006.⁶⁶
- **Summer 2000:** Right-wing extremists attack a Turkish kebab shop. Among them is Patrick Wieschke, a future member of the NPD’s federal executive committee, who is sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison.⁶⁷
- **February 13, 1999:** A group of young right-wing extremists chase asylum-seeker Omar Ben Noui through the small town of Guben in Brandenburg. In his panic, Noui kicks in a glass door, injures himself, and bleeds to death. One of the men involved in the pursuit is Alexander Bode, who is sentenced to two years in prison. During Bode’s trial, he allegedly damages a memorial marker to Omar Ben Noui. Nine years later, Bode becomes an NPD candidate in a municipal election in Guben.⁶⁸

⁶⁰ Katharina Meyer zu Eppendorf and Max Holscher, “Der Schauermarsch,” *Spiegel Online*, September 1, 2018, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/chemnitz-afd-pegida-und-pro-chemnitz-schliessen-sich-bei-demo-zusammen-a-1226122.html>.

⁶¹ Melissa Eddy, “German Leaders Seek to Ease Tensions Over Migrant Crisis,” *New York Times*, August 26, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/27/world/europe/heidenau-merkel-refugee-germany.html?_r=0; “Das Neonazi-Netz hinter den Flüchtlingsangriffen,” *Die Welt*, August 30, 2015, <http://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article145789205/Das-Neonazi-Netz-hinter-den-Fluechtlingsangriffen.html>.

⁶² “Asylum seekers’ accommodation set on fire in suspected far-right arson attack in Germany,” *Independent (London)*, April 4, 2015, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/asylum-seekers-accommodation-set-on-fire-in-suspected-far-right-arson-attack-in-germany-10156058.html>.

⁶³ Andres Speit, “Wir klären das wie in den 90ern,” *TAZ*, September 2, 2014, <http://www.taz.de/!145205/>.

⁶⁴ Lisa Erdmann, Christina Hebel, and Björn Hengst, “Debatte über NPD-Verbot: Partei der Schläger,” *Der Spiegel*, February 23, 2012, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/debatte-ueber-ncp-verbot-partei-der-schlaeger-a-815695-2.html>.

⁶⁵ Lisa Erdmann, Christina Hebel, and Björn Hengst, “Debatte über NPD-Verbot: Partei der Schläger,” *Der Spiegel*, February 23, 2012, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/debatte-ueber-ncp-verbot-partei-der-schlaeger-a-815695-2.html>.

⁶⁶ Lisa Erdmann, Christina Hebel, and Björn Hengst, “Debatte über NPD-Verbot: Partei der Schläger,” *Der Spiegel*, February 23, 2012, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/debatte-ueber-ncp-verbot-partei-der-schlaeger-a-815695-2.html>.

⁶⁷ Birger Menke, “Neonazis und NPD: Unter Kameraden,” *Der Spiegel*, November 23, 2011, <http://www.spiegel.de/panorama/justiz/neonazis-und-ncp-unter-kameraden-a-799340.html>.

⁶⁸ Sandra Dassler, “Guben fürchtet wieder um seinen Ruf,” *Der Tagesspiegel*, September 11, 2008, <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/berlin/brandenburg/kommunalwahlen-guben-fuerchtet-wieder-um-seinen-ruf/1321874.html>.

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Designations:

Designations by the U.S. Government:

None.

Designations by Foreign Governments and Organizations:

None.

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Associations:

Ties to extremist entities:

- **Alternative for Germany (*Alternative für Deutschland* or AfD)**

The NPD reportedly lost popular support and electoral votes due to the rapid rise of the right-wing nationalist AfD.⁶⁹ Nonetheless, in 2016, AfD politicians in the state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania offered to support and cooperate with the NPD if they both win seats in the subsequent state parliamentary elections.⁷⁰ According to the German newspaper *Zeit* in March 2018, some AfD parliamentarians have employed individuals with known far-right extremist and racist backgrounds, including supporters of the NPD and others.⁷¹ In August 2018, far-right protestors—including NPD and AfD party members as well as known neo-Nazis—took to the streets in response to a fatal stabbing attack of a German man by two refugees in Chemnitz.⁷²

- **Freedom Party of Austria (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* or FPÖ) (officially until 2010)**⁷³
- **National Rally (formerly National Front) (France; officially until 2013)**⁷⁴

As recently as August 2013, an official delegation of the National Front participated in a NPD meeting.⁷⁵

- [Jobbik](#)

Reports indicate both Jobbik and the NPD are interested in establishing links between the two groups. In February 2007, then NPD chairman Udo Voigt travelled to Budapest for an annual meeting of European neo-Nazis. In addition, in 2008, the NPD publication *Deutsche Stimme* published an interview with Jobbik's then-chairman Gábor Vona. The interview was conducted by Benedikt Frings, a former NPD candidate in the 2005 regional election in North Rhine-Westphalia. The NPD has said that it seeks to build “informal contacts” with Jobbik.⁷⁶

- [Hizb ut-Tahrir](#)

Hizb ut-Tahrir is an Islamist group which has been banned in Germany since 2003. In October 2002, leading members of the NPD, including then-chairman Udo Voigt and the party's former lawyer Horst Mahler, took part in a Hizb ut-Tahrir event at a Berlin university.⁷⁷

- **Alliance for Peace and Freedom (APF)**

In 2014, former NPD chairman and newly elected MEP Udo Voigt formed the European political party “Alliance for Peace and Freedom” (APF) together with former chairman of the British National Party Nick Griffin and leader of the Italian Forza Nuova Roberto Fiore. APF also built close ties with Hungary's ultranationalist party Jobbik and the Greek far-right party Golden Dawn. Overall, however, the attempt to advance European-wide cooperation among far-right political parties appeared to have been unsuccessful. In May 2018, the European Union adopted new legislation restricting the funding of European political parties and their think tanks in response to certain exploitative practices. Subsequently, in September, the APF and its affiliated think tank Europa Terra Nostra was officially deregistered by the European Union, leading to its defunding for 2019.⁷⁸

Ties to countries:

- **Russia**

NPD officials appear to be in contact with Russian President Vladimir Putin and his circle.⁷⁹ In 2012, the NPD chapter in Saxony-Anhalt stated in a publication, “While the West is getting increasingly tangled up in the web of Zionist wizards, Putin is leading his Russia boldly to new strength, freedom and independence. The German people can only dream of such political heroes at the moment.”⁸⁰ According to the NPD, “a mental and national rebirth of Europe can only take place on the pillars of a Russian-German friendship.”⁸¹ During the Ukraine crisis in 2014, the NPD has sided firmly with Russia, arguing that the problem was the European Union's actions, not Russian expansionism, and rejecting Ukrainian membership in NATO.⁸² In 2015, Russia's nationalist Rodina party invited politicians from several far-right political parties—including the NPD, Greece's Golden Dawn, and the British National Party—to discuss “traditional values” of family and Christianity.⁸³ In July 2017, MEP Udo Voigt criticized the recent extension of EU sanctions against Russia, calling it short-sighted, hypocritical, and self-sabotaging for Germany.⁸⁴ In March 2018, he congratulated Putin for his re-election, explaining that “the ones who want to work together with Russia today are right. Russia, not America, is the natural partner of the Europeans.”⁸⁵

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According to *Deutsche Welle*, in June 2020, a group of German far-right extremists participated in paramilitary training provided by Russian fight club, Rezerv/Partizan at a military facility on the outskirts of St. Petersburg. Partizan is the military training arm of the Russian Imperial Movement, a neo-Nazi, monarchist, white supremacist group. Among the participants are members of the Young Nationalists, the youth wing of the NPD.⁸⁶

- **Iran**

In the past, the NPD has sought to demonstrate its solidarity with the Islamic Republic of Iran and particularly former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.⁸⁷ Thus, NPD officials hoped for Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad “as a potential ally for a new Germany.”⁸⁸ The NPD youth organization congratulated Ahmadinejad on his re-election: They were happy that Ahmadinejad did not shun “the confrontation with the capitalist world power USA and its Zionist pedants Israel. [...] His fearless standing up for the disenfranchised and oppressed Palestinians and for the freedom of research in contemporary history earned him the hatred of the Zionist rulers of Israel and the U.S.”⁸⁹ One example of this “freedom of research” that the NPD youth mentioned was a Holocaust denial conference that the Iranian leadership held in December 2006. During the 2006 football world championship in Germany, the NPD staged several protests to demonstrate its solidarity with Iran. The NPD’s then-chair, Udo Voigt, even wrote on the party website that “Germany and the world need a visit of the Iranian head of state.”⁹⁰ During an interview with Iranian journalists in 2010, Voigt downplayed the Holocaust, saying, “The six million cannot be true. No more than 340,000 could have died in Auschwitz. The Jews always say that because one Jew died and because he is a Jew, it is a crime. But there is a difference if we pay for 6 million or for 340,000.”⁹¹ In January 2018, Voigt, as a Member of European Parliament, advocated during a parliamentary session to lift all sanctions against Iran. Although the European Council previously lifted nuclear-related economic and financial sanctions against Iran, restrictive measures related to violations of human rights remained in force. Voigt criticized the lack of sanctions against the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Israel, who he perceived have violated human rights and committed war crimes.⁹² In March 2019, a delegation of far-right extremist European politicians—including Voigt—met with Hezbollah’s foreign affairs head Ammar Al-Moussawi in Beirut to “express support for the Lebanese terrorist organization’s fight against the Jewish state,” according to the *Jerusalem Post*.⁹³

Ties to other groups:

The NPD is believed to have a number of connections to neo-Nazi groups. In November 2011, the anti-fascist blog Gamma published data from an online chat forum called “Hard to Hate,” which was allegedly used by some leading neo-Nazis. The data was provided by a former member of the forum and dates back to 2009. In the forum, one member, an alleged former NPD candidate during local government elections in 2009, stated that the NPD is nothing more than “a pragmatic tool for our political work.”⁹⁴ At a different point, the member declared that the NPD youth organization should “establish itself as a closed ideological unit to develop leaders and personalities based on the [national socialist] model.”⁹⁵ The 2013 intelligence report of the Interior Ministry of the state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania appeared to echo these assertions, stating that “the neo-Nazi squad appears to pursue the goal of using the NPD as a vehicle for their own political ambitions.”⁹⁶

⁶⁹ Torsten Oppeland, “Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands,” Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, June 5, 2017, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/grundfragen/parteien-in-deutschland/kleinparteien/42205/npd>.

⁷⁰ Dietmar Neuerer, “Die Maske ist gefallen, Nazis helfen Nazis,” *Handelsblatt*, August 31, 2016, <https://www.handelsblatt.com/politik/deutschland/landtagswahlen-2016/afd-fuer-kooperation-mit-mpd-die-maske-ist-gefallen-nazis-helfen-nazis/14477778-all.html>.

⁷¹ Kai Biermann, et.al, “AfD-Abgeordnete beschäftigen Rechtsextreme und Verfassungsfeinde,” *Zeit Online*, March 21, 2018, <https://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2018-03/afd-bundestag-mitarbeiter-rechtsextreme-identitaere-bewegung>.

⁷² Katharina Meyer zu Eppendorf and Max Holscher, “Der Schauermarsch,” *Spiegel Online*, September 1, 2018, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/chemnitz-afd-pegida-und-pro-chemnitz-schliessen-sich-bei-demo-zusammen-a-1226122.html>.

⁷³ Heribert Schiedel, *Extreme Rechte in Europa* (Wien: Edition Steinbauer, 2011), p. 93-95.

⁷⁴ “Front National zu Gast auf NPD-Veranstaltung,” *NRW rechtsaußen*, February 11, 2013, <http://nrwrex.wordpress.com/2013/02/11/sbe-front-national-zu-gast-auf-mpd-veranstaltung/>.

⁷⁵ See “‘Deutschland ist kein souveräner Staat!’ ‘Brainstorming’ vor dem Wahlkampf-Endspurt: Inspirierende NPD-Sommeruniversität im Saarland,” in *Deutsche Stimme* October 2013, 12.

⁷⁶ Jannis Bruehl, “Den Westen fest im Blick,” *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, May 17, 2010, <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/neonazis-in-ungarn-und-die-mpd-den-westen-fest-im-blick-1.112091>.

⁷⁷ Andreas Ulrich, “Dolch im Herzen,” *Der Spiegel*, 47/2002, November 18, 2002, <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-25718128.html>.

⁷⁸ Ralf Fischer, “Die Internationalsoziale,” *jungle.world*, April 5, 2018, <https://jungle.world/index.php/artikel/2018/14/die-internationalsoziale>; Nikolaj Nielsen, “Ultra-right parties in EU funding axe,” *EU Observer*, September 28, 2018, <https://euobserver.com/political/142977>; Authority for European political parties and European political foundations, “Implementation of Regulation 2018/673 amending Regulation No°1141/2014,” September 27, 2018, http://www.epgencms.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/upload/fc24ff5d-b483-4455-a57c-3ecf44819d3b/2018_09_27_PRESS_RELEASE_IMPLEMENTATION_OF_REFORM.pdf.

⁷⁹ Heinrich Vogel, “Sehnsucht nach einfachen Antworten und Führern,” *Focus Online*, August 25, 2014, http://www.focus.de/politik/experten/vogel/putin-wir-vertrauen-dir-sehnsucht-nach-einfachen-antworten-und-fuehrern_id_4084169.html.

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- 80 Sebastian Hesse-Kastein, "Warum die NPD in Wladimir Putin ein Vorbild gefunden hat," MDR Nachrichten, April 15, 2014, https://web.archive.org/web/20140419204644/http://www.mdr.de/nachrichten/putin-ndp100_zc-e9a9d57e_zs-6c4417e7.html.
- 81 Richard Herzinger, "In Europa bilden sich üble Bündnisse für Putin," *Die Welt*, May 7, 2014, <http://www.welt.de/debatte/kommentare/article127739762/In-Europa-bilden-sich-ueble-Buendnisse-fuer-Putin.html>.
- 82 Sebastian Hesse-Kastein, "Warum die NPD in Wladimir Putin ein Vorbild gefunden hat," MDR Nachrichten, April 15, 2014, https://web.archive.org/web/20140419204644/http://www.mdr.de/nachrichten/putin-ndp100_zc-e9a9d57e_zs-6c4417e7.html.
- 83 "NPD auf Einladung von Putin-Freunden in St. Petersburg," *Der Tagesspiegel*, March 22, 2015, <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/rechtsextremisten-ndp-auf-einladung-von-putin-freunden-in-st-petersburg/11540858.html>.
- 84 Karl Richter, "'Kurzsichtige Rußland-Sanktionen'," NPD, July 4, 2017, <https://npd.de/2017/07/kurz-sichtige-russland-sanktionen/>.
- 85 Karl Richter, "Congratulations, Vladimir Vladimirovich!," March 19, 2018, <https://npd.de/2018/03/congratulations-vladimir-vladimirovich/?lang=en>.
- 86 Hans Pfeifer, Mikhail Bushuev, Vladimir Esipov, "Why are German neo-Nazis training in Russia?," *Deutsche Welle*, June 6, 2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/why-are-german-neo-nazis-training-in-russia/a-53702613>.
- 87 See Anton Maegerle, "Die iranische Rechtsextremismus-Connection," in *Vierteljahresheft Tribüne: Zeitschrift zum Verständnis des Judentums*, 2nd Quarter 2006, http://www.doew.at/cms/download/42gbn/re_maegerle_iran_re.pdf; Anton Maegerle, "Solidarität mit Ahmadinedschad," in *Tribüne: Zeitschrift zum Verständnis des Judentums*, 3rd Quarter 2009, http://www.doew.at/cms/download/52kb7/re_maegerle_iran.pdf.
- 88 Stephan Grigat, "Die neue Achse Budapest-Teheran," *Unique*, April 2012, <http://www.univie.ac.at/unique/uniquecms/?p=1310>.
- 89 Heribert Schiedel, "Heiliger Hass: Zur rechtsextrem-iranischen Freundschaft," in *Der Iran im Weltsystem. Bündnisse des Regimes und Perspektiven der Freiheitsbewegung*, ed. Stephan Grigat and Simone Dinah Hartmann (Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 2010).
- 90 Anna Bilger, "Rechtsextremismus: NPD unter iranischer Flagge," *Der Spiegel*, June 19, 2006, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/rechtsextremismus-ndp-unter-iranischer-flagge-a-422195.html>.
- 91 "NPD-Chef verharmlost Holocaust," *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, May 17, 2010, <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/ndp-und-iran-ndp-chef-verharmlost-holocaust-1.357038>.
- 92 Karl Richter, "Udo Voigt: 'The NPD is on the side of Iran!'," NPD, January 17, 2018, <https://npd.de/2018/01/udo-voigt-the-ndp-is-on-the-side-of-iran/?lang=en>.
- 93 Benjamin Weinthal, "German Neo-Nazi Politician Meets Hezbollah, Supports Terror Against Israel," *Jerusalem Post*, March 24, 2019, <https://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/German-leader-meets-with-Hezbollah-supports-terrorism-against-Israel-584259>.
- 94 Birger Menke, "Neonazis und NPD: Unter Kameraden," *Der Spiegel*, November 23, 2011, <http://www.spiegel.de/panorama/justiz/neonazis-und-ndp-unter-kameraden-a-799340.html>.
- 95 Birger Menke, "Neonazis und NPD: Unter Kameraden," *Der Spiegel*, November 23, 2011, <http://www.spiegel.de/panorama/justiz/neonazis-und-ndp-unter-kameraden-a-799340.html>.
- 96 Verfassungsschutzbericht 2013," Ministerium fuer Inneres und Sport, 54, http://www.verfassungsschutz-mv.de/cms2/Verfassungsschutz_prod/Verfassungsschutz/content_downloads/Verfassungsschutzberichte/Verfassungsschutzbericht_2013.pdf.

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Media Coverage:

Analysis of the Group

Almost since its inception in the 1960s, the NPD was widely discussed in the German and at times international media. Described by the German Intelligence service as “racist, anti-Semitic and revisionist” and staunchly opposed by the German political establishment, media reports of the party have been quick to point out its xenophobic and anti-democratic character.⁹⁷ Given the extreme views propagated by the party and against the backdrop of Germany’s World War II legacy, the NPD’s electoral success has been received by the media with shock and consternation. While the NPD’s views and actions were universally rejected by media outlets, opinion varied on the most effective way to deal with the challenge the party posed to Germany’s young democracy. Given the current collapse of approval for the NPD among its former supporters and the financial difficulties the party faces, recent media reports have concluded that the NPD has failed to modernize and is likely to become increasingly more extreme.⁹⁸

The discovery in 2011 of the neo-Nazi terrorist cell National Socialist Underground (*Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund* or NSU), which murdered at least 10 people, mostly of Turkish origin, between 2000 and 2007, sent shockwaves through the German political system. The failure of German police and intelligence agencies to uncover the activities of the group for so long, and the scale of the group’s crimes, led to a new debate on the threat of right-wing extremism in Germany. During the investigation into the NSU’s activities, an overlap between NSU members and the NPD were uncovered. While direct links between the NSU and NPD have been hard to prove, newspapers pointed to the ideological role that the NPD had played in establishing an environment where violent right-wing extremist ideas could flourish. The left-wing *TAZ* argued in this context that “The NSU could only survive 14 years in the underground because they could rely on a legal operating network...” and held the NPD responsible for a “mental brutalization.”⁹⁹

Attempts by Germany’s constitutional bodies to ban the NPD have been widely discussed in the press. Some viewed the second attempt by the Federal Council to ban the party as an insufficient way to deal with the challenges that the NPD poses. The conservative *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* argued that “[A] ban, which can only target the organization and not the views that are associated with it, will ultimately strengthen the forces, which view the current system as sordid and un-democratic.”¹⁰⁰ The newspaper went on to ask, “[W]here is the debate around [the issue of xenophobia]? Why does no one dare to tell the sad supporters of raciology that they are not at all nationally disposed (...)?”¹⁰¹ The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ), on the other hand, strongly supports banning the party, arguing that “the NPD (...) is anti-constitutional to its bones because it believes in an ethnically defined concept of humanity, which denies immigrants fundamental human rights.”¹⁰² While the SZ does not view the NPD as a direct threat to Germany’s democracy, it argues that the party should be banned “because the lessons from the Hitler regime include a firm defence of the dignity of human beings.”¹⁰³

In January 2017, the Federal Constitutional Court rejected the proposed ban on the NPD due to the party’s lack of political weight to pose an actual threat to Germany’s democratic system. However, the court noted that the NPD resembles the Nazi party and that its objectives were unconstitutional.¹⁰⁴ The NPD criticized the ruling but did not alter its ideological positions and, instead, reaffirmed its nationalist stance.¹⁰⁵

Although the NPD has not changed its ideological core values, the party has tried to rebrand and improve its image since Frank Franz assumed the chairmanship in 2014. Instead of combat boots, 88 tattoos, and t-shirts carrying Germanic deities, the NPD alongside other far-right groups have tried to appeal to younger generations by being less overtly aggressive. As chairman, Franz mixes pop culture with nationalism on social media. He is often photographed wearing trendy tailored suits and his style aesthetics serve to attract young people in the hipster scene.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁷ Michelle Martin, “German party accused of neo-Nazi traits set for EU parliament,” Reuters, May 21, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/21/us-eu-election-germany-neonazis-idUSBREA4K0DY20140521>.

⁹⁸ Frank Jansen, “Verfassungsschutz: ‘NPD wird eng mit Neonazis kooperieren,’” *Der Tagesspiegel*, September 15, 2014,

<http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/rechtsextreme-nach-den-wahlen-verfassungsschutz-npd-wird-eng-mit-neonazis-kooperieren/10703248.html>.

⁹⁹ Andreas Fanizadeh, “Der Ober- und Untergrund,” *taz.de*, November 19, 2011, <http://www.taz.de/!82179/>.

¹⁰⁰ Reinhard Mueller, “Stumpfe Waffe,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, December 3, 2013, <http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/inland/npd-verbot-stumpfe-waffe-12693531.html>.

¹⁰¹ Reinhard Mueller, “Stumpfe Waffe,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, December 3, 2013, <http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/inland/npd-verbot-stumpfe-waffe-12693531.html>.

¹⁰² Wolfgang Janisch, “Verfassungsfeindlich bis in die Knochen,” *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, December 2, 2013, <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/npd-verbotsverfahren-verfassungsfeindlich-bis-in-die-knochen-1.1833652>.

¹⁰³ Wolfgang Janisch, “Verfassungsfeindlich bis in die Knochen,” *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, December 2, 2013, <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/npd-verbotsverfahren-verfassungsfeindlich-bis-in-die-knochen-1.1833652>.

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¹⁰⁴ “Germany’s top court rules against ban on far-right NDP,” Guardian, January 17, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/17/germany-s-top-court-rules-against-ban-on-far-right-ndp>; Ben Knight “A guide to Germany’s far-right groups,” Deutsche Welle, June 17, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/en/a-guide-to-germanys-far-right-groups/a-39124629>.

¹⁰⁵ “Brief summary, 2017 Report on the Protection of the Constitution, Facts and Trends,” Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, accessed April 1, 2019, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/embed/annual-report-2017-summary.pdf>.

¹⁰⁶ Elizabeth Schumacher, “The ‘Nipsters’: NPD and neo-Nazis change their style,” Deutsche Welle, December 8, 2015, <https://www.dw.com/en/the-nipsters-ndp-and-neo-nazis-change-their-style/a-18902369>; Jan Karon, “Hashtags, Memes und Selfies – Wie der NPD-Chef auf Instagram um Follower buhlt,” Vice, September 25, 2015, <https://www.vice.com/de/article/qbmmjp/wie-der-ndp-chef-auf-instagram-nach-followern-buhlt-frank-franz-308>.

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Rhetoric:

NPD page on Facebook, December 12, 2017

In response to a fatal stabbing attack of a 15-year old German girl by her asylum-seeking ex-boyfriend:

“The ruling pro-immigration fanatics have opened the doors for killers and other criminals to Germany: the Afghan murderer of the 15-year-old German girl entered the country as an underage unaccompanied pseudo-refugee!”¹⁰⁷

NPD page on Facebook, December 12, 2017

In response to a fatal stabbing attack of a 15-year old German girl by her asylum-seeking ex-boyfriend:

“More and more German girls and women become victims of crimigrants [a compound word of criminals and immigrants] with whom they previously had relationships. Stay away from those uncultured psychos, who have zero experience with liberal women...”¹⁰⁸

Udo Voigt, NPD Member of European Parliament, 2014

“We want to make sure that even in 50 years' time an Italian, a Frenchman, an Englishman, an Irishman and a German are still recognizable as European and cannot be mistaken for Ghanaians or Chinese.”¹⁰⁹

Udo Voigt, NPD Member of European Parliament, 2014

“We say Europe is the continent of white people and it should remain that way.”¹¹⁰

NPD slogan, European parliamentary election, 2014

“Money for granny instead of Sinti and Roma.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ “Verfassungsschutzbericht 2017,” Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, July 24, 2018, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/download/vsbericht-2017.pdf>.

¹⁰⁸ “Verfassungsschutzbericht 2017,” Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, July 24, 2018, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/download/vsbericht-2017.pdf>.

¹⁰⁹ Michelle Martin, “German party accused of neo-Nazi traits set for EU parliament,” *Reuters*, May 21, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/21/us-eu-election-germany-neonazis-idUSBREA4K0DY20140521>.

¹¹⁰ Michelle Martin, “German party accused of neo-Nazi traits set for EU parliament,” *Reuters*, May 21, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/21/us-eu-election-germany-neonazis-idUSBREA4K0DY20140521>.

¹¹¹ Michelle Martin, “German party accused of neo-Nazi traits set for EU parliament”, *Reuters*, May 21, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/21/us-eu-election-germany-neonazis-idUSBREA4K0DY20140521>