

VERFASSUNGSSCHUTZ (“DEFENCE OF THE CONSTITUTION”) IN BRANDENBURG

The enemies of open societies enjoy the freedom and the opportunities of the system they seek to destroy. They enjoy the freedoms of speech, association and assembly. They also enjoy the right to vote. They make use of these freedoms and yet seek to destroy them. Be they racist, Islamist zealots or self declared “liberators of the people” they are all against the basic principles of an open society.

The German history of the last century has taught us two lessons about anti-democratic political systems. This is why the open society in Germany is organised in such a manner so that it is always able to defend itself, a concept that is described by the German word “wehrhaft”.

The “wehrhafte Demokratie” (alert / ready for action democracy) is an integral part of the German political system, as are the concepts of the welfare state, the federal state and the rule of law. “Wehrhafte Demokratie” means that the state not only guarantees democratic freedoms to the enemies of democracy, but that it can also take them away once basic principles have been violated.

The Verfassungsschutz (VS, Defence of the Constitution) is the German interior intelligence service and, as such, part of the “Wehrhafte Demokratie” system. Historically, it used to be part of the policing system in Germany. However, particularly because of the experience with the Gestapo during the Third Reich, it has now been divided.

The powers of the police are on one side, and the intelligence services on the other. Verfassungsschutz is now purely an information service with no policing powers at all.

Like the Police, Verfassungsschutz is part of the federal system. This means that both are managed by the individual Länder (provinces), and not by the central government in Berlin. Therefore, the Verfassungsschutz Brandenburg is only one of 16 Verfassungsschutz authorities in Germany.

The cooperation between the individual authorities and the collaboration with other intelligence services is coordinated by the Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BfV, Federal authority of the Defence of the Constitution) in Cologne.

What and who is under Verfassungsschutz-surveillance?

According to the Brandenburg Verfassungsschutz-Act, the agency has the duty to gather information about structures, which have the aim of destroying the liberal and democratic order of open society in Germany. Particularly “when they pursue their aim with violent means or when they show an aggressive attitude” against some of the principles of a democratic society, they are likely to become subject to Verfassungsschutz-surveillance (§ 4, 2).

These principles have been laid out in two rulings of the federal constitutional court in 1952 and 1956. The court at that time had to settle legal boundaries by distinguishing between what is a democratic or an anti-democratic political standpoint. According to these rulings, the following principles are not to be called into question or be removed by a political party or movement

- Human rights
- The right of the people to elect their representatives
- The binding of all authority to the law
- The right to form and execute a parliamentary opposition
- The possibility of relieving a government of its duties
- The independence of legal courts
- The exclusion of tyranny and despotism.

Structures which work against one or many of these principles are described as being “extremist”. Extremist groups are subject to Verfassungsschutz surveillance.

The duties of the Verfassungsschutz

According to the Brandenburg Verfassungsschutz Act it is the agency’s duty to inform “the government of the Land as much as other responsible authorities about threats to the liberal and democratic order, the continued existence and the safety of the Federation and the Länder” (§ 1, 1). The information handed over is to help, for example, the police forces to proceed actively against those threats.

In addition, the agency is responsible for assisting with security clearance checks of personal granted access, in the public interest, to classified information or of persons actually employed in, or recruited for, security-sensitive posts within essential civil or military establishments.

Another important duty of the Verfassungsschutz – the giving of information to the public about extremist movements – is put down in § 5 of the Brandenburg Verfassungsschutz Act. The agency follows this duty with the publication of this annual report. But there are more public relations activities carried out by the Verfassungsschutz Brandenburg which should be mentioned. On average, an employee of the agency will be working somewhere in Brandenburg twice a week, teaching in schools or universities, participating in open discussions or giving talks. There is also a Verfassungsschutz web-site (www.verfassungsschutz-brandenburg.de) and a series of small publications on a number of issues.

Each citizen also has the right to be informed as to whether information has been gathered about her or him by the agency. According to § 12 of the Brandenburg Verfassungsschutz Act, this information has to be given upon request.

Procuring and Evaluating Information

The Verfassungsschutz primarily gathers the information needed for fulfilling its task from publicly accessible sources. Where this is not possible or effective, they may, within the limits of clearly defined legal powers and in accordance with the principle of proportionality, use intelligence methods for covert information gathering. These resources include informants, surveillance, video and audio recordings, and interception of correspondence, mail and telecommunications.

Supervision of the Verfassungsschutz

The activities of the Verfassungsschutz Brandenburg are subject to supervision by the Brandenburg government and the Brandenburg parliament. The “Parlamentarische Kontrollkommission” (PKK, Parliamentary Control Commission) established for this purpose is regularly provided with comprehensive information on the general activities of the Verfassungsschutz. Upon request, this body must be also permitted to inspect records and files.

Different factions of the Brandenburg Parliament appoint the independent G10-Commission which, always in advance of any such operation, will consider the permissibility and necessity of restrictions of the privacy of correspondence, post and telecommunications in accordance with Article 10 of the Grundgesetz (Basic Law, i.e. the constitution).

The Brandenburg Commissioner for Data Protection has ample rights for controlling the administration of personal data by the Verfassungsschutz.

The structure of the Verfassungsschutz in Brandenburg

The Verfassungsschutz Brandenburg is an integral part of the administration of the Ministry of Interior (Section V), which is structured as follows:

Department 1	Legal issues, Data Protection, Technical issues, Security
Department 2	„Verfassungsschutz by means of information“, Public Relations
Department 3	Observation
Department 4	Procuring of Information
Department 5	Analysis and Distribution of Information
Department 6	Counter-Intelligence, Security Clearance Checks

Personnel costs total 4.910.000 Euros. Another 1.154.000 Euros for non-personnel-related funds were at the Verfassungsschutz's disposal in 2004.

Extremism in Brandenburg

Violence, particularly when its political intention is obvious, is an indicator of the potential behind extremist ideologies. The following figures have not been gathered by the Verfassungsschutz but by the Brandenburg police. However, as they give an idea of how extremist potential within the Land, they are reproduced here. The first thing that strikes the reader of the police statistics on “politically motivated criminality” is the enormous amount of right-wing extremist crime in comparison to other forms of extremism. 1.046 right-wing extremist offences were registered in 2004 (2003: 982) whereas only 56 were recorded from left-wing extremists (2003: 39) and none by foreigners. But a closer look shows that 722 of these right-wing extremist offences were propaganda offences (2003: 669). Still, a total of 105 acts of violence committed by right-wing extremists (2003: 87) shows, when compared to 22 acts of violence by left-wing extremists (2003: 14), that Brandenburg’s main problem remains right-wing extremism.

Right-wing extremist following ¹

	Bundesrepublik Deutschland		Land Brandenburg 2003	
	2003	2004	2004	
Subculture-oriented, violence-prone right-wing extremist ²	10.000	10.000	560	580
Neo-Nazis ³	3.000	3.800	220	300
Political Parties				
NPD	5.000	5.300	180	130
DVU	11.500	11.000	230	230
REP ⁴	8.000	7.500	50	50
Other right-wing extremist organisations	4.600	4.300	75	50
Total (after deducting multiple memberships)	41.500	40.700	1.265	1.290

¹ Some of the figures have been estimated and rounded off

² Most of the subculture-oriented and other violent right-wing extremists (mainly skinheads) are not organised in groups. The statistics list not only those with records as suspects or perpetrators, but also those right-wing extremists presumed to be prepared to use violence on the basis of pertinent and persistent indicators.

³ After subtracting multiple membership of groups within the Neo-Nazi milieu. This figure includes only those Neo-Nazi groups and those „Kameradschaften“ (comradeships) that demonstrate a certain degree of structure and permanence.

⁴ Not all REP members can be assumed to pursue or support right-wing extremist aims.

Left-wing extremist following

	Bundesrepublik Deutschland		Land Brandenburg	
	2003	2004	2003	2004
Violence-prone left-wing extremists ("Autonome")	5.400	5.000	350	330
Anarchists	550	500	Individuals	
Political Parties				
DKP	4.700	4.500	100	130
KPD	200	200	15	15
MLPD	2.000	2.000	40	25
Other left-wing extremist organisation	18.850	19.000	210	205
Total (after deducting multiple memberships)	31.300	30.800	670	660

Extremist activities of foreigners

	Bundesrepublik Deutschland		Land Brandenburg	
	2003	2004	2003	2004
Islamists	30.950	31.800	50	50
Thereof IGMG	26.500	26.500	Individuals	
Left-wing extremists ¹	17.470	17.290	110	110
Thereof Kongra-Gel	11.500	11.500	90	90
Nationalists	8.880	8.430	30	30
Total	57.300	57.520	190	190

¹ Banned organisations are also counted here

RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM

Right-wing extremists are self-declared enemies of the liberal and democratic order. They stand for a racist or nationalist concept of state and law and are thus opposed to the idea of human rights and Democracy. Right-wing extremists might not appear in homogenous forms, but the following principles form a good, general classification.

Ethnic or national identity is of principal importance to right-wing extremists. Other values are subordinate to these ideas. This is why right-wing extremists are against the ideas of equality for all and equal rights.

Their political thought also consists of anti-semitism and xenophobia. They want to expel Jews and foreigners from Germany because they are seen as alien to German culture and identity. This idea pushes them towards breaking German law through inciting people to hatred. Violence against minorities is often founded on this principle.

Right-wing extremists wish a government to be uncontrollably powerful. According to them, dictatorship is preferable to the balance of power typical within a democracy.

Right-wing extremists are revisionists. They claim that during the Second World War no war crimes took place and that the Holocaust is an invention of the enemies of the German nation. They deny and distort historical facts and instead prefer myths and tales of conspiracies.

Right-wing extremism has different social forms. According to their degree of organisation four different groupings can be identified

- Subculture-oriented and other violence-prone right-wing extremists
- Neo National Socialists (Neo-Nazis)
- Members of political parties
- Members of intellectual circles.

Right-wing extremism has become a form of youth culture in some parts of Brandenburg. Therefore, the Subculture-oriented right-wing extremism is the most visible kind in Brandenburg. This does not imply that right-wing extremism can be looked at as a folly of youth that will pass with its followers growing older and wiser. On the contrary, Right-wing extremism is a challenge to the democratic development of individuals.

Subculture-oriented and other violence-prone right-wing extremists

When talking about Subculture-oriented and other violence-prone right-wing extremists one implies, in most cases, youths and young adults. They are often peer groups in the first place, and their right-wing extremism is subordinate to that. They meet in public places such as supermarkets, petrol-stations or bus-stops, and they enjoy “hanging out” with their friends. Sub-cultural codes like particular items of clothing, certain corporate brands and music play an important role in the lives of subculture-oriented and other violence-prone right-wing extremists. These codes are points of orientation for the youths, which help to distinguish “outsiders” from “insiders”. It is usually music that facilitates the initiation of (in most cases) young men to right-wing extremists ideology.

When Subculture-oriented and other violence-prone right-wing extremists use Nazi accessories like medals or parts of uniforms, they most often do so for fashion reasons. They rarely are real Neo-Nazis when the term is understood to mean a political nostalgia for the Third Reich. It can in fact be said that subculture-oriented and other violence-prone right-wing extremists lack a political vision of a “different” society and are often unable to produce a concept of how society should be organised according to their views. This lack of intellectual seriousness and thought is paralleled by almost unforeseeable outbursts of violence. About 70% of the violent acts motivated by right-wing extremism are spontaneous and come out of the Subculture-oriented and other violence-prone fields.

Structures of right-wing extremist youth culture

Subculture-oriented right-wing youth groups can be found in Angermünde, Belzig, Bernau, Cottbus, Eberswalde, Frankfurt (Oder), Oranienburg, Perleberg, Potsdam, Prenzlau, Pritzwalk, Rathenow, Schwedt, Templin and Wittstock. Even though the skinhead dominates the public picture of a subculture-oriented right-wing extremist, members of these groups often look very much like their non-political peers. Nevertheless also they follow a certain dress-code which is usually inspired by certain fashion brands like Lonsdale, Consdaple, Fred Perry or Thor Steinar.

The latter is a relatively new brand from Königs-Wusterhausen, Brandenburg. Thor Steinar's logo is made out of runic characters and caused much debate during 2004. With a closer look the logo appears to be made out of two sig-runes - the emblem of the SS during the Third Reich. After the Second World War, Hitler's National Socialist Party (NSDAP) along with all of its sub-organisations, was banned by the allies.



Poster announcing a concert on September 4th 2004
in Belgium in memory of B&H-Founder
Ian Stuart Donaldson

Therefore, using the swastika (the NSDAP-party-logo) is as much forbidden as the use of the double sig-rune. The owners of Thor Steinar argued that their logo stood for a tyr- and a sig-rune and were to be read as the first letters of the brand's name. The county court of Neuruppin nevertheless judged differently and banned the logo in August 2004.

The rise of illegal propaganda activities in the last year is also due to this judgement. The Thor Steinar logo has at least once been used as a political statement by an unknown person who sprayed it as a graffiti against an anti-fascist monument in Hennigsdorf. The example of Thor Steinar shows how political ideas and fashion come together in some right-wing extremist youth cultures. There are hardly any organisational structures to be found. The groups, which usually have short life-spans, nevertheless bear dramatic sounding names like "National Rebels", who were to be found in Schwedt. These "National Rebels" unsuccessfully tried to burn down a clubhouse used by left-wing youths in Schwedt in October 2004.

Some of the subculture-oriented right-wing extremists are also skinheads. Apart from a completely shaven head, which explains the name of this stream within the Brandenburg youth culture, skinheads can be recognised by their dress-code (worker's boots, blue jeans with braces etc.) and their loud and aggressive music.

Like most European youth cultures, skinheads first appeared in Britain in the 1960s. Whereas the look was soon defined and made imitable, the political orientation of skinheads underwent some changes. First, skinheads understood themselves to be anti-establishment and pro-proletarian, which made it plausible for them to align with the political left. Skinhead music was very much influenced by reggae and ska, and was developed within working class areas of industrial cities with high immigration. When we talk about skinheads nowadays, we mean a xenophobic branch of this youth culture that prefers a specific form of rockmusic to a more multicultural sound.

Skinhead organisations are very much like cliques, and only a few of the skinheads who live in Brandenburg are formally organised. Some, like "Blood & Honour", which was founded in England in 1987, are followers of the "White Power" ideology - according to which the "white master-race" is under attack. "Blood & Honour" produced a 25-point programme which in parts looks like the 25-point programme Adolf Hitler gave the National Socialist Worker's Party (NSDAP) in 1920. Since 1994 there have been sections of "Blood & Honour" in Germany. In 2000, the organisation was banned by the Federal Ministry of the Interior. The use of the letters "B&H" nonetheless still form part of the secret codes which are common amongst skinheads.

Activities

Music is often the first contact between youths and right-wing extremist ideology. Being a member of a band is, in some parts of Brandenburg, the first semi-political association young people get to join. Some of these bands, particularly from the south of the Land, have achieved some fame within the scene. “Confident of Victory” and “Sturm & Drang”, for example, come from Spremberg, with “Frontalkraft” originating in Cottbus and “Kontra” from Eisenhüttenstadt.

Apart from being a political happening, skinhead concerts are also financially attractive to their organisers. In order to escape the likely banning of concerts, they are often organised in a secretive, conspiratorial manner. Nevertheless, organising a skinhead-concert in Brandenburg has proved to be rather difficult. Whereas the number of skinhead concerts increased in Germany during 2004, it stagnated in Brandenburg. Only eight concerts are known to have taken place.

The importance of music for the political development of youths is maybe best illustrated by “Projekt Schulhof” (project schoolyard), which was financed by about 50 different interest groups like right-wing extremist parties and entrepreneurs in the skinhead music business. The idea was to produce 50.000 CDs containing mainly skinhead music but with other styles as well, in order to promote right-wing extremist ideology – as the name of the project suggests – on German schoolyards. “Frontalkraft” from Brandenburg is one of the 19 bands who appear on this compilation. The introduction to the compilation is particularly interesting, as it demonstrates how the editors of the CD have tried to bind young people emotionally to their ideological convictions. It says for example:

“Everyone who looks around in our cities, everyone who follows the daily news, cannot but speak of our time as being run-down and hostile. (...) Egoism rules. Everybody goes for money – there is no time left for real feelings. Trust and values fall by the wayside.”

The internet is another important tool of communication and propaganda for right-wing extremists. The initial boom of right-wing extremist websites has nonetheless slowed down and there are at present about 1.000 of them in the German language. The most revolting example of a Neo-Nazi website is www.nazi-lauck-nsdapao.com. The person responsible for the site is Gary Lauck who, for decades, has been dominating the Third Reich nostalgia-business, selling national socialist items like Hitler busts and so on. Even though Lauck himself is of German origin, his company managed to mix up the Dutch and German languages in at least one case during 2004.

A packet of anti-Semitic propaganda stickers in the Dutch language were sent to Potsdam, leaving right-wing extremists puzzled about what they were supposed to do with them.



Right-wing-extremist CDs

Neo-Nazis

Neo-Nazis understand themselves as leading figures of a right-wing extremist social movement. They therefore underline their differences to political parties on the one side and unorganised subculture oriented streams of right-wing extremisms on the other. They argue that Hitler's National Socialist Worker's Party (NSDAP) preferred to call itself "Hitlerbewegung" (Hitler-movement) and that they follow this example. This also implies that their organisational structures are rather weak, but stronger than those in subculture oriented right-wing extremism. The word "Kameradschaft" (comradeship) which describes somewhat centralised small organisations, essentially represents Neo-Nazi structures.

Neo-Nazi ideology is very much influenced by the NSDAP programme from 1920, insofar as it is anti-semitic and racist. They tend to dream of a new "Reich" in which German culture is the leading force for other nations and spreading all over Europe. They view Democracy as being weak and think that a "Führer" would do a better job.

Racism is the ideological pillar on which the entire Neo-Nazi vision of the world is based. Neo-Nazis are convinced that society should be racially organised because they think that ethnicity and culture are interconnected.

Their relationship with violence is rather tactical. As self-defined revolutionary movements, the protagonists think that violence should be used in order to achieve political aims. Spontaneous outbreaks of violence, so typical for subculture oriented right-wing extremism, are therefore not so for Neo-Nazis.

Neo-Nazi Activities

Demonstrations and public activity form the backbone of Neo-Nazi activity. There have been several occasions nationwide for the small groupings and Kameradschaften to come together and demonstrate their political ideology publicly. The dates of the four most prominent Neo-Nazi demonstrations in 2004 were

- 13 February commemorating the 60th anniversary of an allied air-raid on Dresden with 2.500 participants,
- 1 May (international Labour Day) with 2.300 marching in Berlin and 900 in Leipzig,
- 17 August in remembrance of Rudolf Hess with 3.800 Neo-Nazis not only from Germany but also from abroad (Italy, Denmark, Russia etc.),

- 13 November, when 1.600 Neo-Nazis gathered in Halbe (Brandenburg) to commemorate the last battle of encirclement of the Second World War that took place there.

Other minor activities were directed against the social reforms that took place in Germany under the name “Agenda 2010” and the enlargement of Europe.



Poster announcing the „Heldengedenken“ (commemoration of the Heroes) in Halbe



Poster announcing the annual commemoration ceremony in remembrance of Rudolf Heß

Neo-Nazi Organisations

“Kameradschaften” (comradeships) are a typical form of Neo-Nazi organisation of the 1990s. After a wave of groups from different right-wing extremist associations being banned, Neo-Nazi activists asserted that small and basically-organised groups might be the best structure to escape state control. This assumption has been proved erroneous as two “Kameradschaften” were banned in Berlin in 2005. The Kameradschaft “Hauptvolk” was banned along with its substructure “Sturm 27” in Brandenburg on 12 April 2005.

One can speak about a Kameradschaft when the following factors are evident

- A recognizable centre of activists which tries to hold the membership fluctuations of the group low
- First steps towards organisational structure and discipline
- Readiness to carry out political work together on the basis of Neo-Nazi convictions.

At the moment there are about 300 Neo-Nazis in Brandenburg, 165 of which are organised in Kameradschaften. “Kameradschaften” or “Kameradschafts”-like structures can be found in Cottbus, Frankfurt (Oder), Guben, Lübben, Rathenow, Spremberg, Strausberg and around Schöneiche.

The most prominent example of a “Kameradschaft” was a group of teenagers from the Havelland who called themselves “Freikorps”. They associated with the documented aim to burn down kebab and asian food vans in the surrounding area in order to terrorise strangers and push them into leaving the country. They burned down or attempted to burn down nine vans. They were caught in May 2004. The founders of “Freikorps” were convicted as members of a terrorist association and were sentenced to between acht and 24 months in prison. The leader was sentenced to four and a half years in prison.

Other Neo-Nazi organisations

Some Neo-Nazi-structures go beyond a regional context. These larger entities are too big to be considered “Kameradschaften”, but they are not political parties either. The “Märkischer Heimatschutz” (MHS) and the “Bewegung Neue Ordnung” (BNO) are two examples from Brandenburg of these larger Neo-Nazi organisations.

The “Märkischer Heimatschutz” (MHS) was founded in 2001 in an attempt to group several “Kameradschaften” under the leadership of Gordon Reinholz from Eberswal-

de. This organisation is particularly active in the Uckermark and the Barnim. It has approximately 45 members who are organised in local sections that exist, for example, in Angermünde, Berlin, Barnim, Prenzlau and Strausberg).

Their main activity is propaganda. Their aim is to produce a society in which the state autocratically rules the economy as much as social and cultural life. The MHS propaganda takes up discussions within society and bends them towards the arguments and concerns of the organisation. Social reforms are defined as anti-German, the war on Iraq is compared with the “imperialistic occupation” of Germany after the Second World War and EU enlargement is being described as being “national suicide” undertaken by German politicians.

The MHS also led the re-organisation of the “National and Socialist Action-committee Mid-Germany” (NSAM) in 2003. This committee acts as editor of a series of publications, amongst them the MHS Newsletter “Märkischer Heimatbote” and the “Mitteldeutsche Jugend Zeitung”, which appears in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Networking is essential for the political work of the MHS. The MHS therefore also has strong ties to other right-wing extremist organisations and “Kameradschaften” in Eastern Germany.



Propaganda-leaflet of the „Märkischer Heimatschutz“ (MHS) demanding „saussages instead of kebab“

The “Bewegung Neue Ordnung” (BNO) was founded in February 2004. The name of the organisation means “New Order Movement”. The sociological self-definition as movement rather than a political party is typical for a Neo-Nazi organisation. The aim of a “New Order” hints at the racist ideology the BNO stands for. The “Ordine Nuovo” which tried to implement the SS race ideology in Italian right-wing extremism in the 1960s, is as much an example of a comparable movement as is the French “Ordre Nouveau”, which was integrated into the Front National in 1972.

The official reason why the BNO split off from the right-wing extremist National Democratic Party (NPD) in 2004 was in fact racist. The founding figures within the BNO argued that they could not support the NPD’s move to nominate a Bosnian candidate for the European Elections in 2004. According to their strictly racist ideology, the party had broken with the maxim which states that a “German is someone who is of German blood”.

The organisation gave itself a 25-point program that in many parts looked like an exact copy of the NSDAP-program of 1920. The program is essentially racist and demands the supremacy of the German state in economic, cultural and social affairs.

In the attempt to get hold of state money, the BNO put up an electoral list called “JA zu Brandenburg” which took part in the Brandenburg elections in 2004. Had they gathered 0,5 % of the votes the BNO might have had the right to collect 0,85 Euro for each vote. This was the solitary and openly-declared point for the existence of “JA zu Brandenburg”.

“We do not seek to get into any parliament in Germany because there is no way to change things from there. Why then do we stand for election? Our propaganda is expensive. We can raise the money only partly from our own sources. This is why we ask you to vote for us (...). Any vote for us means ca. € 0,85 of so called “Wahlkampfkostenerstattung”. This means for us that each vote stands for about 200 leaflets for the future of our people.” (www.ja-zu-brandenburg.de/JA_Zu.html)

With an election campaign based on propaganda on the internet, “JA zu Brandenburg” managed to poll 0,4 % of the votes, with best results in the hometowns of its most prominent leaders.

The BNO tried to get together a nation-wide network in May 2004 when it collaborated with other similar groups from southern Germany to form a “Plattform Neuen Ordnung” (PNO). This initiative obviously failed.

The BNO-propaganda sometimes appears under different labels. A BNO leaflet-campaign against the Federal Republic was formally organised by the “Schutzbund Deutschland” (Defence Alliance Germany). The personal ties between BNO and the “Preußische Aktionsfront” (PAF, Prussian Front of Action), as much as the similarities in programmes, are also very obvious. The “Preußische Aktionsfront” is mainly active in Belzig.

The “Nationales Bündnis Preußen” (NBP, National Alliance Prussia) is a small association of about 20 people. It has the aim of gathering right-wing extremists in Barnim, Uckermark and North Berlin. There is continuous contact between NBP members and the National Democratic party. The organisation is not a party, and neither does it mark a clear border between itself and right-wing extremist political parties. This uncertainty has made it rather unattractive for Neo-Nazis over the last few years.

The NBP participated in a handful of activities against social reform, took part in the 1May demonstration in Berlin and organised an evening of songs in September.



The “Hilfsorganisation für nationale politische Gefangene und deren Angehörige e.V.” (HNG, help organisation for national political prisoners) is the only nationwide non-party right-wing extremist association active in Brandenburg. The HNG is a melting pot of all the different right-wing extremists who sometimes only have in common the fact that they have been imprisoned. It organises contact between pen-pals and also the material support of prisoners. People get to know each other in the HNG network and on-going political work is sometimes born out of these contacts. This makes the HNG important for Neo-Nazi structures. The annual general meeting took place in March in Gremsdorf (Bavaria), with 150 members attending.

Political Parties

“Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands” (NPD, National-democratic Party of Germany)

Founded	1964
Headquarters	Berlin
Members in Germany	5.300
Members in Brandenburg	130
Important publications	“Deutsche Stimme” (“German Voice”), “Zündstoff” (“explosive stuff”)
Internetadress	www.npd.de

The National-democratic Party was founded in 1964. Many of the founders had previously been members of the “Socialist Party of the Reich” (SRP), the first political party to be banned in Germany in 1952. The NPD ideology still preserves a memory of the SRP. The most obvious remnants are the idea of “German Socialism” and a strong anti-capitalist ideology.

The party was elected to several Länder parliaments in the 1960s, but failed in the Bundestag elections in 1969. The following crisis made the party lose up to 80% of its members. In 1996, with only 3.500 party-members remaining, Udo Voigt was elected chairman of the NPD. His concept of a threefold strategy called “The struggle for the minds, the streets and the parliaments” made an integration of different right-wing extremist streams possible, and the party moved from internal quarrels to attacks against “the system”, as Democracy is often called amongst party members and affiliates.

Ideology

The central pillar of the NPD ideology is what is called in many of the party’s publications the “lebensrichtige Menschenbild”. “Lebensrichtig” means “correct according to life” and “Menschenbild” essentially stands for the picture one has of mankind. In order to explain this concept it might be easiest to quote from the political programme for the European election 2004 (p. 45 f.).

“It (the “lebensrichtige Menschenbild”) understands man as part of nature, who is subject to the laws of nature. According to what is known thus far, human behaviour is mainly conducted by desires, instincts and emotions. The “lebensrichtige

Menschenbild” does not want to judge from an ethical point of view and it does not have the intention of indicating a social aim society should strive to, it is solely descriptive.”

This biological concept of human society does of course not deal with personal freedom or responsibility. All eminent social processes are in fact described in the racist terms being laid down in the concept of the “lebensrichtige Menschenbild”. The answers of the NPD to questions like social justice, crime prevention or legitimacy of leadership are all based on it. Their call for a “safe journey home” for all immigrants living in Germany and their “No to EU enlargement” are to be explained in the same terms.

The main aim of the NPD is “the reconstruction of the full ability of the German Reich to act” as much as “the realisation of the community of the German people”.



Election-posters of the NPD demanding the expulsion of foreigners and an end to EU-enlargement

“The struggle for the minds, the streets and the parliaments”

The threefold NPD-strategy goes back to the idea of “cultural hegemony” which has been very much discussed amongst European right-wing extremists in the last few decades. The basic idea is that the need for a political change has first to be thought both necessary and possible before it can actually take place. This is why the “struggle for the minds” is of central importance for the NPD. It implies both propaganda and schooling for its own members. The “Deutsche Stimme”, the NPD-newspaper, plays a central role in this struggle. Almost 7.000 people attended the Deutsche Stimme Summer Festival 2004.

The “struggle for the streets” mainly aims at the non- or hardly-organised right-wing extremist youth culture. By organising demonstrations and concerts the NPD affiliates these young people into the party without them necessarily having to become members.

The “struggle for the parliaments” was particularly successful in 2004. At the Saarland elections the NPD gathered 4 % of the votes, in Saxony they even achieved 9,2 % and was thus elected into the Saxonian parliament. At the communal elections in Saxony in 2003 the NPD had in some parts of the Land gathered more than 20 % of the votes. This success was explained by the party as a result of its threefold strategy.

Collaboration with other right-wing extremists

In 2004 the NPD was forced not to take place in the Brandenburg elections because the “Bewegung Neue Ordnung” (BNO) had split off from the party and had taken some of the most active political members with it. The NPD tried to recoup this internal defeat by signing an agreement with the other major German right-wing extremist party, the “Deutsche Volksunion” (DVU). According to this agreement the DVU was to stand for election in Brandenburg alone whereas the NPD was to stand for the elections in Saxony, undisturbed by the DVU. As both parties subsequently managed to get elected into the respective parliaments the agreement was celebrated as a success.

Further steps of collaboration were now taken. The idea of a right-wing extremist “People’s Front” (“Volksfront von rechts”) was born. It embraced the two leading political right-wing extremist parties NPD and DVU as much as some leading figures of the Neo-Nazi scene. Three notorious Neo-Nazis even joined the NPD. On January 15th 2005 a “Deutschlandpakt” between DVU und NPD was signed in which the two parties agreed to stand for the Bundestag elections together under the leadership of the NPD and for the EU-elections in 2009 under the leadership of the DVU.

The NPD even became international when Udo Voigt signed an agreement of association with the Francist “La falange” in Spain in November 2004. The Deutsche Stimme reported: “The Spaniards know that the NPD is the historical leading force” behind the cooperation of right-wing extremist parties in Germany (www.deutsche-stimme.com/Ausgaben2004/Sites/12-04-Spanien.html).



DVU - Einigkeit macht stark - NPD

NPD in Brandenburg

The splitting off of the BNO from the Brandenburg NPD has already been mentioned. It paralysed the party’s activities in the Land for some months. The electoral success in Saxony nevertheless has stimulated Brandenburgers to join the party. At its annual meeting in Oranienburg on 20 November 2004 the newly reinforced Brandenburg NPD announced that it would be ready to campaign for the Bundestag elections.



Election-poster of the NPD in Brandenburg

Deutsche Volksunions (DVU, German People's Union)

Founded	1987
Headquarters	Munich
Members in Germany	11.000
Members in Brandenburg	230
Important publications	“National-Zeitung” (“National-Newspaper”)
Internetadress	www.dvu.de

The DVU was founded in 1987 when the downfall of the National Democratic (NPD) party had become obvious even to its more optimistic members. During the same year, the DVU was elected into the Bremen Parliament. The most remarkable DVU success was the gaining of 12.9 % of the votes in the Sachsen-Anhalt elections in 1998. In 1999, the party won five mandates in the Brandenburg parliament, and managed six in 2004.

The autocratic structures of the party stem from the groupings in the Länder directly to Munich and the party leader, Dr. Gerhard Frey. He decides about any political programmes, the design of posters and the messages to give to the electorate. The regional structures have only very limited responsibilities of political decision making.

Dr. Frey's important role within the party is also partly due to his enormous economic power. The party is deeply in debt to Dr. Frey who is said to be the richest right-wing extremist in Germany. He is the manager of a publishing company and editor of numerous newspapers, journals and book publishing houses. He also makes a living out of selling devotional artefacts and objects, mainly from the Second World War.

There are three main possible sources of votes for right-wing extremist parties: staunch supporters, voters who know their candidate personally; and protest voters.

The DVU is most likely to attract votes from the last of these, but hardly any from the first two. In its electoral campaigns the party invites voters to “show the big shots in politics the people's opinion”. One of the ever-returning slogans is “Sick to the back teeth? Vote for DVU this time!”.



The DVU's Language

DVU Party programmes are not very telling about its ideological standpoints, as they generally aim at their protest-voter targets. Using short sentences, the aims are described in the form of accusations and demands. Animal and ecological rights make as much a part of these demands as a general "Germans first" policy. The "National-Zeitung" to which each member is automatically subscribed gives a more detailed insight into the party's line of thought.

The DVU is Anti-Semite but not as racist as the NPD. Their political arguments can better be described as being nationalist. The Anti-Semite argumentation is subtle and only hints at a presumed world-wide "Zionist conspiracy". Jewish actors, politicians or authors are generally defined by their religious background, particularly when they are being mentioned in a negative context.

The nationalist elements can also be found in the headlines of the paper: "Are the Turks Taking Over Germany?", "Is Germany Going To Be Turkish?" and "Is The EU Enlargement Going To Ruin Us?". Immigration is described as being "folly" and a "menace" to Germans and their economy and culture.

Cooperation with the National Democratic Party (NPD)

The cooperation of Neo-Nazis, DVU and NPD, which runs under the slogan "Volksfront von rechts" (right-wing people's front), has been described more broadly in the chapters above. It is very likely that the DVU owes its re-election into the Brandenburg parliament in 2004 to this cooperation. Had the NPD stood for election, the DVU might have faced difficulties in getting the amount of votes necessary to achieve the 5 % hurdle that bans smaller parties from getting into parliaments in Germany.

The DVU was officially invited to the NPD annual meeting in Leinefeld end of October 2004. During the meeting the main points of cooperation were agreed upon. Nevertheless, party activists were unhappy with the cooperation, in particular with the Neo-Nazis, as they felt alien to "these people", as one of the DVU Brandenburg activists said in a Berlin Newspaper in November 2004. But, according to the official protocol of the party, the cooperation is being hailed and celebrated.

DVU in Brandenburg

For the time being the DVU is the strongest right-wing extremist party in Brandenburg insofar as it has 230 members. Their activities are nevertheless very weak, which is

partly due to the party structures that leave little freedom for individual members. The regional alehouse and pub meetings are ill-attended.

Due to the concentration of protest voters' support, the party's electoral results can hardly be foreseen. When the DVU campaigned for the regional elections in Brandenburg in 2003, it did so in order to prepare itself for the Brandenburg parliamentary elections. However, contrary to its expectations, the DVU gathered only between 0,9 % and 4,3 % of the votes.

At the Brandenburg elections in 2004 the DVU was strongest in the southern administrative districts. It gathered 9,5 % of the votes in Elbe-Elster and Oberspreewald-Lausitz and 8,1 % in Spree-Neiße. In the whole Land the DVU polled 6,1 % of the votes. Its performance was weakest in the constituencies of Potsdam I (2,3 %), Potsdam II (4 %) and Potsdam-Mittelmark (3 %).

Minor right-wing extremist parties

The "Republikaner" (REP, Republicans), were the strongest ever right-wing extremist party in Brandenburg with about 600 members in the mid 1990s. The party dramatically lost importance, however, and now has only some 50 members in Brandenburg. The main problem for the party is its structural imbalance between right-wing extremists and conservatives. In fact, the Verfassungsschutz does not see every member of the party as a right-wing extremist.

This imbalance came to light once again when the federal party had to elect a president at its annual meeting in Veichtshöchheim end of November 2004. The two candidates were split about the question of whether or not to cooperate with the NPD. The candidate who opted against joining the "Volksfront von rechts", the president, Dr. Rolf Schlierer, was re-elected with only 58 % of the votes, and his election continues to be disputed within the party.

Two other right-wing extremist parties were eligible in Brandenburg for the European Elections 2004. The "Deutsche Partei" (German Party) (DP) is one of the many attempts to bring German right-wing extremists of different ideological streams together in one organisation. The DP has few members and is hardly represented in Brandenburg. It polled only 1,823 (0,3 %) of the votes. "Ab jetzt! Bündnis für Deutschland" (Go! Alliance for Germany) was founded in 1997 and is active in North-Rhine-Westphalia in the West of Germany. Its policy is mainly nationalist. Perhaps mainly due to its dynamic sounding name, the party gained 3,875 votes (0,7 %).

LEFT-WING EXTREMISM

Left-wing extremists oppose the free, democratic constitutional and societal system, which they vilify as being „imperialistic“ and based on racist and fascist ideas. Therefore, left extremists are in favour of revolutionary change in German society and intend to overthrow the political order.

Left-wing extremism comprises two main groups: Anarchists and Marxists. The aim of anarchists is to establish what they call a society without rulers, based on the principle of self-government. In contradiction to the anarchist idea of an autonomist lifestyle, autonomists (the typical German type of anarchist) do form organizations. They represent the largest share of left-wing extremists with a propensity for violence.

Marxists strive to create a socialist/communist society, bringing about a „dictatorship of the proletariat“. The Marxist notion of the state as dictatorship cannot be reconciled with the fundamental principles of the German Basic Law, such as the balance of power between Parliament, judiciary and executive authorities, pluralism of parties, the majority vote, the freedom to form an opposition and the freedom of expression in general.

Autonomists

Autonomists form a special German branch of anarchism. Unlike most European anarchists autonomists consider violence a legitimate means to achieve their political goals. They undertake a wide range of militant action, including arson and bomb attacks, bodily injury, militant protest against nuclear power plants, dangerous disruption of road and rail transport, and violent demonstrations where stones and other missiles are thrown.

Autonomists reject more fixed forms of organisation and some autonomists lack even the minimum understanding of organisational capabilities and systematic work.

Recent Trends

In 2004 the overall number of supporters and active members of autonomist groups nation wide increased slightly from 5.400 (in 2003) up to 5.500, whereas in Brandenburg the figure dropped from 350 (in 2003) down to around 330. Groups exist in almost all larger Brandenburg cities: Potsdam, Neuruppin, Oranienburg and Frankfurt (Oder). Examples of well-known organisations „Progress [antifascist youth] Potsdam“, „Antifaschistische Aktion Potsdam“ (AAPO), „Jugend Antifa Belzig“ (JAB, Young Anti-

fa Belzig), „Autonome Antifa Frankfurt (Oder) „ (aaffo) and „Antifaschistische Gruppe Oranienburg“ (A.G.O., Antifascist Group Oranienburg).

Inside the left-wing spectrum, so called anti-German organisations have attracted more followers than before, especially in and around Potsdam. Anti-Germans form a special segment within the autonomist movement. For them the word „German“ does not refer to a nationality, but is rather a term denoting a general attitude, which can predominate in other peoples as well. To their mind „German“ means a “suicidal and projective” approach to social and political conflicts, trying to solve problems by looking for scapegoats. At the moment, Palestinians are regarded as being typically „German“ in this meaning of the word. Anti-Germans accuse Palestinians and jihadists of committing another holocaust in history, in which the Koran takes the place of Hitler’s „Mein Kampf“. For Anti-Germans almost any political development is in one way other linked to the holocaust. By seeing it happen everywhere they do not realise how much they contribute to the making of a unique historical phenomenon seem banal. Since 11th September 2001 anti-Germans are in fervent support of Israel and all the measures taken by Israeli security forces against Palestinian „terrorists“. They also defend the US- and British-led intervention in Iraq against critical views within the left-wing spectrum. On this they are prepared to use violence when other people express a different opinion. During a left-wing demonstration against a right-wing rally in Hamburg on 31st January 2004, police had to intervene in a street battle between anti-imperialist and anti-German left-wing extremists.

Looking at the trends in Germany as a whole, left-wing organisations last year focused their agitation and campaign activities on problems concerning social welfare systems and community services. For a short period of time protests against deep cuts in social security have made the traditional anti-fascist engagement the second item on the agenda. The broad-based alliances of democratic organisations fighting right-wing extremism have often dominated the scene which, in combination with appropriate police measures, made it more difficult for left-wing extremists to make their mark in the field of anti-fascism. This led to both a reduction of general activities and specifically to a drop in the number of autonomists supporting protests against marches by right-wing extremists. Recently, left-wing extremists have lacked the ability to mobilise their own adherents. With a topic like social welfare which left-wing extremists traditionally consider their own autonomists were hoping to play a leading role in the public protests in order to give them an anti-capitalist undertone. Meanwhile, it has turned out that left-wing extremists were not able to mould public protest into an organised revolt of the masses against the „ruling system“. After the downfall of socialism as practised in the GDR, left-wing extremism remains in a deep crisis.

The above described changes among Germany's left-wing extremists do not apply completely to Brandenburg. In the Brandenburg state parliament elections on 19th September 2004, the right-wing party DVU (German People's Union) managed not only to keep their previous five seats but to gain a sixth seat as well. On the same day the National Democratic Party (NPD) in Saxony won 9,6 % of the vote. For left-wing extremists the outcome of the elections in Brandenburg and Saxony served as confirmation, that right-wing extremism can only be pushed back by continuous street battles (which they also call „mass militancy“). On such occasions activists often cover their faces and dress in uniform „combat gear“ to form what are known as „black blocks“. Autonomists regularly accuse state institutions of favouring right-wing extremists and so themselves take repressive measures against „anti-fascists“. What they actually try to do is in fact disguise their propensity for violence as a fight against right-wing extremism.

Areas of Activity

Anti-Fascism

Some weeks after the state parliament elections on 19th September 2004, Potsdam saw street riots between the police and autonomists during a peaceful civilian protest demonstration against right-wing extremist rallies. The well-known Neo-Nazi from Hamburg, Christian Worch, had mobilised his followers to attend a rally at Potsdam on the 30th October 2004.



Potsdam, 30th October 2004

The demonstration took place under the slogan „Against slander and terror by the left“. As the 30th October fell on a Saturday, the City Council and a wide range of social organisations called the public to a counter-demonstration at the same time. While the peaceful crowd of around 2.500 inhabitants of Potsdam gathered in the streets, 350 Neo-Nazis from different groups known as Kameradschaften arrived at the main railway station. Examples of these groups were „Märkischer Heimatschutz“, „Kameradschaft Rathenow“, „Kameradschaft Oder-Spree“, „Kameradschaft Gardelegen“ and „Kameradschaft Tor“ from Berlin. Around a thousand autonomists and spontaneous supporters of more „fun-oriented“ young people were already waiting for them.

The police, trying to keep the three demonstrations apart, were attacked with stones and bottles by the left-wing extremists. The autonomists set rubbish bins on fire, built barricades, set them on fire as well, shattered shop windows and caused severe property damage, for example to a mattress shop. There were violent clashes with members of the right-wing scene during the event. At the end of the day, 18 police officers had been injured and 19 people arrested.

Anti-Racism

Conflicts over the issue of „anti-racism“, already observed in recent years between autonomist „anti-racist“ groups and groups of immigrants represented in the border camp movement, continued in 2004 and proved a hindrance to activities in this area. Various representatives of autonomist groups accused immigrants‘ associations of manipulating the border camp movement for their own purposes. The same can be said about autonomists, because they manipulate social issues for their campaigns against capitalism and democracy in general.

It was agreed by several anti-racist groups and initiatives, including the militant left-wing spectrum, to organise a so called „Anti-camp-action-tour“ between 21st August and 5th September 2004. The word camp, reminiscent of German concentration camps in the past, actually means Foreigners‘ offices, Immigration offices and confinement places for illegal immigrants or unsuccessful asylum seekers. From 2nd to 5th September 2004 the tour was cruising around Brandenburg.

The demonstrations and actions carried out in front of different offices went widely unnoticed by the general public. In publications and internet portals left-wing extremists expressed their disappointment about the small number of participants. Overall, the anti-racist movement has lost much of its ability to mobilise supporters in recent years.

Campaign Against Genetically Modified Plants

In the past, campaigns against genetically modified food were organised mainly by citizens and environmental pressure groups with no extremist intentions. However, left-wing extremists stepped up their efforts in 2004 to use civil activities for a revolution against the „system“ by giving them an anti-capitalist background. Militant actions against genetically modified plants have largely increased in 2004.

Nation-wide, six incidents were registered (in 2002 there were two, in 2003 just one), among them three with impact on Brandenburg. On 22nd June 2004 an experimental field for genetically modified potatoes in Golm (near Potsdam), belonging to the „Max-Planck-Institute for molecular plants' physiology“, was demolished by unknown culprits. The same happened on 26th June 2004 in Berge (county Prignitz) in a field belonging to the company Bayer, and on 27th June and 2nd July 2004 in Wittlingen-Teschendorf (Lower Saxony) on the premises of the Potsdam based company, „Solvista GmbH“.

Protest Against the Government Programme of Labour Market Reforms („Hartz IV“)

Late summer and autumn 2004 saw a broad-based campaign against the Federal Government's reform of the social security system. Thousands of German citizens filled the streets in demonstrations to protest against deep cuts in social security spending and the government programme of labour market reform known as the Hartz IV concept. Autonomists were striving to make clear that a solution to this problem could not be achieved by means of step-by-step reforms, but only through revolutionary changes in society.



**BOLSCHEWISTISCHE
INITIATIVE**

**Hilft nur
dem Kapital
eins auf's Maul!**

Bolshevist call for violence
against „The Capital“

Right-wing extremists were also able to benefit from the social protest by putting forward their idea that social security for everybody could not be guaranteed unless all foreign work forces leave Germany and give way to German workers. On the so called „Monday demonstrations“ – an allusion to the massive protests leading to the downfall of GDR socialism – ordinary citizens were marching side by side with left- and right-wing extremists. Neither of the two extremist movements succeeded in influencing protest for their purposes.

Political Parties

„Deutsche Kommunistische Partei“ (DKP, German Communist Party)

Founded	1968
Headquarters	Essen (North Rhine-Westphalia)
Members in Germany	4.500
Members in Brandenburg	approx. 130
Important Publications	„Unsere Zeit“ (UZ, Our Time), „Roter Brandenburger“ (Red Brandenburger, local DKP-newspaper), „Trotz alledem!“ (In spite of it all, DKP newspaper for Potsdam)
Internetadress	www.dkp.de

The German Communist Party (DKP) represents the traditional Marxist faction within the left-wing extremist spectrum. After the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) had been banned in 1956, the new party was founded by former KPD party officials in 1968. Until the wall came down, the DKP served as a lever of SED (Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the ruling communist party in the GDR) politics in former West Germany. After the downfall of socialism as practised in the GDR, the party suffered a dramatic loss in attractivity to younger people.

Being a West German party, the DKP struggled to set foot in the former states of the GDR. However, in the last Brandenburg parliament elections of 19th September 2004, the party managed to improve their position by winning 0.2% of the vote (2,084 votes in total). The biggest and most influential groups exist in Potsdam, Frankfurt (Oder), Bernau and Cottbus.

The party has been weakened due to its ageing membership and the intense struggles going on between different wings within the party. Therefore it was not possible in 2004 for the DKP to reach unanimous agreement in the debate surrounding a new draft party programme (the current version dates back to 1978). The „state and democracy issue“ has not yet been resolved between DKP comrades in Eastern and Western Germany – a euphemism to describe the fact that those sections of the party originating in the former GDR advocate using terms like „dictatorship of the proletariat“ in the programme text. Another issue is the question of whether or not the party should agree to tactical alliances with Stalinist parties like the KPD or MLPD (see below). The decision to break formally with Stalinist tendencies is in line with its

tactic of adhering strictly to the principle of legality since its „reconstitution“ in 1968. This tactic is now quite controversial within party organisations in the five Eastern German states. The Brandenburg party seems to belong to the more leftist factions within the DKP.

„Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands“ (KPD, Communist Party of Germany)

Founded	1990
Headquarters	Berlin
Members in Germany	200
Members in Brandenburg	15
Publications	“Die Rote Fahne“ (The Red Flag), „Trotz alledem“ (In spite of it all)
Internetadress	www.kommunistische-partei-deutschlands.de

The KPD was formed 1990 in what was then still the GDR mainly by former members of the ruling communist party (SED) in Berlin. It sees itself as the only legitimate successor to the original KPD, founded in 1918/1919 by famous left-wing politicians such as Liebknecht, Thälmann and Pieck.



„All united against the Capital“ - Communist poster

The party's ideology is strictly neo-Stalinist. The activities of the GDR Ministry for State Security and the GDR border guards are openly justified as necessary for suppressing counter-revolution. The party expresses particularly servile affirmations of loyalty to the regime in North Korea.

During the 23rd Party conference, held on 29th March 2003 in Strausberg (county Märkisch-Oderland), Werner Schleese, a man from Brandenburg, was elected party leader.

The KPD did not take part in the Land parliament elections 2004.

„Marxistisch-Leninistische Partei Deutschlands“ (MLPD, Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany)

Founded	1982
Seat of Central Committee	Gelsenkirchen (North Rhine-Westphalia)
Members in Germany	2.000
Members in Brandenburg	25
Publications	„Rote Fahne“ (Red Flag)
Internetadress	www.mlpd.de

The Maoist/Stalinist-oriented party, founded in 1982 in West Germany, is largely isolated on the left-wing spectrum. Nearly all the other left-wing extremists remain hostile towards the MLPD. The party has sectarian traits. It is only through camouflage organisations that it can become part of political alliances.

There is no party branch in Brandenburg. Last year the MLPD focused its energies on problems concerning the Hartz IV-reforms. The party was playing an important role in organising Monday demonstrations. From the party's perspective this effort seems to have paid off. It has provided the MLPD with a certain public presence and helped the party to get a wider acceptance in Brandenburg.

Trotzkyist Groups

The Group „Linksruck“ (Left Turn)

The group „Linksruck“ is the largest and most agile and largest Trotzkyist organisation in Germany. It is the German section of the London-based international Trotzkyist umbrella organisation, „International Socialist Tendency“ (IST). It has 400 members nation-wide and ten in Brandenburg. The headquarters are based in Berlin and publishes an eponymously titled newspaper and a magazine called „arguments“. Every year „Linksruck“ organises so called „Rosa-Luxemburg-Days“. The event (which took place between 28th and 31st May 2004) is aimed at active members of „Linksruck“ as well as people interested in issues like anti-globalisation, the anti-war movement, social politics and other typical left-wing topics.

In 2004 „Linksruck“ played a key role in organising and mobilising members and supporters for a large-scale campaign against the government's social politics (Hartz IV). This campaign turned out to be very successful, with „Linksruck“ becoming more popular than before.

„Rote Hilfe e. V.“ (RH, Red Aid)

Founded	1975
Headquarters	Göttingen (Lower Saxony)
Members in Germany	4.600
Members in Brandenburg	130
Publications	„Die Rote Hilfe“ (Red Aid), „newsletter“
Internetadress	www.rote-hilfe.de

In 2004 „Rote Hilfe“ continued to provide political and material support to members of the left-wing spectrum whom it regards as being victims of political and state persecution. The organisation gives support to people held in custody with a left-wing extremist background. In Brandenburg it is mostly autonomists who work for Red Aid. They have groups in Potsdam, Strausberg (county Märkisch-Oderland) and contact addresses in Rathenow (county Havelland) and Frankfurt (Oder). Most active, however, is the Potsdam group.



Poster of the „Rote Hilfe“: „No collaboration with the state’s organs of repression!“

Traditional Anarchists

Traditional anarchists have an estimated number of 20 followers in Brandenburg. Public activities are very rarely known of.

ISLAMISM

Islamism has to be distinguished from both Islam and terrorism. Whereas Islam is a monotheist world religion with more than a billion believers world wide and a history of nearly 1.400 years, Islamism is a political ideology of recent times. Islamism is not Islam, but rather a politicised version of the religion. Some Islamists make use of terrorism.

Islamists are not democrats. They argue that in a society that follows the rules put down in the Koran and the traditions (sunna) derived from therein, no balance of power or freedom of speech is necessary. They are convinced that the community of believers (umma) can easily live in peace and harmony, once the “true spirit of Islam” reigns in that society’s political institutions and in the hearts of the individuals.

Of course, it is the Islamists who pretend to know what this “true spirit of Islam” is, and they often try to convince forcefully other believers about their points of view. Even though the first political leaders of Islam after the death of the Prophet Mohammed were elected, Islamists often reject the idea of general elections because they see them as “Western” and therefore as irreconcilable with Islamic tradition.

According to Islamists, the problems of Muslim societies are due to “Westernisation”. Signs of “Westernisation” are seen, for example, in nation-building, Western life-styles, international cooperation and democracy. To them most of the actual political leaders in the Muslim world are “apostates”, because they cooperate with “the West”.

Many Islamists are not only fierce enemies of what they call “the West” but are also convinced that the small political and economic importance of the Muslim world nowadays is the result of a Jewish conspiracy against Islam. The mere existence of the Jewish state is for them unsupportable, and their aim is to extinguish the state of Israel. Sometimes Islamists manage to attract the sympathetic attention of right or left-wing extremists with Anti-Zionist or Anti-Semite slogans.

Two main streams of Islamism have to be identified: the “legalist” Islamists try to achieve their political aims by using legal means, accepting the laws and avoiding violence or terror. Most of the Islamists who live in Germany are in fact legalists. The jihadist Islamists, on the other hand, are convinced that the use of terror is legitimate to achieve their political aims. Their terror in most cases is directed against Muslims who are being accused of “apostasy”. In Iraq, Jihadists have killed far more Muslims than members of the allied forces.

Jihadist Islamism

Jihadist terror reached Europe on 11 March 2004, when a series of bomb explosions in Madrid killed 191 people and injured 1,500. The bombs were installed on four trains. A “military speaker for the supporters of al-Quaida in Europe” some days later claimed responsibility for the attack.

The very structure of al-Quaida – loosely bound, independently working groups – led to different interpretations in the days immediately following the attack. Whereas the Saudi-Arabian al-Quaida leader, Abdul Aziz al-Moqrin, called for the “transformation of all the countries of the blasphemers into war-zones”, Osama bin Laden offered “reconciliation” with Western societies if foreign troops left “our country” (Iraq) in the following three months.



A series of bomb explosions in Madrid killed 191 people and injured 1,500.

This change in rhetoric is interesting, as bin Laden at least seemed to respect the democratic order of Western societies. This seems to be a hint at the possibility that the dream of a world-wide Muslim revolution against “the West” might have changed into more precise political aims, like gaining power in Iraq.

On the other hand there is a threat of radicalisation within European Muslim communities in Europe. Young European Muslims have been recruited to Iraq

terror organisations and are practising what they think to be “Jihad”. It is not unlikely that these young “homecoming” combatants will influence their surroundings with their particular views on “Jihad” and “the West”.

After the Murder of the film maker Theo van Gogh on 2 November 2004, the Dutch Intelligence Service AIVD pointed towards another possible source of Jihadist radicalisation in Europe in a study called “Van dawa tot jihad” (From Dawa to Jihad). This study shows that young Muslims in Europe are not only attracted to Jihadism by ex-combatants, but that they also find their way to violent Islamism by their own impulse when, for example, visiting Islamist websites.

The importance of Islamism and Islamist terrorism in Germany can be illustrated with the 164 preliminary court proceedings with an Islamist context in January 2005. Some of the court proceedings taking place at the moment deal with Islamist terror in Europe, like the one which opened in Düsseldorf on 10 February. Members of the “Al-Tawid” group were accused of having planned several bomb attacks on discotheques, the Jewish Museum in Berlin and a pub in Düsseldorf.

Others have dealt with Islamist activities abroad, such as the one that opened in December 2004, where the “Ansar al-Islam” group have been accused of committing terrorist attacks in Northern Iraq.

Jihadist groups in Brandenburg

Even though there is thus a certain Islamist danger in Europe most of the Islamist activity is concentrated in Muslim countries. Most of the Islamist groups originate in the Palestinian Territories (eg. HAMAS), the Levant (eg. Hizb-Allah) and northern Africa (eg. Front Islamique du Salut). Only individual members of these different regional Islamist groups (as opposed to organised cells) live in Brandenburg. Their activities are reduced to collecting money or seeking other support for their brethren in their country of origin. A small Islamist cell in Cottbus was known of in 2002 but dissolved as soon as its existence was made publicly known.

Nevertheless, it should not be presumed that Islamism is only a problem of non-German citizens. On the one hand, Muslims of foreign origin who have been granted German citizenship might be amongst the Islamists, while other German converts to Islam sometimes feel pushed to demonstrate their religious eagerness with violence. The case of Steven Smyrek, who was sent on a murderous mission to Israel by Hizb-Allah and who was subsequently arrested there, has become famous in this context.

Legalist Islamists

Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüs (IGMG, Islamic Community Milli Görüs)

Founded	1985 in Cologne as the Vereinigung der Weitsicht in Europa (AGMT, Association of a New World View in Europe)
Membership	265.000
Membership in Brandenburg	single figures
Publications	„Milli Görüs & Perspektive“ amongst others, published at irregular intervals

Among Islamist organisations, the IGMG has a special significance due to its large membership and following, as well as its numerous mosques and facilities, some of which are in other European countries.

The Europe-wide interests of the IGMG are also reflected in the organisation's structure: The headquarters in Kerpen, North Rhine-Westphalia, oversees 30 subordinate regions with several hundred local mosque communities.

The IGMG-owned "Europäische Moscheebau und Unterstützungsgemeinschaft (EMUG, European Mosque Building and Support Society) is responsible for the administration of the 2.000 mosques which the IGMG claims to have in Europe.

The organisation upholds the tradition of the Milli Görüs movement inspired by Prof. Necmettin Erbakan. The aim of this movement is to re-Islamise society, the state and politics in Turkey. Erbakan has been politically active since the 1970s, attempting to realise his idea of a "just order" (adil düzen), in which all areas of life (education, training, trade and industry, legal system and state action) are based on the commandments and traditions of Islam.

Erbakan distinguishes between "batil"- (void) societies based on force and "hak"- (law) societies in which monotheist rule is prevalent and which, at its highest state, is Muslim. For Erbakan an ongoing struggle between the two types of society is obvious. All bad things in the world according to this ideology are due to the "batil" societies and their political orders. Milli Görüs ideology stands for a universal response to all these problems, as the German IGMG-chairman Osman Döring said in a speech on June 22nd 2003:

“We believe that it is possible to remove all oppression, inequality, injustice, senseless disputes and wars which we can currently observe in the world through a movement of unity emanating from the Islamic world, spearheaded by Turkey (...). And we believe with our whole hearts that only those people who have the Milli Görüs mentality can envisage and realise this goal.”

IGMG can thus be called Islamist as it politicises Islam and sees it as a counter-ideology to Western democracy. Another typical Islamist attitude can be seen in the fact that IGMG claims to hold the “true spirit of Islam” which, according to its Milli Görüs ideology, has to be followed by the rest of the Muslim world in order to create a “just order”. This totalitarian aspect has come to light particularly during the internal debates on the future course of the movement.



In Turkey a great number of followers of the Milli Görüs ideology have joined the “Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi” (AKP, Justice and Development Party), founded in 2001 and currently governing the country. The “Realpolitik” emphasised by some AKP-leaders has raised the question whether IGMG should distance itself from Turkish politics and concentrate on the concerns of Muslims in Europe.

The IGMG is active in youth work. It is questionable as to whether or not IGMG is seriously interested in the integration of Turkish youths into European societies. The strong emphasis on the “wrong” Western life style and the “right” Milli Görüs ideology raise some doubts.

Additionally, the IGMG has still not distanced itself from the sometimes aggressively Anti-Semite Milli Görüs ideology. In a statement on its website on 23 April 2004, it described the death of HAMAS-leader Ahmed Yassin as martyrdom. Yassin, the statement said, had been killed by the “damned race”, showing how anti-semitic Milli Görüs ideology can be.

ACTIVITIES BY FOREIGNERS THAT ENDANGER THE SECURITY OF THE STATE

Apart from Islamist organisations there are also different right and left-wing extremist groupings of foreigners carrying out political work in Germany. The aims are as different as the political alignment of the groups. They range from refreshing the forces in a peaceful atmosphere guaranteed by democracy and freedom, fund-raising, political training for the members in the diaspora and the attempt to make the political situation in the respective home-countries known to a European public.

The Sri Lankan “Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam” (LTTE) and Sikh organisations striving to establish the independent state of Khalistan in India for example, continue to focus on propaganda and fund-raising.

With varying levels of intensity, left-wing extremist groups of foreigners continue to pursue the “revolutionary” destruction of the existing social order and the establishment of socialist or communist systems in their countries of origin. The ideologies of these mainly Turkish groups are usually rooted in Marxism-Leninism and Maoism. The most prominent of these groups are the “Devrimci Halk Kurtulus Cephesi” (DHKP-C, Revolutionary People’s Liberation Front), the “Türkiye Komünist Partisi / Marksist-Leninist” (TKP/ML Turkish Communist Party / Marxist-Leninist) and others. The “Marksist-Leninist Komünist Partisi” (MLKP) has been accused of having masterminded a series of bomb attacks in Turkey in 2004. There are hardly any members of Turkish left-wing extremist groups living in Brandenburg.

Other groups with a rather nationalist or ethnical focus on their political aims sometimes combine left-wing extremist rhetoric with their policies. Kongra Gel, for example, is the second renaming of the Kurdish Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK, Kurdistan’s Workers Party) and is the largest political organisation of foreigners in Brandenburg, with regards to the numbers of members living here.

Kongra-Gel has 11.500 members in Germany of which about 90 live in Brandenburg. It was founded in 1978 by Abdullah Öcalan as a communist cadre party under the name “Kurdish Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan” (PKK, Kurdistan’s Workers Party). Its aim was to create an “independent and democratic Kurdish state”.

From 1984 until 1999 the “Atesen Rizgariya Gele Kurdistan” (ARGK, People’s Liberation Army Kurdistan) lead a guerrilla war against Turkey. In 1993, Öcalan tried to open a second front in Europe. Particularly in Germany, PKK-activists made their

cause known by blocking roads and burning barricades. They were also accused of terrorist acts, and the PKK was subsequently banned in Germany. In 1999, Öcalan was arrested and has been sentenced to life in prison in Turkey.

The name and structure of the organisation have changed several times since the arrest. The end of the Iraq war and the subsequent democratic elections, which led to stable political majorities in the Kurdish parts of the country, raised hopes of a independent Kurdish state once again in 2004. But the Turkish government refused to hold any talks with Kongra-Gel.



Demonstration of the KONGRA GEL June 9th 2004 in Strasbourg

Osman Öcalan, Abdullah Öcalan's brother, founded a new democratic Kurdish party which, according to his announcement on the internet, will pursue the aim of independence with peaceful means, as Kongra-Gel has ended up in a cul-de-sac of violence.

Kongra-Gel (like the PKK before) is active mainly in two European fields. Fund raising makes up the most prominent part of its activity and members are sometimes pushed into debt for "the cause". The second activity is the mobilisation of great numbers of members to become active. During the end of 2004, Kongra-Gel were campaigning in many European countries.

The aim was to solve the Kurdish question before the talks officially started between Turkey and the European Commission about Turkey's joining the European Union. 10.000 Kurds gathered in Brussels on 11 December to demonstrate under the motto "The Kurds want Dialogue and a Solution". In February 2004 12.000 activists came together in Strasbourg to commemorate the fifth anniversary of Abdullah Öcalan's arrest.

ESPIONAGE

The Federal Republic of Germany continues to be a primary target for the intelligence services of a number of foreign nations. In addition to intelligence services from a number of republics within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) – mainly those of the Russian federation – these also include services from countries in the Middle East and North Africa.



Verfassungsschutz-poster advising its members to be cautious „When you are on a holiday, your job stays at home!“

Varying numbers of intelligence staff are assigned to the official or semi-official missions of these countries in Germany. From their cover posts at so-called legal residences, these “diplomats” engage in overt or clandestine information gathering activities, or support intelligence operations, directed by the central headquarters of these services. If such “diplomats” are shown to have engaged in activities incompatible with their status, they may be expelled from Germany. The intelligence targets of foreign services range from “classic” espionage – for example, information-gathering activities in such fields as politics, trade, industry and the military – to the investigation and infiltration of organisations and individuals in Germany which oppose the current regime in their country of origin.

A number of countries are continuing their efforts to gain possession of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons of mass destruction and their related delivery systems, and/or to acquire the material and know-how required

for producing such weapons and systems (“proliferation”).

In addition to counter-intelligence activities, the Brandenburg Verfassungsschutz is also responsible for assisting with security clearance checks of personal granted access, in the public interest, to classified information or of persons actually employed in, or recruited for, security-sensitive posts within essential civil or military establishments. These services are obligatory for state-owned institutions and can be delivered upon request to private institutions and firms.