

# Class 2: Far-right ideology

From transnational traits to local idiosyncracies

Dr. Michael C. Zeller

# Agenda for the day

- Opening notes
- Ideological components
- Idiosyncratic far-right features
- A (disturbing) digression: fascism
- Ideology and emotions
- Far-right organisational forms
- Germany's far-right scene
- Any questions, concerns, feedback for this class?

# Opening notes

# Presentation groups

Remember: topic to me at least by Week 4

May    June    July

## Presentations line-up

Date	Presenters	Method
15 May:	Idil M., Zeynep P., Liesl W., Selin K., Chiara W.	TBD
22 May:	Gabriel W., Lina M., Florian S., Julian B.	TBD
29 May:	NO CLASS MEETING	

# Ideological components

- nationalism → • nativism
- exclusionism → • authoritarianism
- xenophobia → • populism
- strong state
- welfare chauvinism
- traditional ethics

# Recall...

## Far Right encompasses both

**Radical right**

illiberal but democratic

**Extreme right**

anti-democratic, anti-system

# Nationalism (a whole area of study on its own)

- *basic definition:* political doctrine that strives for the congruence of the cultural and the political unit, i.e., the nation and the state
- Variations:
  - ethnic nationalism
  - civic nationalism (e.g., Will Kymlicka)
    - assimilative
    - integrative

- *basic definition:* ideological practice of deliberately excluding certain individuals, groups, or communities based on (usually inherited/innate) characteristics such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or other factors
- Particularly common examples:
  - antisemitism
  - ethnopluralism (all ethnicities are equal, but should be kept separate)

# Xenophobia

- *basic definition:* antipathy towards people from other countries (typically) or perceived as 'other' ('out-group')
  - overlaps with *nationalism* and *exclusionism*

# Strong state

- *basic definition:* preference for a powerful, centralised government (often with an autocratic leader) capable of maintaining control over various aspects of society
- Here, the state becomes a tool for...
  - representing and preserving national identity
  - maintaining social order
  - securing dominance of a particular group
  - building/maintaining strong military

- *basic definition:* belief in restricting access to welfare benefits based on exclusionary precepts
  - e.g., healthcare, unemployment benefits, housing assistance – only for certain categories of people
  - assumption of (undeserving) ‘outsiders’ that are ‘scamming’ the system, i.e., taking from welfare system without having first contributed

# Traditional ethics

- *basic definition:* belief in preservation and promotion of “traditional” patterns of social life, for example: ...
- traditional gender and sexuality: two sexes/genders with typical traits ...
- traditional gender family roles: male ‘breadwinner’ and stay-at-home female ...
- social hierarchies (e.g., of gender, class)

# Mudde (2007) - 3 core features

- **nativism** (*combination of nationalism and xenophobia*): states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group (“the nation”); non-native elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening
- **authoritarianism**: belief in a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely

# Missing features and special considerations?

So... **nativism, authoritarianism, and populism**

- does this make sense? are any important components missing?
- issues to consider on ideology and classification:
  - individuals' and groups' ideology can change, even dramatically
  - where does 'ideology' happen or manifest?
    - for Mudde (2007), it is assessable through party manifestos
    - ↪ then how to assess movements?
    - difference of what parties write in official material and say elsewhere? (e.g., 'frontstage moderation,' Brandmann 2022)
  - is 'far right' classification only/mainly about ideology—or might it also be about behaviours/actions?

# Idiosyncratic far-right features

# A miscellaneous smattering of features

- **accelerationism**: accelerate society's system collapse to new order
- **anti-globalist**: opposed to globalisation, advocating preservation of national sovereignty, local cultures, economies
- **civilizationist**: world is a battle of competing civilisations (e.g., 'Western, Christian')
- **great replacement**: conspiracy belief that white or European or autochthonous populations are being systematically replaced by immigrants
- **irredentism**: restoration of former territory (e.g., HU, AT, SRB)
- **male supremacism**: belief that men are inherently superior to women and should dominate in society
- **neo-völkisch**: revival blend of ethnonationalist (racial or ethnic purity), spiritual, and esoteric beliefs (mythic or pagan themes)

# A (disturbing) digression: fascism

- what is it?
- historical phenomenon or living ideology?



- *thin, consensus definition:* revolutionary ultra-nationalism
  - a totalitarian movement
- locked into a specific era?
  - yes!: today's right-wing extremism is 'essentially different' to interwar predecessors
  - no!: ideological features, modes of organising, aspirations — all live on in contemporary organisations

- Stanley Payne (1995):
  1. **negations** (anti-Marxism, anti-liberalism, anti-conservatism);
  2. **ideology and programme**, such as nationalism, a positive evaluation of war, imperialism, and corporatism;
  3. **style**, such as the organised party-mass movement, and extensive use of symbolism
- Roger Eatwell (2007): ideology that strives to forge social rebirth based on a **holistic-national radical Third Way**, though in practice fascism has tended to stress style, especially action and the **charismatic leader**, more than detailed programme, and to engage in a **Manichaean demonisation** of its enemies

# Fascism - contemporary examples?

Some scholarship applies the ‘fascist’ label to...

- British National Party (BNP)
- Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD)
- Golden Dawn
- Jobbik
- Mi Hazánk
- CasaPound
- Fratelli d’Italia
- Kotleba - People’s Party Our Slovakia

# Ideology and emotions

# Ideology and emotions

Pilkington, Omelchenko, and Perasović (2018, 124): "... activists attached both rational and emotional meanings to their activism... the rational and the emotional may be entwined in social movement participation rather than constituting alternative explanations of motivation to engage"

for more on *emotions* in social movements, see Jasper (2018)

# Ideology and emotions

Virchow (2007, 156): "...an integrative approach that considers ideology production, dissemination, and learning on the one hand and the way that protagonists of movements perform and act on the other hand"

- in other words... examining 'theory and practice' of FR

Rational actors with ideological convictions, or...



# Ideology and emotions

Virchow (2007, 160, *emphasis added*): “why people join and stay in political movements cannot be explained by *cognitive* processes alone. Rather, *emotional* and *practical*/dimensions also are relevant to political recruitment and socialization”

- key concept: **emotional collective**
- Hints at the various modes of radicalisation (Class 11): true believers, material gain, network/peer-to-peer socialisation, etc.
- Ideology is important—but not to the exclusion of other considerations

# Ideology and emotions

- Demonstrations as sites of instilling ideology and of creating emotion
- create 'emotional collective' and stabilise *collective identity* (cf. Polletta and Jasper 2001)
  - racial pride, rage/grievance about immigrants, distrust of state, amusement or aggression towards counter-protesters
- recruit new followers
- promote new leaders
- 'shape an ideological worldview and attitudes'
- asserting FR's right to participate in public sphere
- occupy a public space, as show of power

# Emotional collectives in action

Pilkington, Omelchenko, and Perasović (2018) - looking at youth radical right activists in Croatia (football fans), England (EDL), Russia (jogging club)



Plate 6.3 Torcida placing a wreath at the Ovčara memorial site before the Hajduk match in Osijek, 24 November 2012

# Emotional collectives in action

Pilkington, Omelchenko, and Perasović (2018, 128): **bonds** through the ‘buzz’ of participation (at demonstrations, mass jogging events, or football matches) – also through the warmth, affection and sense of belonging to a ‘family’ generated by participation and persistent relationships between actions

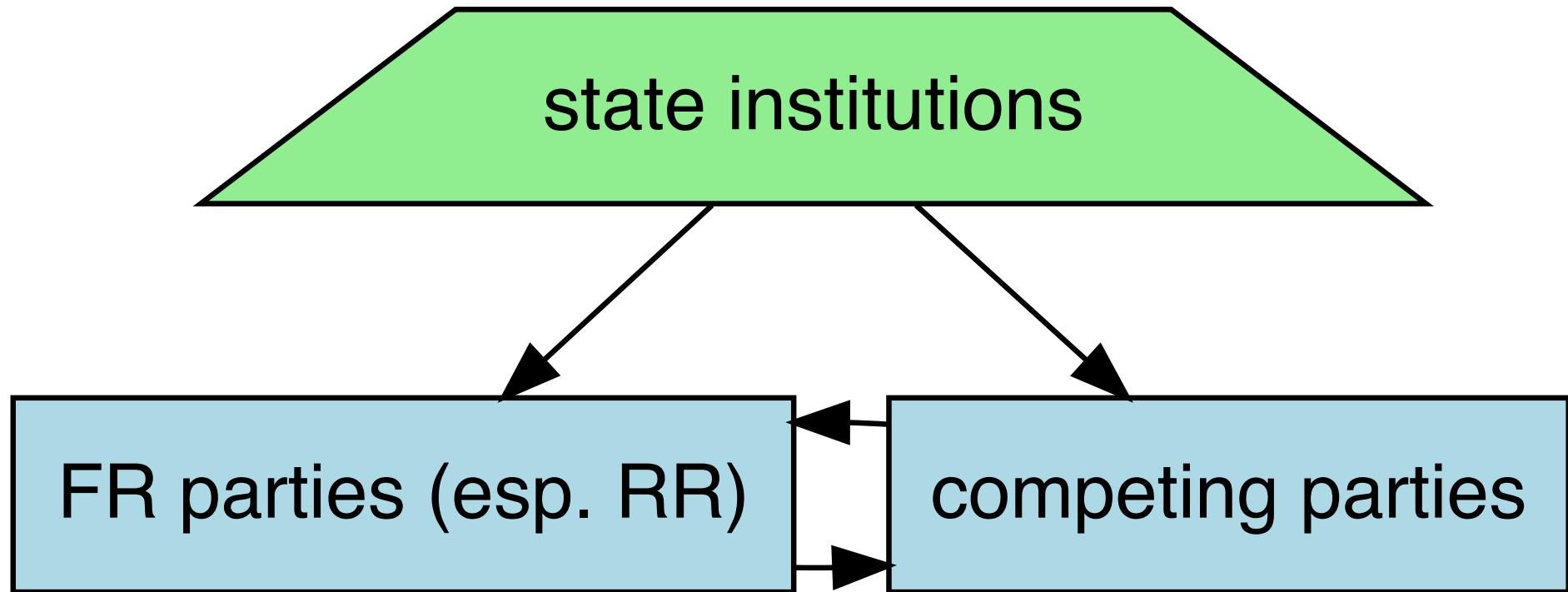
When we arrived at the stadium, just that feeling that you are at Giuseppe Meazza and that you silenced the home fans in the first 5 minutes, their flags down, 4000 of us shouting hard [...] money can't buy that feeling. I would have walked [to Milan] for that.  
(Crni, TOR, HR)

# Far-right organisational forms

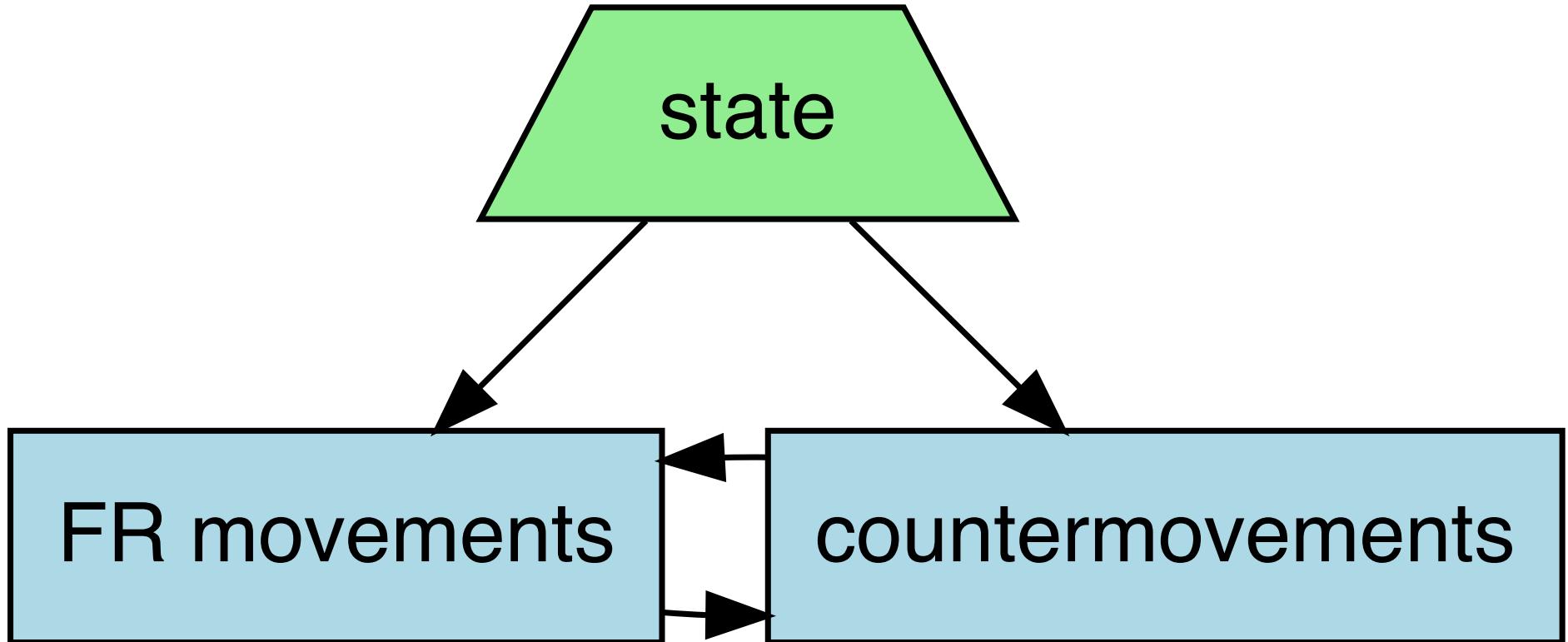
# Organisations (macro-, meso-, micro-levels)

- Parties
  - Party family
  - individual parties (and within-party studies)
  - voters/supporters
- Mobilisation
  - Whole movements or movement sectors/fields
  - SMOs
  - leaders, activists, members, participants
- Terrorism / violent extremism
  - surrounding structures (e.g., NSU)
  - groups, cells
  - individuals

# Triadic competition and contention



# Triadic competition and contention



# Germany's far-right scene

- Overview
- Party membership
- Demonstrations (movement activity)
- Crime
- Terrorism, political violence
- 2024 counter-mobilisation

# Germany's far-right scene

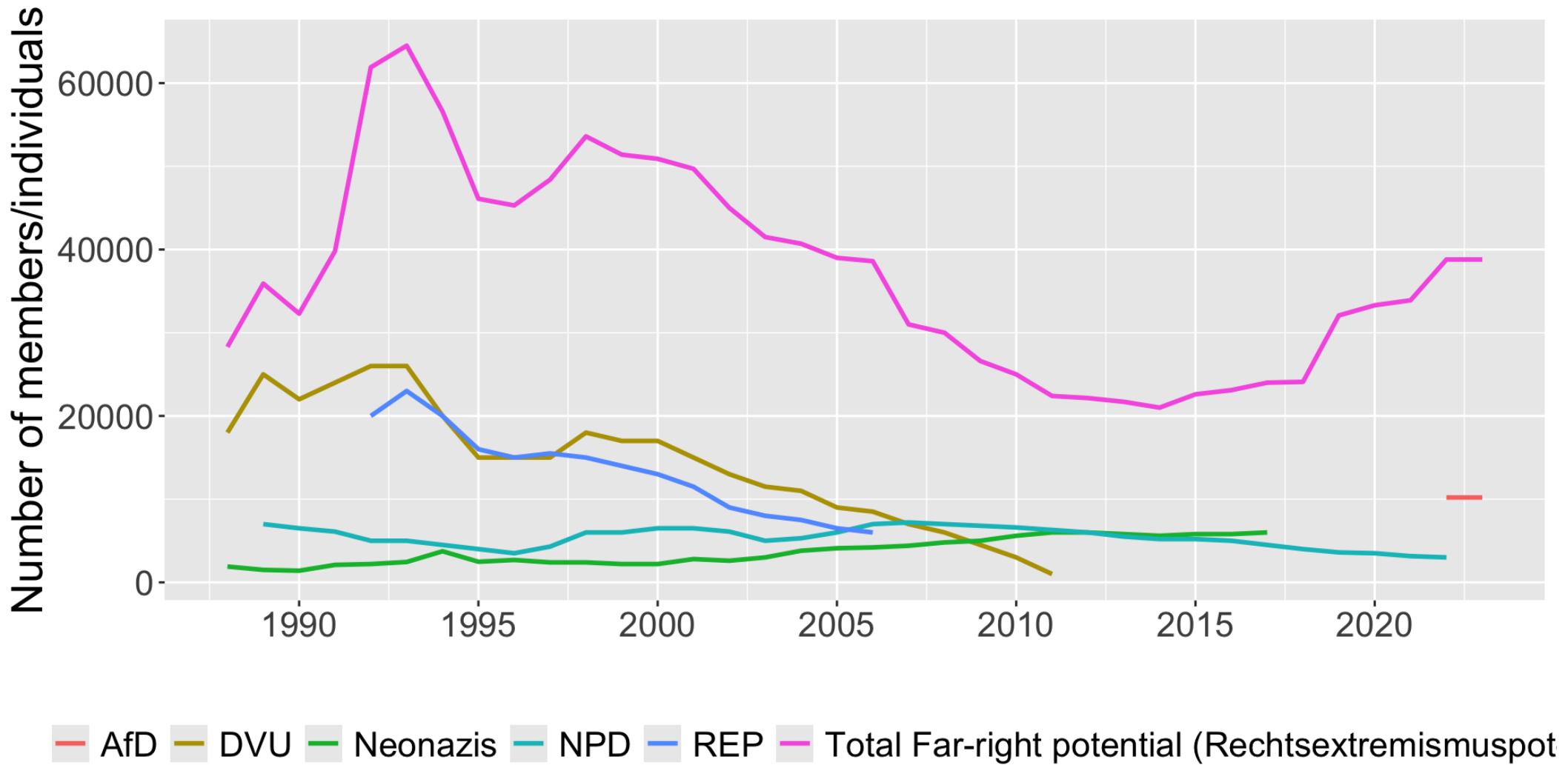
*Parties:* AfD, DVU, NPD\*, REP

*Media, civil society:* Institut für Staatspolitik (*Sezession*), Compact, Desiderius Erasmus Stiftung (AfD)

*SMSOs:* NPD\*, Dritte (III.) Weg, Identitäre Bewegung Deutschland, Pro-Bewegung

- groupuscules, Kameradschaften
- Virchow (2007): 4 big demonstration campaigns of the 2000s: 13 Feb. Dresden, 1 May, Aug. Hess, Nov. Halbe
- anti-COVID groups? are they far-right? Querdenken 711, dieBasis? (e.g., Plümper, Neumayer, and Pfaff 2021; Heinze and Weisskircher 2022)

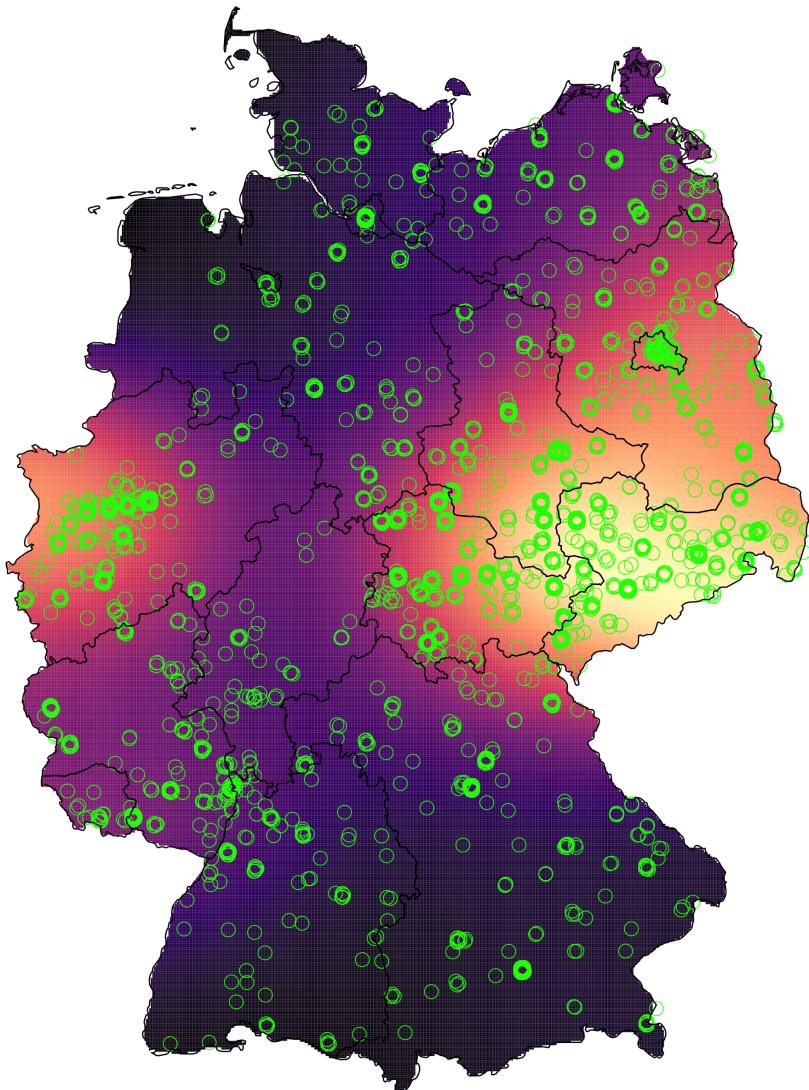
# German FR party membership



# German FR demo mobilisation (2005-2020)

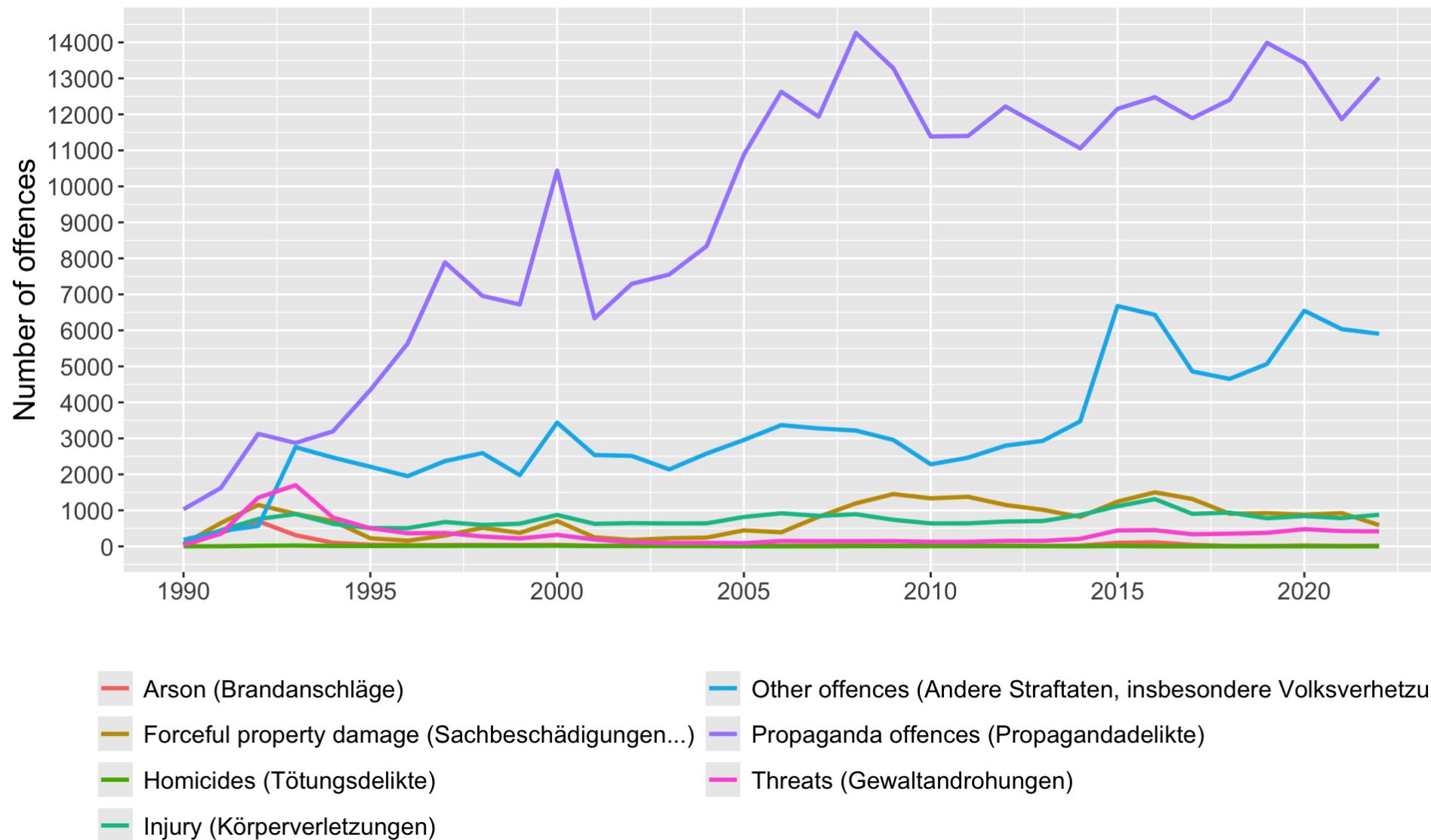


# Kleine Anfrage data



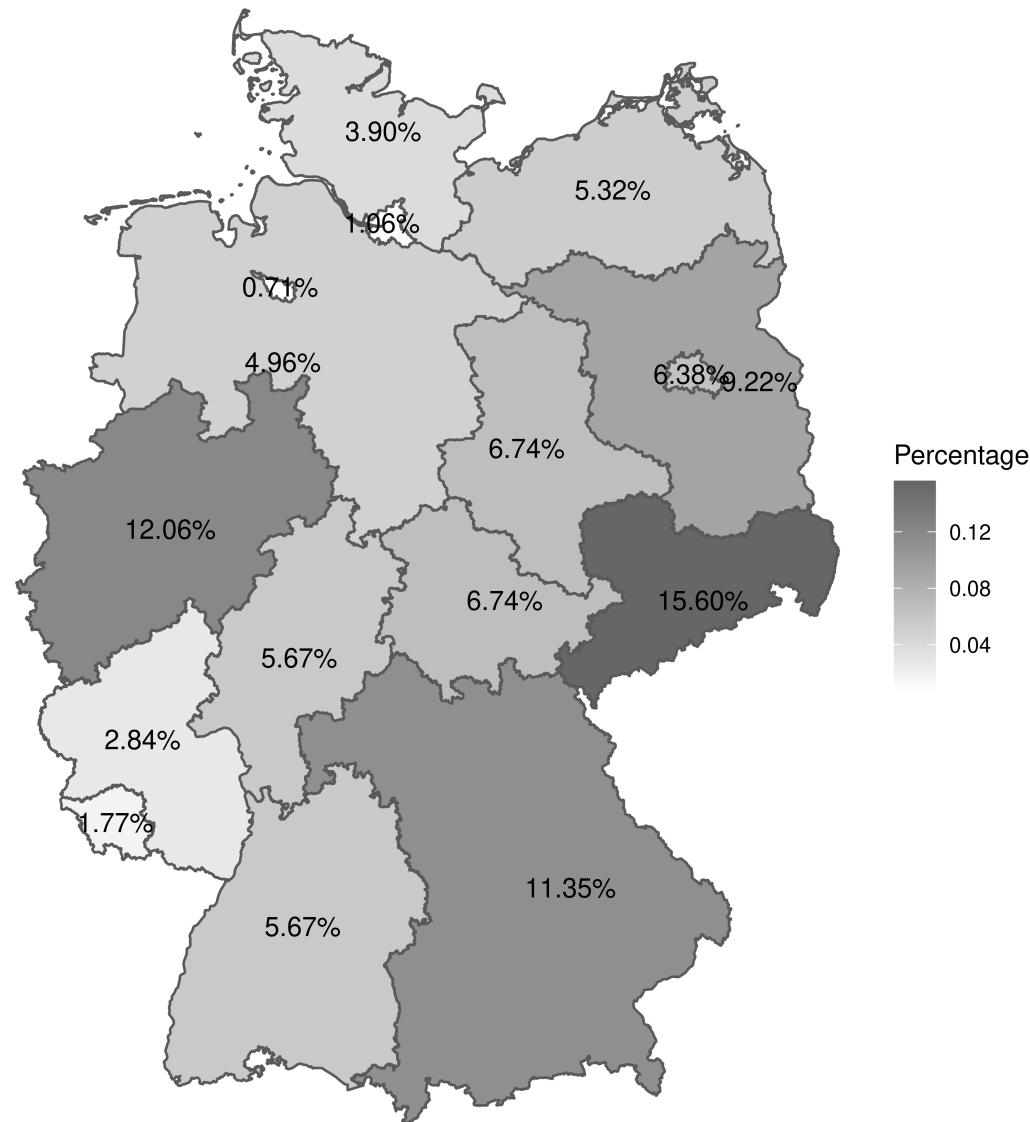
Events	Participants	Grouping
1	30	(ohne)
2	100	ARMINIUS-Bund
240	22,521	DIE RECHTE
124	9,988	Der III. Weg
1	50	NPD-JN
1,002	157,054	NPD/JN
1	200	NPD/JN – „Freie Kräfte“
2	160	NPD/JN/DIE RECHTE
11	1,325	NPD/JN/Neonazis / Rechtsextremisten
1,253	211,740	Neonazis / Rechtsextremisten
2	90	Neonazis / Rechtsextremisten/DIE RECHTE
4	1,470	Neonazis / Rechtsextremisten/Der III. Weg
2	380	n. b.
64	3,101	pro NRW

# German FR crime



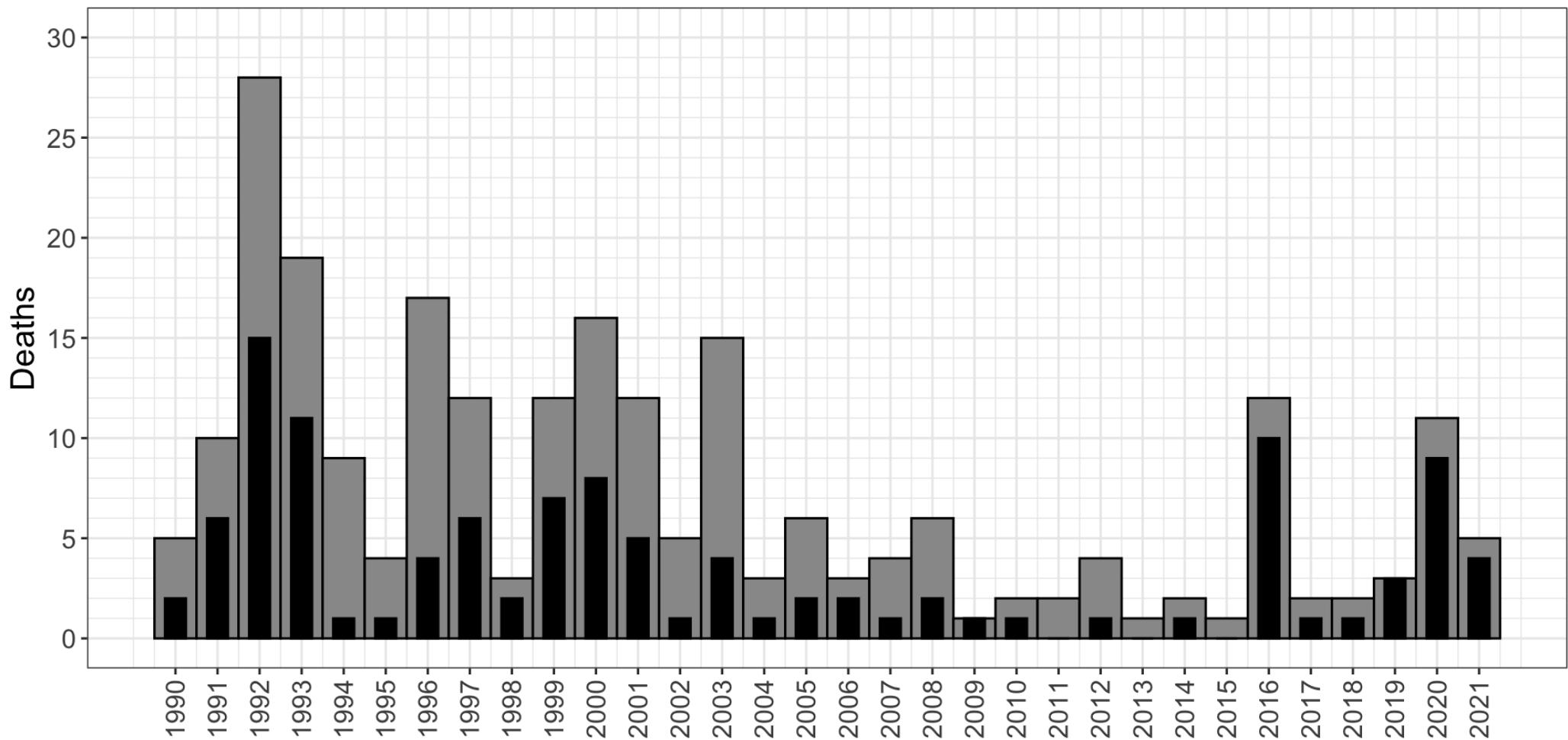
# German FR terrorism/violent extremism

Visualisation  
data 1990  
from Ravndal et al.  
(2021)

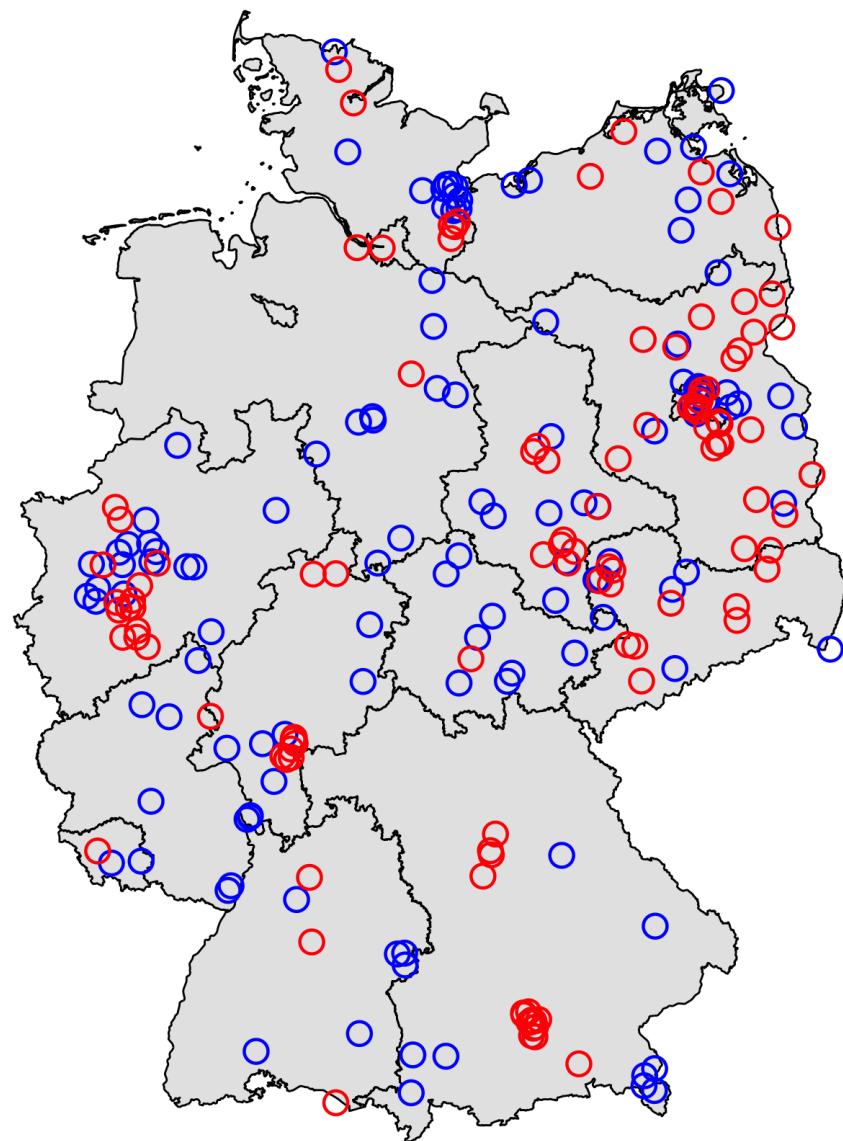


# far-right motivated homicides in Germany

Recognised by BRD vs. identified by Amadeu Antonio Stiftung



# far-right motivated homicides in Germany



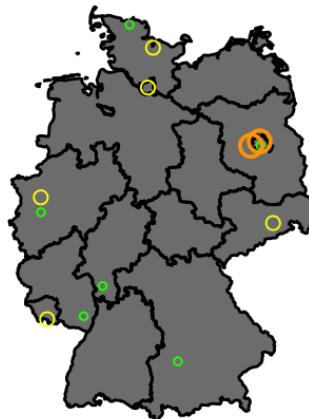
O: officially  
recognised by BRD

O: identified by  
Amadeu Antonio  
Stiftung

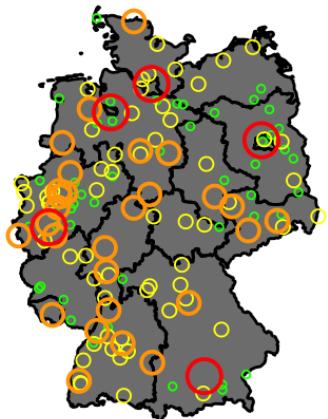


# 2024 counter-mobilisation against AfD

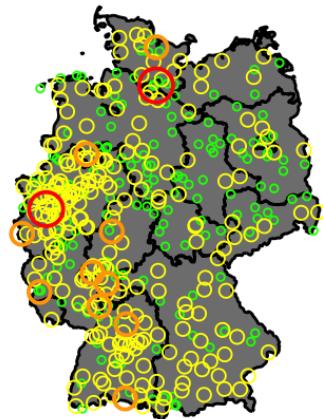
11-14 January



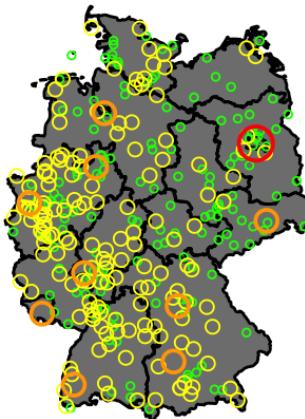
15-21 January



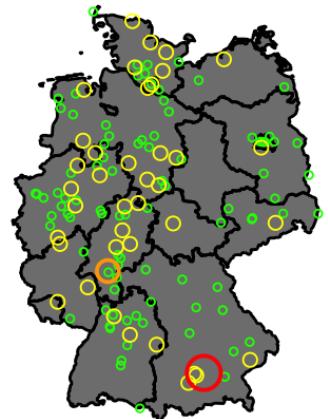
22-28 January



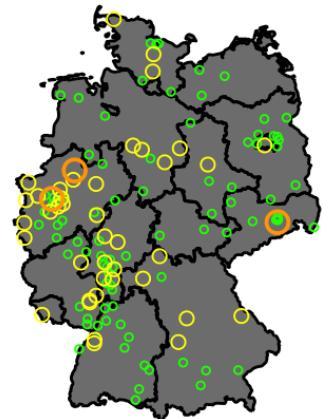
29 January-4 February



5-11 February



12-18 February



<https://www.derstandard.at/story/3000000209911/die-logik-hinter-den-anti-afd-protesten>

# Any questions, concerns, feedback for this class?

Anonymous feedback here:

<https://forms.gle/pisUmtmWdE13zMD58>

Alternatively, send me an email: [m.zeller@lmu.de](mailto:m.zeller@lmu.de)

# References

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