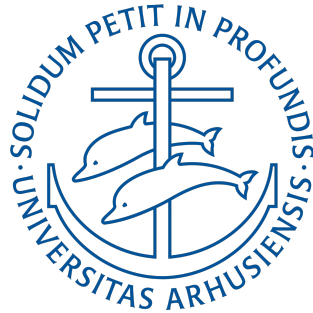


# POLITICAL EXTREMISM

## Understanding Citizens' Attitudes and Behaviours

Fall 2024



Version: August 21, 2024

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### Course description:

Democracies face a persistent threat from the inside through political-extremist actors and ideas. Time and again, extremist individuals, movements, and parties aim to challenge the existing political system to establish an order that contradicts the fundamental principles of liberal-democratic coexistence, while at the same time, hate and violence against minority groups are surging across the globe. However, political extremism is not just a marginal social phenomenon – extremist ideas and ideologies often reach deep into large parts of society. This is highly problematic as citizens' support for basic democratic rights and institutions is the backbone of democratic stability, and a lack thereof might motivate and legitimize extremist violent actions. Thus, it is essential to understand both when and why citizens support extremist views and behaviors, as well as which strategies extremist groups and movements pursue to achieve their goals. Therefore, this course will focus on both aspects and how they interact by looking at different forms and examples of political extremism in the past and today, with a focus on how contextual factors shape citizens' attitudes and behaviors. In addition, to comprehend the causes and consequences of political extremism, a key component of the course will be to better understand methods of causal inference and their limitations, as well as how to develop a research design.

## General readings:

The following readings are meant to help you in the process of working on your own research idea and writing the term paper throughout the semester.

- **Writing:**

- Graff, G., & Birkenstein, C. (2014). *They Say, I Say - The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*. W.W. Norton Company

- **Research Design:**

- Imai, K. (2018). *Quantitative Social Science: An Introduction*. Princeton University Press
- Cunningham, S. (2021). *Causal Inference: The Mixtape*. Yale University Press. [Available as e-book](#)
- Druckman, J. N. (2022). *Experimental Thinking: A Primer on Social Science Experiments*. Cambridge University Press. [Available as e-book](#)

- **Theories and concepts:<sup>1</sup>**

- Gambetta, D., & Hertog, S. (2018a). *Engineers of Jihad: The Curious Connection between Violent Extremism and Education*. Princeton University Press. [Available as e-book](#)
- Miller-Idriss, C. (2020b). *Hate in the Homeland: The New Global Far Right*. Princeton University Press. [Available as e-book](#)
- Gerstenfeld, P. B. (2017). *Hate crimes: Causes, controls, and controversies*. Sage Publications. [Available as e-book](#)

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<sup>1</sup>We will read some chapters of the books in class, yet, it might be helpful or interesting to dive into them more deeply.

## Expectations:

- **Active participation!**
- **Literature review:** The students write a brief (1 page, font size 12; 1.5 spacing) literature review critically discussing one of the readings of one class session. The idea is not only to 1) summarize the key arguments, but also to 2) discuss potential limitations or contradictions in the readings (theoretical and/or methodological) and the key contributions/strengths of the reading. The literature reviews serve two purposes: First, it should motivate students to critically engage with existing research, which is key to entering the academic discourse and developing their own research ideas. Second, they help me to understand how you interpret the readings and which problems you might have had with them. This will be important for structuring the in-class discussions.

The literature reviews should be uploaded to Brightspace on Monday at noon before the respective session on Tuesday.

- **Presentation:** The final two sessions of the seminar will culminate in a Mini-Conference. Here, the students will present their own ideas for their term paper (**max. 8 minutes**). The main purpose is to present a first idea on their own theoretical argument and research design, rather than an extensive literature review. This will help the students to figure out whether their ideas fly and help them to understand what challenges they have to deal with when working on the final term paper.
- **Term paper:** As a final assignment, the students need to write and submit a term paper at the end of the course (max. 42,000 characters including blanks [ $\approx$  7000-9000 words including bibliography], font size 12; 1.5 spacing; justified text). More on the formal requirements can be found here: [Formal requirements for submission of take-home assignments](#). Please list the number of characters (with blanks) on the front page of your paper.

Term papers should develop an original argument and test this argument empirically. Term papers contain an 1) introduction 2) literature review 3) theoretical argument 4) research design 5) results 6) conclusion section. It is key to re-capture the original arguments/discussion in the academic literature, to develop an own argument on the subject, and to test this argument rigorously.

## Use of AI:

- If you use AI (ChatGPT, Gemini, etc.) to write your term paper, you are required to be transparent about it. More specifically, list the prompts and answers in a separate appendix at the end of the term paper.
- This appendix does not count towards the word count. You do not need to list the use of AI for coding, data analysis, and grammar corrections (e.g., DeepL Write, Grammarly, etc.).
- Please remember always to respect the rules of academic integrity and honesty!

## Important dates:

1. Upload of literature review: **Monday at noon** before the session for which the reading was assigned
2. Presentation slot: **26.11.2024** or **03.12.2024**
3. Handing in of the term paper: **08.01.2025**

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# Introduction

## 27.08. What is political extremism? (+ Organization)

### Required readings:

- Jungkunz, S. (2022). What is Political Extremism? In *The nature and origins of political extremism in germany and beyond* (pp. 17–44). Palgrave Macmillan. [Available as e-book](#)
- Gambetta, D., & Hertog, S. (2018b). The Ideology of Islamist Extremism Compared. In *Engineers of jihad: The curious connection between violent extremism and education* (pp. 85–99). Princeton University Press. [Available as e-book](#)
- Dancygier, R. (2023). Hate crime supporters are found across age, gender, and income groups and are susceptible to violent political appeals. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 120(7), 1–7

### Optional readings:

- Pirro, A. L. (2023). Far right: The significance of an umbrella concept. *Nations and Nationalism*, 29(1), 101–112
  - Backes, U. (2014). Meaning and Forms of Political Extremism in Past and Present. In C. Mudde (Ed.), *Political extremism* (pp. 3–22). Sage Library of Political Science
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## Contextual explanations of political extremism

### 03.09. Historical roots and persistence

#### Required readings:

- Pop-Eleches, G., & Tucker, J. A. (2020). Communist Legacies and Left-Authoritarianism. *Comparative Political Studies*, 53(12), 1861–1889
- Acharya, A., Blackwell, M., & Sen, M. (2016). The political legacy of American Slavery. *Journal of Politics*, 78(3), 621–641

#### Optional readings:

- Homola, J., Pereira, M. M., & Tavits, M. (2020). Legacies of the Third Reich: Concentration Camps and Out-group Intolerance. *American Political Science Review*, 114(2), 573–590
    - Pepinsky, T. B., Wallace Goodman, S., & Ziller, C. (2023). Modeling Spatial Heterogeneity and Historical Persistence: Nazi Concentration Camps and Contemporary Intolerance. *American Political Science Review*, 1–10
  - Voigtländer, N., & Voth, H. J. (2015). Nazi indoctrination and anti-Semitic beliefs in Germany. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 112(26), 7931–7936
  - Voigtländer, N., & Voth, H.-J. (2012). Persecution Perpetuated: The Medieval Origins of Anti-semitic Violence in Nazi Germany. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 1339–1392
-

## 10.09. It's the economy, stupid!

### Required readings:

- Dipoppa, G., Grossman, G., & Zonszein, S. (2023). Locked Down, Lashing Out: COVID-19 Effects on Asian Hate Crimes in Italy. *The Journal of Politics*, 85(2), 000–000
- Gambetta, D., & Hertog, S. (2018a). *Engineers of Jihad: The Curious Connection between Violent Extremism and Education*. Princeton University Press (Chapters 1+2). [Available as e-book](#)

### Optional readings:

- Falk, A., Kuhn, A., & Zweimüller, J. (2011). Unemployment and Right-wing Extremist Crime. *Scandinavian Journal of Economics*, 113(2), 260–285
  - Dancygier, R. (2010). *Immigration and conflict in Europe*. Cambridge University Press. [Available as e-book](#)
- 

## 17.09. Social marginalization

### Required readings:

- Schils, N., & Verhage, A. (2017). Understanding how and why young people enter radical or violent extremist groups. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 11, 1–17
- Mitts, T. (2019). From Isolation to Radicalization: Anti-Muslim Hostility and Support for ISIS in the West. *American Political Science Review*, 113(1), 173–194

### Optional readings:

- Lyons-Padilla, S., Gelfand, M. J., Mirahmadi, H., Farooq, M., & Van Egmond, M. (2015). Belonging nowhere: Marginalization & radicalization risk among Muslim immigrants. *Behavioral Science & Policy*, 1(2), 1–12
  - Renström, E. A., Bäck, H., & Knapton, H. M. (2020). Exploring a pathway to radicalization: The effects of social exclusion and rejection sensitivity. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 23(8), 1204–1229
- 

## 24.09. The opinion of others: Social norms and community support

### Required readings:

- Bursztyn, L., Egorov, G., & Fiorin, S. (2020). From extreme to mainstream: The erosion of social norms. *American Economic Review*, 110(11), 3522–3548
- Pinderhughes, H. (1993). The Anatomy of Racially Motivated Violence in New York City: A Case Study of Youth in Southern Brooklyn. *Social Problems*, 40(4), 478–492

### Optional readings:

- Valentim, V. (2021). Parliamentary Representation and the Normalization of Radical Right Support: *Comparative Political Studies*, 54(14), 2475–2511
- Álvarez-Benjumea, A., & Winter, F. (2020). The breakdown of antiracist norms: A natural experiment on hate speech after terrorist attacks. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 117(37), 22800–22804

- Bicchieri, C. (2016). *Norms in the wild: How to diagnose, measure, and change social norms*. Oxford University Press. [Available as e-book](#)
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## 01.10. The political logic of extremism

### Required readings:

- Karapın, R. (2002). Antiminority Riots in Unified Germany: Cultural Conflicts and Mischanneled Political Participation. *Comparative Politics*, 34(2), 147–167
- Romarri, A. (2022). Strongmen in power are not without consequences : far-right mayors and hate crimes. *Working Paper*. [Not available through the library \(access through link\)](#)

### Optional readings:

- Krause, W., Cohen, D., & Abou-Chadi, T. (2023). Does accommodation work? Mainstream party strategies and the success of radical right parties. *Political Science Research and Methods*, 11(1), 172–179
  - Zonszein, S., & Grossman, G. (2024). Voted in, standing out: Public response to immigrants' political accession. *American Journal of Political Science*, 1–16
  - King, R. D., & Brustein, W. I. (2006). A political threat model of intergroup violence: Jews in pre-World War II Germany. *Criminology*, 44(4), 867–891
- 

## 08.10. The role of the media

### Required readings:

- Ang, D. (2023). The Birth of a Nation: Media and Racial Hate. *American Economic Review*, 113(6), 1424–1460
- Bolet, D., & Foos, F. (2024). Media Platforming and the Normalisation of Extreme Right Views. *Forthcoming at British Journal of Political Science*. [Not available through the library \(access through link\)](#)

### Optional readings:

- Kaestner, R. (2023). A Critique of “The Birth of a Nation: Media and Racial Hate”. *Econ Journal Watch*, 20(2), 214–233
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## 15.10. NO CLASS

- Enjoy the break!
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## 22.10. Social media and the internet

### Required readings:

- Chen, A. Y., Nyhan, B., Reifler, J., Robertson, R. E., & Wilson, C. (2023). Subscriptions and external links help drive resentful users to alternative and extremist YouTube channels. *Science Advances*, 9(35), 1–13
- Müller, K., & Schwarz, C. (2021). Fanning the Flames of Hate: Social Media and Hate Crime. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 19(4), 2131–2167

### Optional readings:

- Ribeiro, M. H., Ottoni, R., West, R., Almeida, V. A., & Wagner Meira, W. M. (2020). Auditing radicalization pathways on YouTube. *FAT\* 2020 - Proceedings of the 2020 Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency*, 131–141
  - Mitts, T., Phillips, G., & Walter, B. F. (2022). Studying the Impact of ISIS Propaganda Campaigns. *Journal of Politics*, 84(2), 1220–1225
- 

## Extremist actors and their strategies

### 29.10. Extremist protest and violence

#### Required readings:

- Krause, W., & Matsunaga, M. (2023). Does Right-Wing Violence Affect Public Support for Radical Right Parties? Evidence from Germany. *Comparative Political Studies*, 56(14), 2269–2305
- Eady, G., Hjorth, F. K., & Dinesen, P. T. (2023). Do Violent Protests Affect Expressions of Party Identity? Evidence from the Capitol Insurrection. *American Political Science Review*, 117(3), 1151–1157
  - *If available, instead:* Sardoschau, S., & Artís, A. C. (2024). Public Signal and Private Action: Right-wing Protest and Hate Crimes against Refugees. *Working paper*

#### Optional readings:

- Castelli Gattinara, P., Froio, C., & Pirro, A. L. (2022). Far-right protest mobilisation in Europe: Grievances, opportunities and resources. *European Journal of Political Research*, 61(4), 1019–1041
  - Völker, T. (2023). How terrorist attacks distort public debates: a comparative study of right-wing and Islamist extremism. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 1–28
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## 05.11. Recruitment strategies

### Required readings:

- Davies, G., Bouchard, M., Wu, E., Joffres, K., & Frank, R. (2015). Terrorist and extremist organizations' use of the Internet for recruitment. In M. Bouchard (Ed.), *Social networks, terrorism and counter-terrorism: Radical and connected* (pp. 105–127). Routledge. [Available as e-book](#)
- Miller-Idriss, C. (2020a). Grooming and Recruiting: Cultivating Intellectual Leadership. In *Hate in the homeland: The new global far right* (pp. 111–137). Princeton University Press. [Available as e-book](#)

### Optional readings:

- Reilly, B., & Edwards, A. (2021). Preliminary Analysis on the Recruitment Process for Domestic Violent Extremist Groups. In D. Russo, T. Ahram, W. Karwowski, G. Di Bucchianico, & R. Taiar (Eds.), *Intelligent human systems integration 2021* (pp. 350–356)
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## Encountering Political Extremism

### 12.11. The role of the state

#### Required readings:

- Bischof, D., & Valentim, V. (2023). The Consequences of Punishing Political Ideologies in Democracies – Evidence from Employment Bans in Germany. *Working Paper*. [Not available through the library \(access through link\)](#)
- Lindekilde, L. (2012). Neo-liberal governing of 'radicals': Danish radicalization prevention policies and potential iatrogenic effects. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 6(1), 109–125

#### Optional readings:

- Arenas, A. (2021). Party Bans: Deterrence or backlash? Evidence from the basque country. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 16(3), 325–358
  - Mitts, T. (2022). Countering Violent Extremism and Radical Rhetoric. *International Organization*, 76(1), 251–272
  - Alizade, J., Dancygier, R., & Homola, J. (2022). Structures of Bias: How the State Systematically Downplays Right-Wing Extremism. *Working Paper*
- 

### 19.11. The role of civil society

#### Required readings:

- Ellinas, A. A., & Lamprianou, I. (2024). Movement versus Party: The Electoral Effects of Anti-Far Right Protests in Greece. *American Political Science Review*, 118(2), 687–705
- Turkoglu, O., Dittmann, R., & Firestone, B. (2023). Commemorating local victims of past atrocities and far-right support over time. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 120(28), 1–7

**Optional readings:**

- Colombo, F., Ferrara, A., Vassou, F.-M., Bernardi, F., & Dinas, E. (2024). From the Streets to the Voting Booth: the Electoral Effect of Grassroots Mobilization Against the Far-Right. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. [Not available through the library \(access through link\)](#)
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## **Mini-Conference**

### **26.11. Mini-Conference: Session I**

- Student presentations

### **03.12. Mini-Conference: Session II**

- Student presentations