Class 12: Individuals in the far right
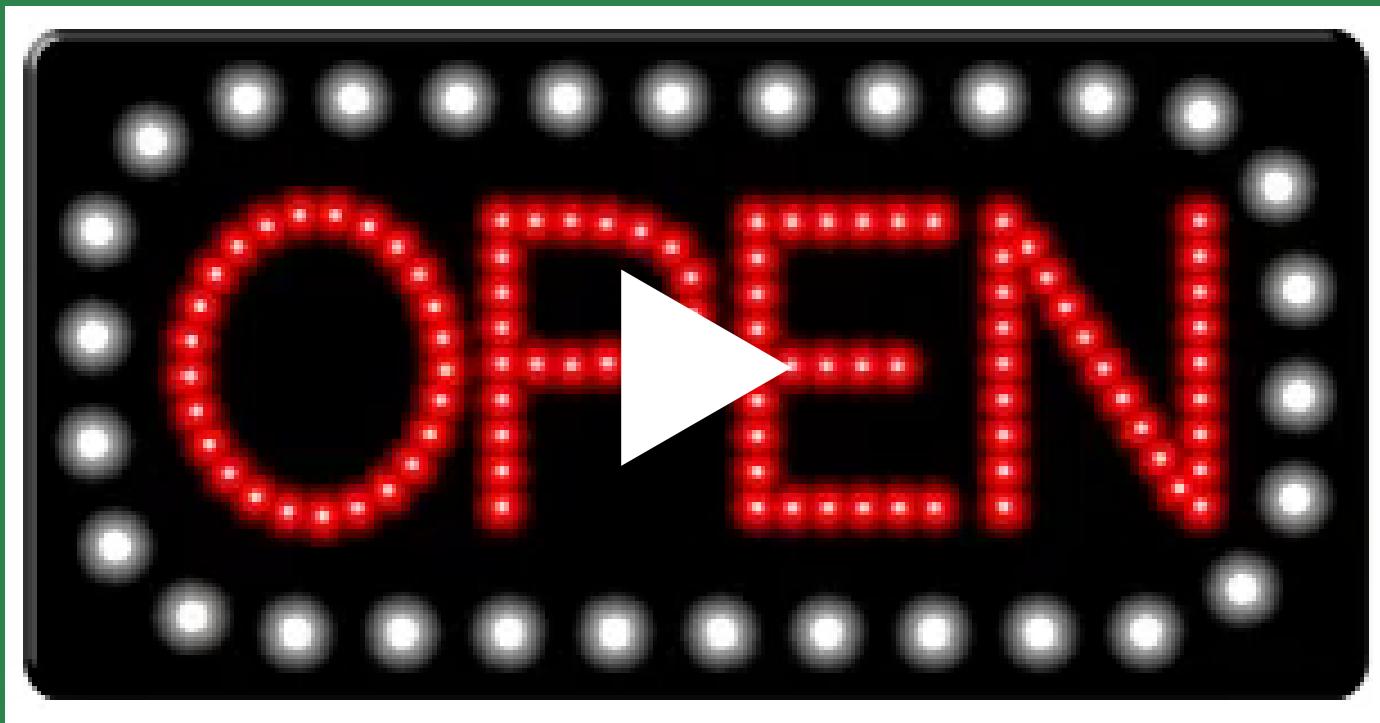
Violence

Dr. Michael C. Zeller

Agenda for the day

- Opening notes
- Course evaluations
- Patterns of violence and the far right
- Poll: far-right violence
- Contextual causes of far-right violence
- Any questions, concerns, feedback for this class?

Opening notes
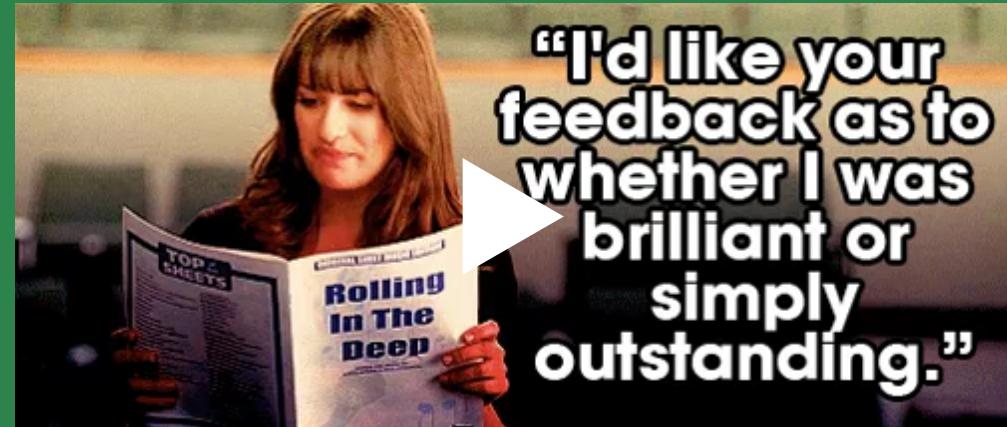
Presentation groups

Date	Presenters	Method
3 July:	Alexander V., Luis G., Oscar O., Mia C.	descriptive inference
10 July:	Lina S., Stephen W., Philomena B., Aarón Z.	ethnography
17 July:	Corinna Z., Eva M., and Rostislav N.	TBD
24 July:	Sebastian K., Thomas R., Emilia Z., Florian P.	quant. text analysis
24 July:	Lorenz F., Daniel B., Medina H.	quant. text analysis

Course evaluations

- course evaluations are available
- scoring is appreciated
- comments can be very helpful, for example:

1. how is the course website? any suggested improvements?

2. what did you like and dislike about the class slides?

3. what did you like and dislike about class meetings?

4. did you watch the recorded lectures? (*evaluations are anonymous, so you can be totally honest*) how were they?

5. are course assignments clear? (e.g., add another report example?)

Patterns of violence and the far ri

- 'patterns of violence' framework
  - repertoires, targeting, frequency, techniques
- applying this framework to far-right violent

Patterns of Violence

borrowing a conceptual framework from armed conflict research (Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2017)

> a pattern of violence on the part of an armed organization (state force, rebel group, or militia) as the *relatively stable and recognizable configuration of violence in which it engages. This configuration consists of ...*

Patterns of Violence

borrowing a conceptual framework from armed conflict research
(Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2017)

repertoire   targeting   frequency   technique

borrowing a conceptual framework from armed conflict research
(Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2017)

targeting   frequency   technique

repertoire

Patterns of Violence

borrowing a conceptual framework from armed conflict research
(Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2017)

repertoire   targeting   frequency   technique

Patterns of Violence

borrowing a conceptual framework from armed conflict research
(Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2017)
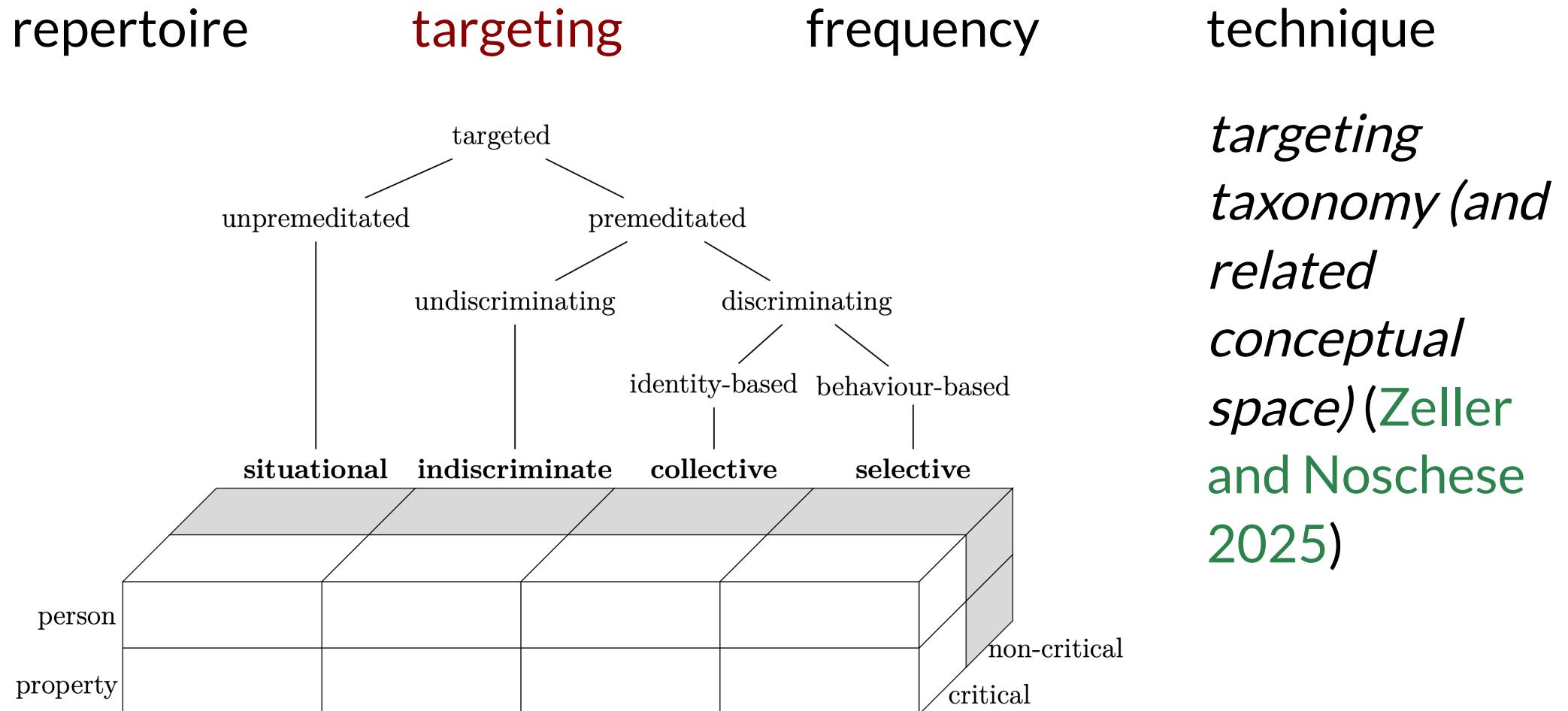
repertoire   frequency   technique

# targeting

Patterns of Violence

borrowing a conceptual framework from armed conflict research (Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2017)

repertoire   targeting   frequency   technique

targeting taxonomy (and related conceptual space) (Zeller and Noschese 2025)

Patterns of Violence

borrowing a conceptual framework from armed conflict research
(Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2017)

repertoire   targeting   frequency   technique

Patterns of Violence

borrowing a conceptual framework from armed conflict research
(Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2017)

repertoire   targeting   technique

frequency

- count: number of attacks deploying a repertoire against ... e

- rates (common in criminology research as well):

  - incidence: incidents per member of some referent population

  - prevalence: fraction of population that suffered an incident

  - perpetration: number of incidents or persons of the targeted group per member of the group of violent attackers

Patterns of Violence

borrowing a conceptual framework from armed conflict research (Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2017)

repertoire   targeting   frequency   technique

Patterns of Violence

borrowing a conceptual framework from armed conflict research
(Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2017)

repertoire   targeting   frequency

technique

- how the actor(s) carry out their violence

- techniques are about the tools or instruments used (e.g., clubs, knives, guns, bombs)

Far-right patterns - Italy (Zeller and Noschese 2025)

Repertoire   Target type   Technique
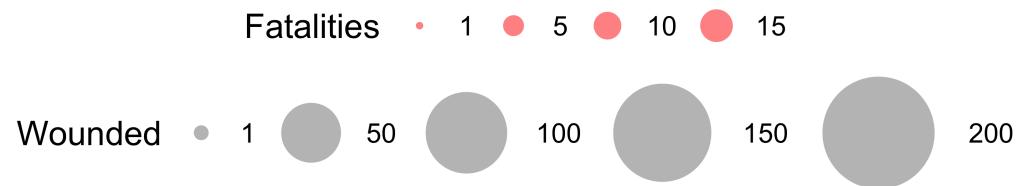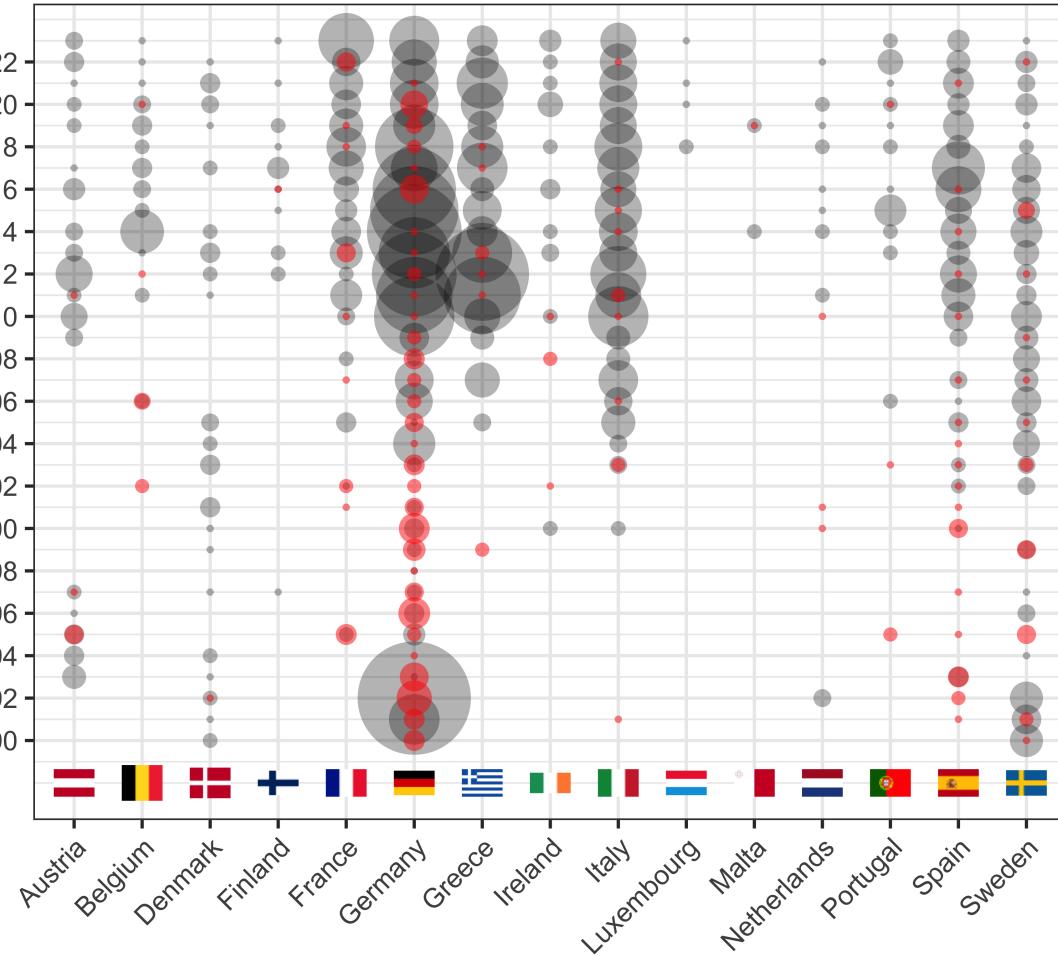
☑ Assault ☑ Vandalism ☑ Homicide

Assault   Vandalism   Homicide
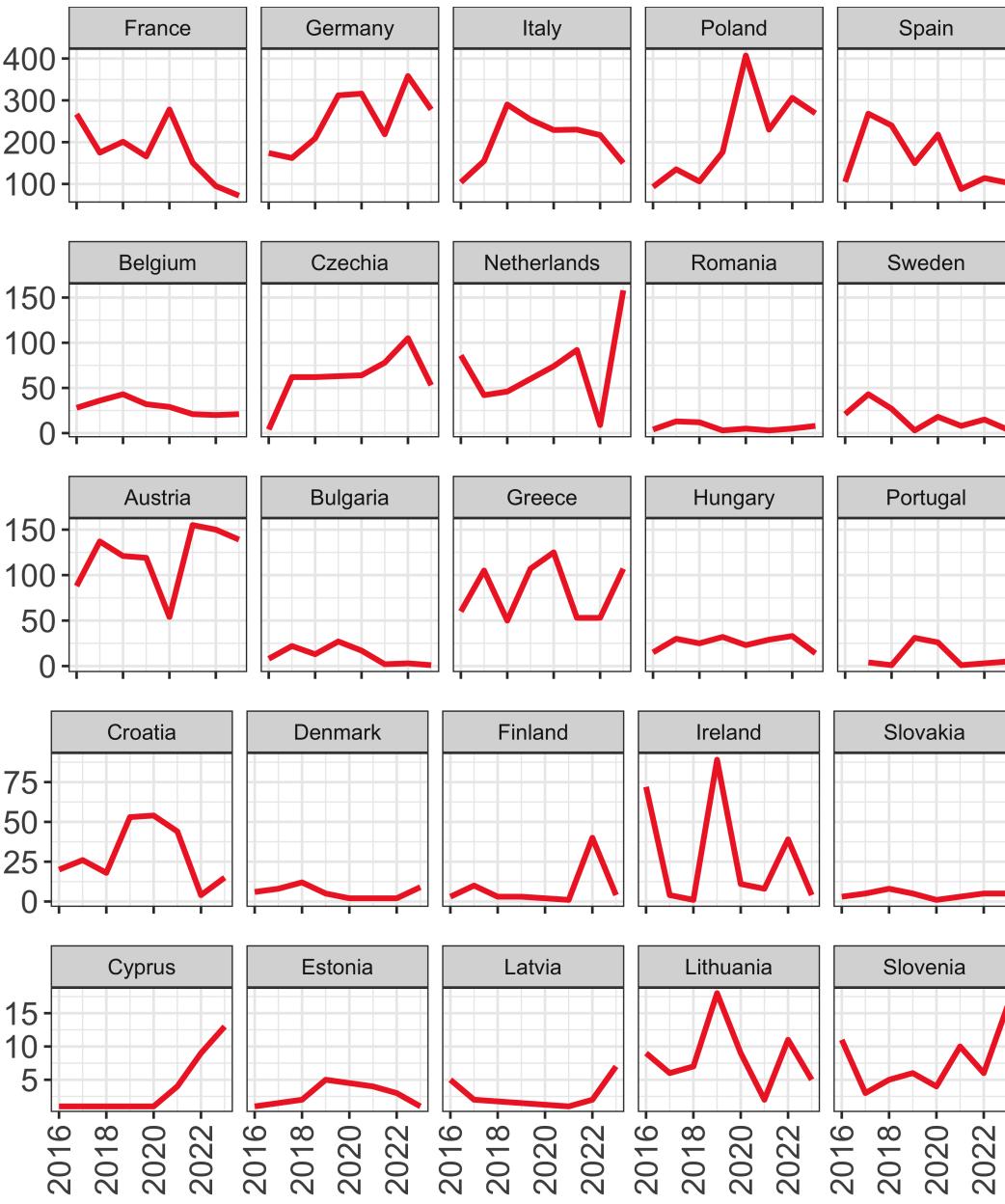
- Injuries and fatalities from violent right-wing extremism

- similar categorical codes used in Right-Wing Terrorism and Violence (RTV) Dataset

https://www.sv.c-rex.uio.no/RTVMapTool/

- Reported hate cri[me] incidents per year[per] country. (most populous countries on top)

- Data are collected by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)

  https://hatecrime.osce.org/

- any issues to discuss if we *reported* on these data?

Poll: far-right violence

Take the survey at
https://forms.gle/EJmHdaqQpbBdvKDx7
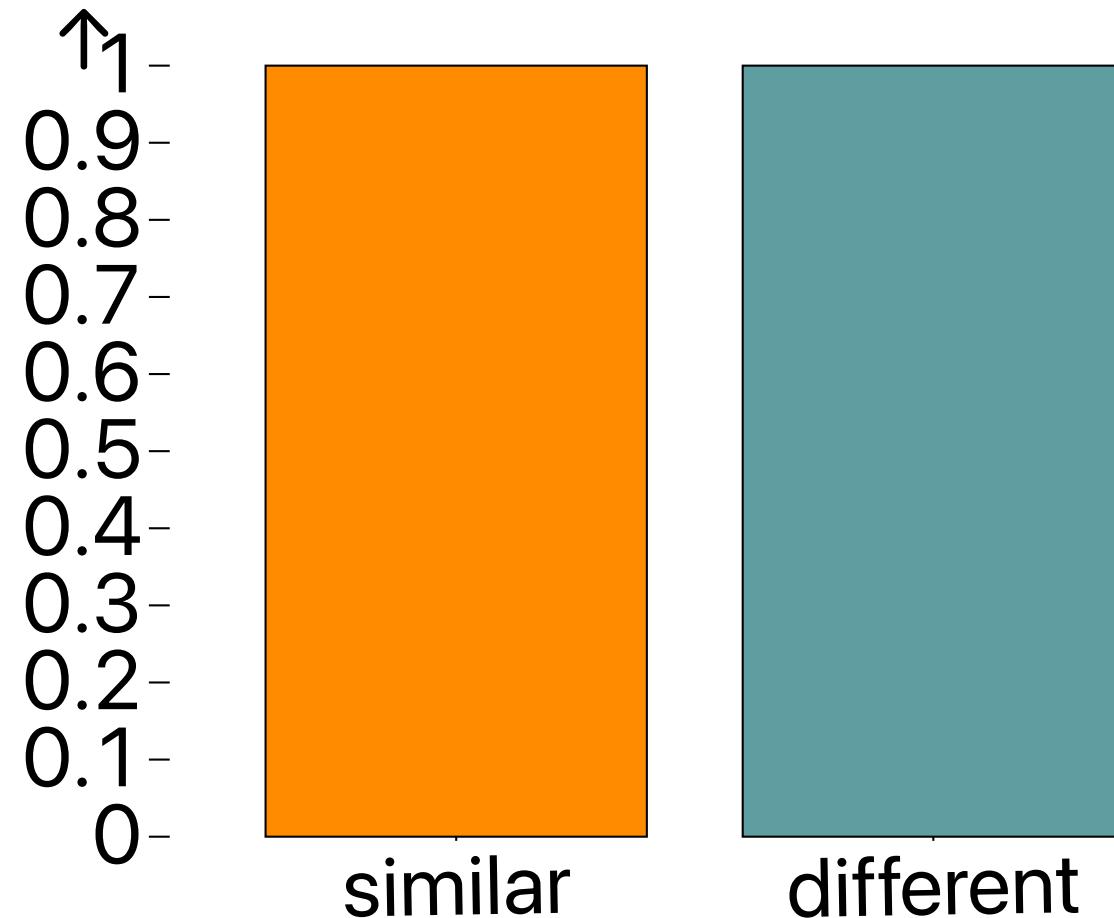
- Patterns of far-right violence similar or different to other extremist violence?

- Generally, are 'lone actors' or violent far-right groups the greater societal threat?

- 'regular' violent crime: just like other individual violent offenders; domestic terrorism: violence to terrift, advance movement goals. State authorities' understanding?: crime or terrorism?

- Groups, parties responsible for members' violent crimes?

- Is anti-fascist violence sometimes legitimate?
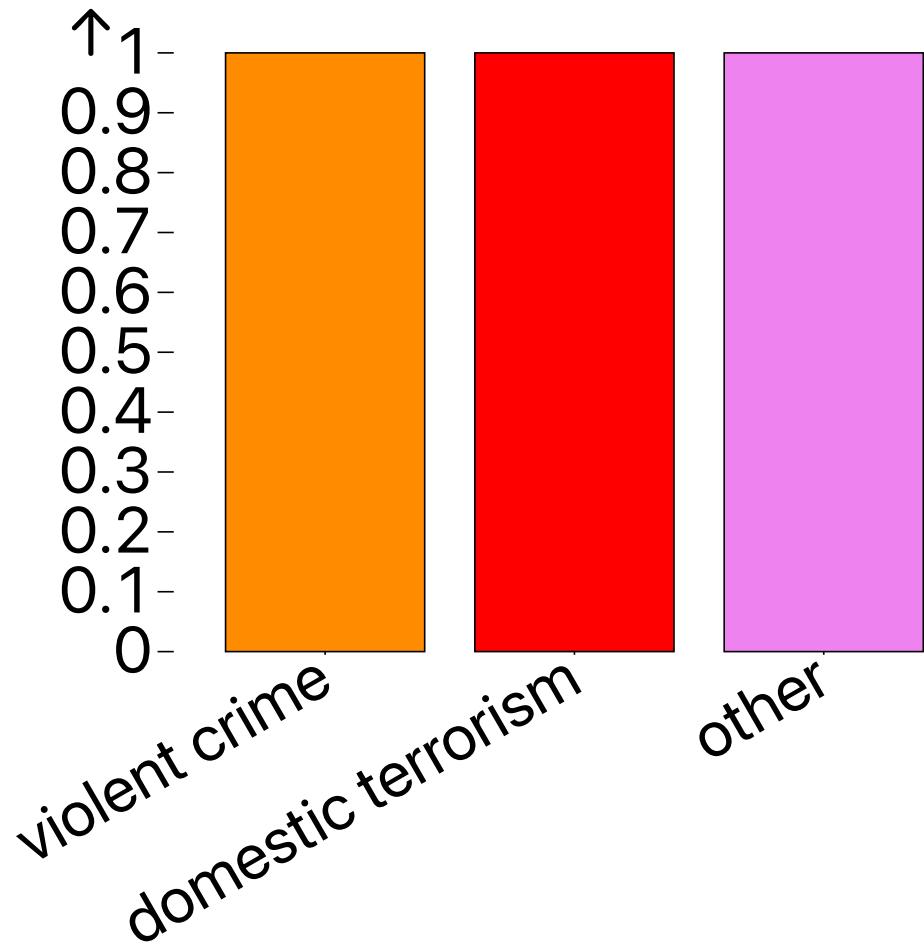
Poll: threat and response

Contextual causes of far-right violence

- country-level causes of right-wing terrorism (Ravndal 2018)

- development of right-wing terrorism within a country (Germany) (Manthe 2021)

  - is right-wing terrorism 'still' a within-country phenomenon?

Explaining right-wing terrorism (Ravndal 2018)

- *RQ*: Why do some Western liberal democracies experience more right-wing terrorism and violence (RTV) than others?

- *data*: RTV in 18 West European countries between *1990 and 2015*
    - (quite hard to gather valid, reliable data for Central and Eastern Europe, as it happens)

- *method*: qualitative comparative analysis (QCA)
    - suited to *explaining* (more so than *describing* or *predicting*)
    - built on set theory: does this concept (set) describe this case

Country-level causes of RW terrorism (Ravndal 2018

Conditions	Theoretical foundation
Ethnic diversity or immigration	Grievances
Socioeconomic hardship	Grievances
Radical right support	Opportunities
Authoritarian legacies	Opportunities
Left-wing militancy (aggression)	Polarisation
Radical right repression	Polarisation

Ravndal (2018) – RTV outcome data table

Country	events	deadly events (no. killed)	per million inhabitants
Austria	23	1 (4)	0.1
Belgium	6	3 (5)	0.3
Denmark	19	1 (1)	0.2
Finland	8	–	
France	16	9 (11)	0.1
Germany	122	82 (104)	1
Greece	55	6 (7)	0.6
Ireland	4	3 (4)	0.8
Italy	99	5 (6)	0.1
Netherlands	10	3 (3)	0.2
Norway	25	3 (79)	0.7
Portugal	3	3 (3)	0.3
Spain	39	22 (22)	0.5
Sweden	89	17 (20)	1.9

Country	events	deadly events (no. killed)	per million inhabitants
Switzerland	1	1 (1)	0.1
United Kingdom	59	31 (33)	0.5
Sum	578	190 (303)	
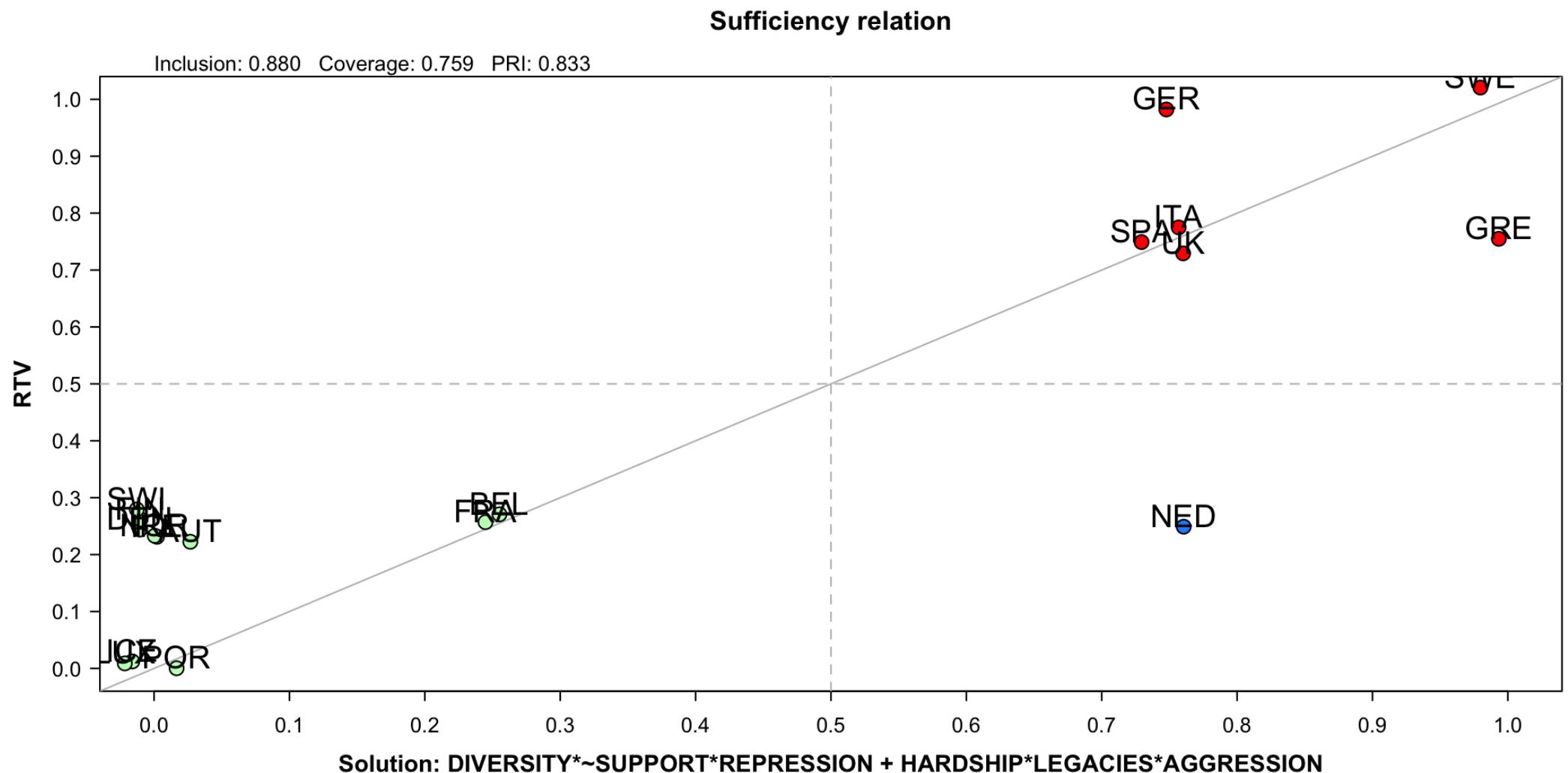
Calibrated data (set membership) (Ravndal 2018)

Country	RTV	Diversity	Hardship	Support	Legacies	Repression	Aggression
AUT	0.25	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
BEL	0.25	1.00	0.25	0.75	0.25	0.75	0.00
DEN	0.25	0.75	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.25
FIN	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00
FRA	0.25	0.75	0.00	0.75	0.25	0.75	0.25
GER	1.00	0.75	0.25	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.75
GRE	0.75	0.75	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	1.00
ICE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
IRE	0.25	0.75	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
ITA	0.75	0.25	0.75	0.75	1.00	0.00	0.75
LUX	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
NED	0.25	0.75	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.75	0.00
NOR	0.25	1.00	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00
POR	0.00	0.25	0.75	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
SPA	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.75
SWE	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.25
SWI	0.25	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.25	0.00
UK	0.75	0.75	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00

Ravndal (2018) - sufficiency

	inclS	PRI	covS	covU	cases
HARDSHIP* LEGACIES* AGGRESSION	0.909	0.875	0.345	0.310	ITA; GRE, SPA
DIVERSITY* ~SUPPORT* REPRESSION	0.867	0.818	0.448	0.414	NED, SWE, UK; GER
Solution	0.880	0.833	0.759		

Sufficiency plot

Sufficiency relation

Inclusion: 0.880　Coverage: 0.759　PRI: 0.833

Solution: DIVERSITY*~SUPPORT*REPRESSION + HARDSHIP*LEGACIES*AGGRESSION

Ravndal (2018) - conclusions

- The two 'causal recipes' both appear "to fuel hostility, polarisation and violence"

    - North European pattern (Diversity* ~Support* Repression)

        - "a predominantly pro-immigration elite perceived as hostile towards people with anti-immigration concerns might be exploited by the extreme right to mobilise new followers and to motivate terrorism and violence"

    - South European pattern (Hardship* Legacies* Aggression)

    - both recipes contain elements of grievances and opportunities

- Ravndal: *high polarisation* might be necessary for extensive RTV, but the data do not offer firm conclusions about this.

Ravndal (2018, 862) – conclusions: 'paradox of tole...'

By implication, a potentially effective cure for RTV could be to limit immigration and be more accepting towards radical right actors and opinions. However, considering the inherently intolerant policies these actors seek to implement, this cure comes with a bitter aftertaste from a liberal democratic perspective. This liberal dilemma has no easy solution…

Right-wing terrorism within Germany (Manthe 2021)

| Manthe's definition of (RW) terrorism | Other definitions |

calculated action of groups or individuals... who, with attempted or actual severe violence against people or property, conspiratorially pursue at least two of the following goals:
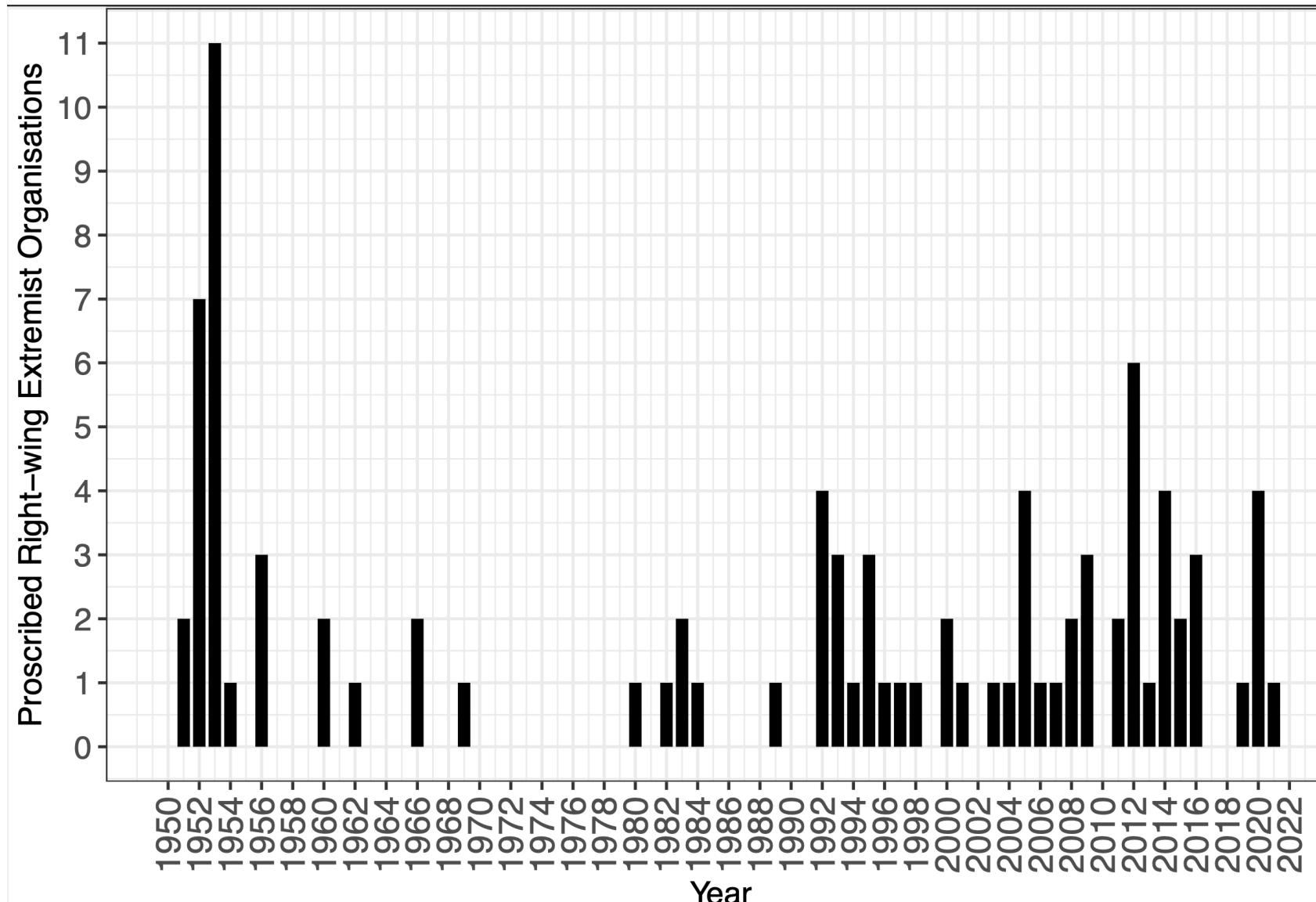
- to create a climate of fear in the general/certain populations;

- to attract public attention;

- to influence the actions of states, leaders, and/or to provoke;

- to destabilize political and social order (which can include challenging the state and its policies); and

- to defend political and social order (vigilantism).

Right-wing terrorism within Germany (Manthe 2021)

- *data*: mainly from Bundesarchiv

    - 22 groups and lone actors between 1970 and 1980

- *common activities*: robberies, illegal weapons, militant training, shootings, planning bombings and attacks

- *common targets*: leftists (GDR, USSR, communists), Jews (incl. cemeteries), U.S. buildings and troops, memorials

want to know more? consider a visit to NS-Dokumentationszentrum München

bans against right-wing extremist groups in Germany

Manthe (2021) - postwar era

Causes of (relatively) peaceful period in postwar era until the 1970s:

1. criminally prosecuting far-right offenders and banning far-right groups

2. lack of strong de-nazification and *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* ('dealing with the past') means 'less impetus for violence'

   - several members of Adenauer's governments had been in NS regime, e.g.,

     - Hans Globke, Chief of Staff for the West German Chancellery, helped draft Nuremberg Laws and worked closely with Adolf Eichmann to administer parts of the Holocaust;

     - Interior Minister Gerhard Schröder, longtime Nazi party member;

     - minister for refugees Theodor Oberländer, served in SS battalion implicated in war crimes; and

     - Bundesnachtichtendienst president Reinhard Gehlen, NS intelligence officer

3. NPD creation in 1964 led the far-right scene to transfer expectations of success through parliamentary victory; also led to strategic restraint with regards to openly violent activities.

how do these explanations relate to the *movements* analytical concepts we have discussed?

Manthe (2021) – phases of 1970s RW terrorist activ

- early 1970s: (larger) group emergence

- mid-1970s: smaller groupings, radicalisation

- late 1970s: escalation in violence

  - participation of German RW extremists in Lebanese civil war, later in Yugoslav wars

- In last phase, two events in particular provoked state rea
  - Oktoberfest bombing (26.09.1980): 12 dead, 200+ inj
    - attacker: Gundolf Köhler (member of WSG Hoffmann)
    - 'lone attacker' theory re-opened for investigation in 2014
  - Assassination of Shlomo Lewin & Frida Poeschke (19.12.1980)
    - attacker: Uwe Behrendt (member of WSG Hoffmann)
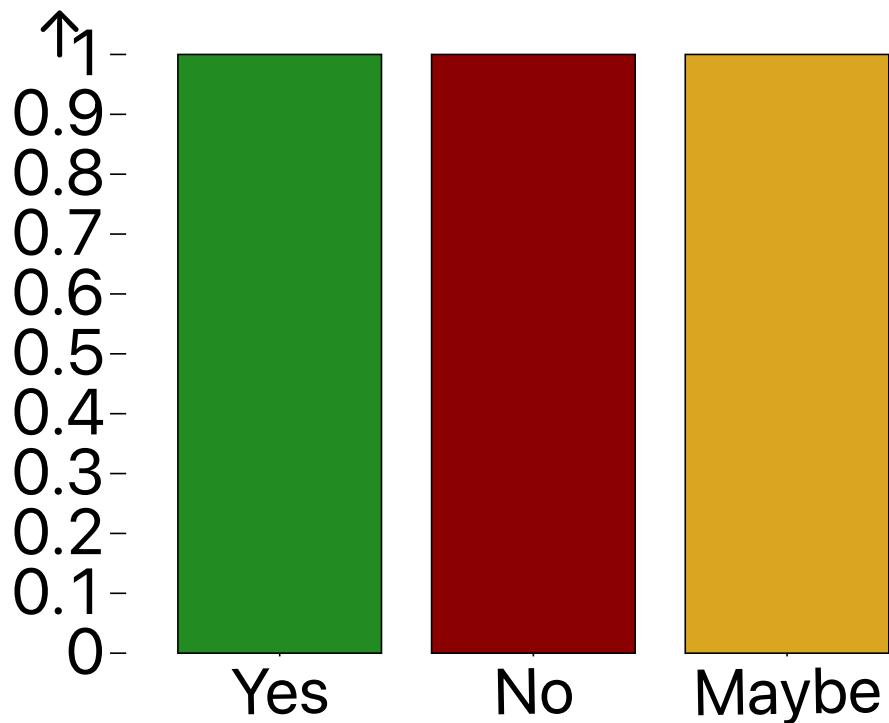
# An example of the curious relationship of opposed movements

> after the RAF had killed the *Generalbundesanwalt* (Public Prosecutor General) Siegfried Buback on April 7, 1977, the neo-Nazi magazine *Wille und Weg* (Will and Way) celebrated the assassination, calling it a "relieving act." Statements by right-wing terrorists, such as Christine Hewicker, indicate that they admired the RAF for its determinedness. However, other activists at the same time deeply objected to the group" (Manthe 2021, 61)
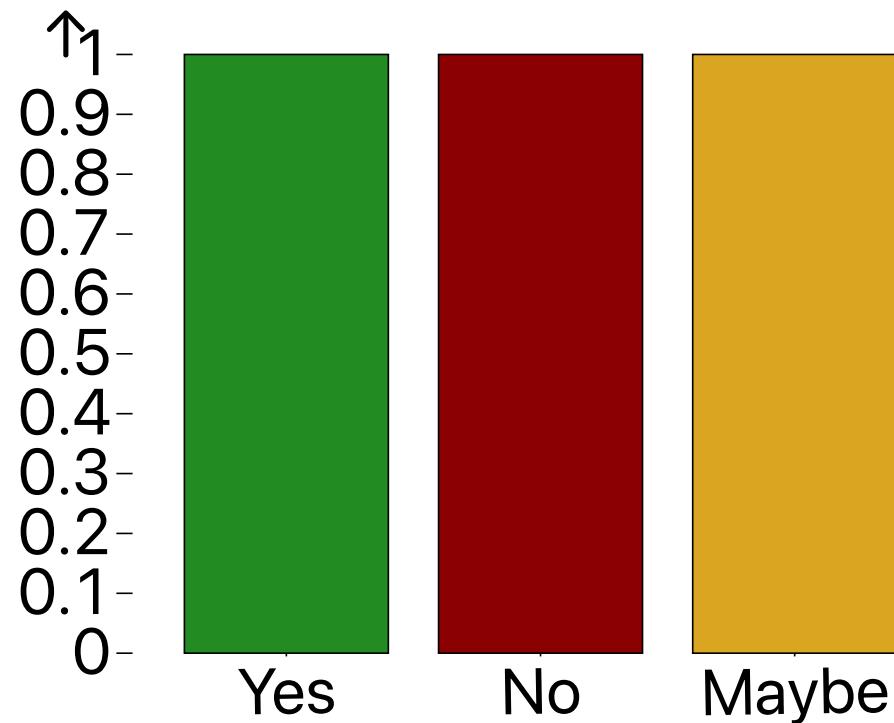
(use and misuse of the 'horseshoe theory'?)

Poll: responsibility and anti-fascism

groups, parties responsible for members' crimes?

anti-fascist violence sometimes legitimate?

Groups responsible for members: pro arguments

- UN Security Council Resolution 1373

  - states bound to prevent and suppress terrorist activity by groups in their territories (*state responsibility*)

- UN Security Council Resolution 1820

  - recognises state and non-state armed groups bear responsibility for acts of sexual violence committed by their members (*[armed] group responsibility*)

Groups responsible for members: contra arguments

Venice Commission of the Council of Europe provided advisory guidelines about the regulation of political parties that stated a "political party as a whole cannot be held responsible for the individual behaviour of its members not authorised by the party within the framework of political/public and party activities. (European Commission 2003)

- banning of NRM (Finland) (Kotonen 2021; Zeller and Vaughan 2024), Golden Dawn (Greece) (Fielitz, Tsagkroni, and Dafnos 2020)
  - strongly motivated by culpability of leaders for members' violence

Any questions, concerns, feedback for this class?

Anonymous feedback here:
https://forms.gle/pisUmtmWdE13zMD58

Alternatively, send me an email: m.zeller@lmu.de

References

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