

Populist Far Right and Radical Movements:
Analysing the AfD and Generation Identity's Shared Narratives on (Re)migration

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Abstract

This thesis examines the interplay between the radical far-right movement Generation Identity (GI) and the populist political party Alternative for Germany (AfD), focusing on how scandals, such as the Potsdam meeting, have influenced their discourse and public perception. Utilizing discourse analysis, content analysis, and comparative methods, this research explores the evolution of the concept of "remigration" within both groups' narratives. The study highlights how the AfD, traditionally seen as a populist party, has gradually radicalized its stance on immigration, aligning closer with GI's extreme views. Additionally, it investigates the impact of the Potsdam scandal on the normalization of remigration discourse in the broader public debate. The research underscores the strategic use of legal and humanitarian rhetoric by the AfD to justify its policies while maintaining a facade of legitimacy. The findings suggest that the scandal has not only failed to harm the AfD's reputation significantly but has also provided a platform to further disseminate their remigration agenda. Furthermore, the research reveals that for identitarians, connections with a mainstream party like AfD are crucial for sustaining and thriving, as these links provide legitimacy and a broader platform for their radical ideas.

Keywords: *far right politics, remigration, identitarian, political scandals*

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Introduction

Far-right political parties and groups have seen a significant rebirth in recent decades, upsetting the traditional political landscape and prompting debates on subjects ranging from migration to public health. The rise of far-right movements in Europe has been fuelled by a combination of economic uncertainties, social anxieties, and a perceived loss of national sovereignty.

While much research has focused on populist far right political parties such as the Alternative for Germany (AfD), the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), a National Rally in France, etc, less attention has been given to grassroots and extra-parliamentary far-right actors. According to Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1744 (Council of Europe, 2010), extra-parliamentary actors are individuals or groups that influence political processes and public opinion outside of formal parliamentary and governmental institutions. These actors engage in various forms of activism, lobbying, and public demonstrations to shape policy and discourse without holding official political office.

Between 2013 and 2015, grassroots extreme far-right initiatives such as PEGIDA, Fortress Europe, and Generation Identity emerged and grew, with their actions and demonstrations becoming a visible force and a channel for anti-immigrant rhetoric. These movements have also attracted a significant number of supporters. In their research on far-right mobilization, Sebastian Hellmeier and Johannes Vüllers (2022) concluded that PEGIDA alone mobilized approximately 337,000 participants for protests and demonstrations in German cities between 2014 and 2017. The development of communication technologies and the rising role of online media have further amplified the influence and reach of such extra-parliamentary actors, enabling them to disseminate their ideas more broadly and mobilize supporters more effectively.

The grassroots mobilization and spread of far-right ideas align with the electoral support for populist far-right parties. Right-populism, particularly when linked with right-radicalism, has

attracted substantial media coverage, which may surpass the attention given to other movements (Rucht 2018).

In 2017 Alternative for Germany (AfD) became the third largest party in the country and the first far-right party to join German parliament since 1961. As of 2023, their support has continued to increase. A recent Forsa election poll revealed that the AfD has become the second-largest political party in Germany, with an average support of 20% of voters¹. A similar situation is occurring in Austria, where the populist far-right Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) has shown significant electoral success, regaining power in the recent regional elections of 2023, adding around 7% points compared to previous elections (Schultheis 2023). And according to the most recent poll the party has leading positions with 29% of voter's support right before the coming elections in 2024.²

In contrast, the popularity of the radical right grassroots movements has been gradually decreasing, partly due to restrictions and repressions from authorities and social media companies, leading to a general decline in followers and supporters (Nissen 2022). Many extreme radical groups that emerged in 2015 are no longer active. However, there is an exception: Generation Identity's movement in German-speaking countries remains active and appears to be even thriving. This movement has a connection with publishing house, which disseminates its ideological literature; it also markets a range of merchandise to support its activities and promote its brand. The leader's main Telegram channel has around 60 thousand followers and has had several waves of interest in the last years, caused by different events (*Figure 1*).

¹ Germany: Polling institutes at a glance. «Germany: Polling Institutes at a Glance». Accessed 05.06.2024 <https://politpro.eu/en/germany/institutes>.

² POLITICO. «POLITICO Poll of Polls — Austrian Polls, Trends and Election News for Austria», 16.02.2022. <https://www.politico.eu/europe-poll-of-polls/austria/>.

Subscribers number growth



Figure 1. Number of Followers' growth of MartinSellner's Channel, 2020-2024. Key points added by the author. Source: TG-STAT

Additionally, Generation Identity is organizing a demonstration in Vienna this summer to celebrate its 10th anniversary and further promote a crystalized agenda on Remigration. The question is why this group remains so active?

Chapter 1. Generation Identity: Historical background, development in

Austria and Germany

The Europe-wide social movement Generation Identity (GI) was established in 2012, inspired by a similar group in France. The movement's followers adhere to the conspiracy theory known as the "Great Replacement," which posits that native Europeans are being systematically replaced by non-European immigrants. The peak of GI's activity occurred between 2015 and 2018, marked by street protests, the occupation of public buildings, and campaigns to "defend Europe", where the members of the movement tried to stop refugees coming to the Italian coast from North Africa (Cusumano 2021). In her research dedicated to this group, Anita Nissen also highlights additional types of events: "Eastern and Western European groups joined forces at several transnational events, including numerous border protests, the 2016 "Summer of Resistance" demonstrations in Paris, Vienna, and Berlin, street theatre performances against terrorism and Islamist violence, and "solidarity actions" for the autochthonous European population" (Nissen 2022, p.91). Ideologically the movement was and still is anti-migrant and anti-muslim. The idea of remigration appeared already then but was not that prominent (Somaskanda 2019) and didn't get much attention from media or scholars. GI has established connections with the EinProzent Group, known for its substantial financial resources and publishing capabilities (Beirich and Via, 2020). GI's presence was primarily strong in Western and Central Europe, particularly in France, Germany, and Austria.

However, following the Christchurch terror attack in New Zealand, where the attacker was reportedly inspired by GI's ideas and had financially supported the Austrian branch, the movement faced a significant decline. In 2021, the French branch was banned based on a ministerial decree, citing their attempts to act as a "private militia" by wearing uniforms and organizing operations to prevent the movement of people.³ In Germany Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution

³ "Décret Du 3 Mars 2021 Portant Dissolution D'une Association - Légifrance," n.d., Accessed 05.06.2024 <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000043210363>.

(BfV) has classified the GI movement as extremist group in 2019 (Murdoch and Mulhall 2019, p.28). The Austrian and German authorities have also banned a symbol of Identitarian – yellow-black Lambda in 2021 (Nissen 2022). Learning from these events, the Austrian and German branches shifted their strategies post-2021, focusing solely on peaceful demonstrations and placing of banners. The movement faced additional challenges with social media bans: Facebook banned them in 2018⁴, followed by Twitter in 2020⁵. Notably, in 2024, after the Potsdam Scandal, the Twitter account of Martin Sellner was reinstated, thanks to Elon Musk, who even responded to one of his tweets⁶. Sellner, previously the leader of GI Austria, now serves as a spokesperson for the broader Identitarian movement and is the author of the Remigration program which he presented at the “secret meeting”. He actively engages with his followers through his Telegram channel, which has around 60,000 followers. Every day Sellner shares several posts, including video and audio materials, and often reposts information about protest actions occurring more frequently in Germany than in Austria (Telegram channels: Identitare Bewegung Deutschland, R21, EinProzent). Telegram remains a key platform for education, communication, and mobilization within the movement. Notably, when there were attempts to regulate or block Telegram in Germany, the AfD opposed such measures, advocating to keep Telegram “uncensored in Germany.”⁷

Populist far-right parties, particularly in Germany given its historical context, face considerable challenges in combating comparisons and labels associating them with neo-Nazism, necessitating significant efforts to distance themselves from any connections with national socialism (Schellenberg 2013). Both AfD and FPÖ publicly deny accusations of being racist and

⁴ Luke Bailey, “Far-right Group Generation Identity Have Been Banned From Facebook Across Europe,” *Inews.Co.Uk*, July 17, 2020, <https://inews.co.uk/news/generation-identity-banned-facebook-166692>.

⁵ German Press Agency - DPA, “Twitter Takes Down Accounts Tied to Austrian Far-right Identitarian Movement,” *Daily Sabah*, July 11, 2020, <https://www.dailysabah.com/world/europe/twitter-takes-down-accounts-tied-to-austrian-far-right-identitarian-movement>.

⁶ Josh Taylor, “Elon Musk Replies to Post by Far-right Austrian Linked to Christchurch Terrorist After X Account Restored,” *The Guardian*, March 19, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2024/mar/19/elon-musk-replies-x-twitter-martin-sellner-far-right-identitarian-movement-christchurch-terrorist-attack>

⁷ Götz Hausding, “Deutscher Bundestag - Fraktionsübergreifende Kritik an AfD-Antrag Zu Telegram,” *Deutscher Bundestag*, n.d., <https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2022/kw11-de-telegram-881850>.

xenophobic parties and are not willing to be associated with neo-Nazi extreme radical group, which the Generation Identity is in its core. Despite these efforts, linkages and connections occasionally come to light, as illustrated by a meeting in Potsdam in November 2023. During this gathering, Martin Sellner, a Generation Identity leader, presented his Remigration program, which sparked public debate on migration concerns and let the AfD raise attention to their vision on new migration policy for Germany. The same discourse on remigration seems to have connections with the Austrian populist far right FPÖ. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the FPÖ demonstration in Vienna on March 2024, where the Remigration banner was used. The very similar banner in the same font style and plane icon was previously posted in one of the GI-related telegram channels, showcasing the group's protest activity (Figure 4).

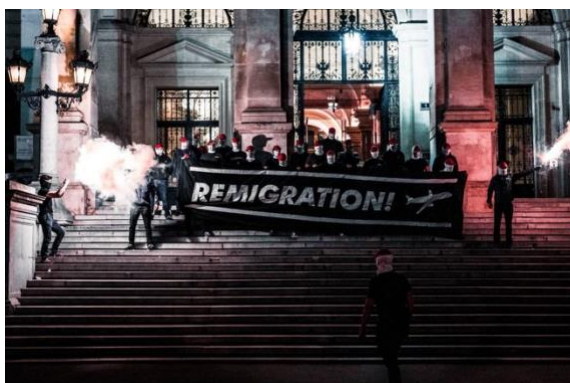
Due to the space and time limitations this study examines the relationship between the Generation Identity movement, focusing on its German-speaking factions which are notably influential, and the Alternative for Germany and not the FPÖ. It suggests that the German branch



*Figure 4. FPÖ Demonstration in Vienna, March 2024.
Photo taken by the author of this thesis*



*Figure 4. FPÖ Demonstration in Vienna, March 2024.
Photo taken by the author of this thesis*



*Figure 4. Photo from telegram channel Widerstand in
Bewegung illustrating GI's protest activity,, September
2023*

of this extraparlimentary group has managed to sustain and even thrive, partly due to support from the AfD. This support may explain the ongoing activity of extreme radical right groups in Germany and Austria. Additionally, the populist political party may benefit from the existence and interaction with this extreme radical movement.

Research questions

1. What are the key ideological and strategic interconnections between the AfD and Generation Identity, and how are these reflected in their public discourses on migration?
2. In what ways has the Potsdam scandal impacted these interconnections, and has it led to the radicalization of the AfD?
3. What are the factors contributing to the successful functioning of GI in German-speaking countries?

The concept of Remigration is a focal point of this thesis. It is used as an analytical term to examine the extent to which it has been adopted by the populist far-right party from the extreme radical right. The paper also explores the extent to which the exposure of links with radicals contributes to the radicalization of the AfD. The presence of GI might contribute to the political agenda of the AfD and also provides the populist far-right party with an opportunity to distance themselves from extreme rhetoric. By having GI with their extreme views on remigration, the policies proposed by the AfD appear less radical and, therefore, more acceptable to the electorate.

Literature review

There is a vast literature dedicated to far-right populist parties. Some scholars focus on mobilization strategies, highlighting the significant role of the internet and digital media in enhancing their reach and influence (Caiani 2021; Hoffmann, Rone 2023). Additionally, research often delves into the political and discursive connections that these parties cultivate to gain legitimacy and support (Gattinara 2018; Gelashvili 2023). In other studies, the impact of social

media is emphasized, discussing both limitations and the opportunities it provides for far-right groups. Bharath Ganesh and Caterina Froio (2018) explore how social media can limit far-right messaging through regulatory frameworks and counter-narratives, while Simpson and Druxes (2015) examine how these platforms offer unprecedented opportunities for far-right parties to disseminate their ideologies, mobilize supporters, and shape public discourse. This body of work collectively underscores the multifaceted strategies and tools that far-right populist parties utilize to navigate and exploit the contemporary political landscape.

An article by Pietro Castelli Gattinara and colleagues (Gattinara et al, 2021) is particularly relevant to this research as it delves into the factors that underpin successful far-right grassroots mobilization. Gattinara et al. argue that cultural grievances, the context of divided governments, and the availability of resources are crucial for the mobilization of far-right movements. Cultural grievances refer to the deep-seated discontent within certain segments of the population, often revolving around issues such as national identity, immigration, and perceived threats to cultural homogeneity. These grievances provide a fertile ground for far-right parties to rally support by tapping into the fears and frustrations of the populace. Resources are supposed to be a critical component of successful mobilization. Gattinara et al. emphasize the importance of political connections and media visibility as key resources that can significantly influence the level of far-right protest mobilization. Political connections help far-right groups gain legitimacy and access to networks that can support their activities. Media visibility, on the other hand, amplifies their message, allowing them to reach a broader audience and attract more supporters. So, for a “successful” grassroots movement the access to media and networking are the crucial points to thrive.

Ruth Wodak's comprehensive study of various far-right populist political parties across Europe highlights that, despite differing historical, social, and economic contexts, issues such as race, immigration, national identity, welfare, and social inequality are central to most of these parties (Wodak, 2013, p. xix). Using discourse analysis, Wodak demonstrates how European right-

wing politicians have long portrayed migrants as "others," "dirty," and "barbarian," with such characterizations being evident as early as 2011 with migrants from Tunisia, even before the Syrian war. During this period, the discourse of Islam as a threat and the perception of these migrants as outsiders to European society began to evolve. Wodak further concluded, that for populist far right there are almost no limits in the far-right discursive strategies: “{they} make false claims sound innocent, allow denying the obvious, say the “unsayable” and transcend the limits of permissible” (Wodak 2013, p. 33). Scandalous rhetoric, coupled with provocative actions, is a common tactic for the populist far right. This approach seldom has a lasting negative effect on their reputation or electoral support. Instead, they manage to attract media attention and place their issues and ideas at the forefront of public discussion and debate.

Another scholar, Ashley Jardina (2019) proposes an identity-based approach to explain the rise and support of far-right movements in the US context. She suggests that the motivation to support white radicals and vote for Trump stems not from hostility towards those outside their group, but rather from a desire to preserve the advantages and status enjoyed by the white group. This reflects a yearning to maintain these privileges rather than a rejection of others. This logic is being shared by many far-right movements in Europe, which however shift focus from race to culture and identity. A similar argument is found in Generation Identity's justification for Remigration, where they claim that the "native" population of Europe is losing its majority status.

In their discussion on the emergence of the New Far Right and its distinctions from the far right of the early and mid-20th century, Kathleen M. Blee and Kimberly A. Creasap (2010) highlight several key differences. They note a reduced significance of leadership figures and an increased reliance on grassroots actions. Additionally, they emphasize the use of culture as a unifying force, which facilitates the mobilization of activists and the formation of a cohesive movement centred around various conservative issues. Blee and Creasap explain how the New Far Right manages to “create a united movement by addressing a range of issues, from states' rights and criminal sentencing to social welfare and family values” (Blee and Creasap 2010, p. 273). This

strategy allows them to attract a broad base of support and sustain their influence across multiple areas of political and social life.

Scholarly interest in the Identitarian movement has been rather narrow and limited. Since the emergence of the group, only a few studies have focused on Generation Identity (GI), primarily examining its narratives and methods. Anita Nissen conducted a comprehensive comparative study on the ideology, goals, actions, and mobilization of GI and similar far-right movements (Nissen 2022). Nissen concluded that, while GI is not necessarily anti-democratic, it opposes the "technocratic EU" and places the concept of identity at the core of its views. GI understands identity as "ethnocultural and organic," viewing culture and identity as static, essentialist, and nativist (Nissen 2022, p. 90). For GI, identity is seen as something fixed and inherited from previous generations, which is under threat of being replaced by the unchanging identity of "non-European Muslims." Nissen's research, however, only covers the years 2015-2017 and does not explain the rise and fall of this movement. It highlights a crucial period in GI's development but leaves questions about its longer-term evolution and current status unanswered. She does, however, provide an overview of GI's branch activities as of 2021, showing that in most countries there were no longer any offline or online activities.

Another scholar who has studied the ideology, tactics, and activities of Generation Identity is Imogen Richards, who characterizes the movement as unique and distinguished within the far-right landscape. Richards notes that Generation Identity often borrows propagandizing strategies from contemporary left-wing movements, including the use of famous left-wing slogans (Richards, 2022). This strategic appropriation is evident in their response to the travel ban imposed on Martin Sellner in Germany, where GI launched a campaign titled "No Martin is illegal," a clear reference to the left-wing slogan "No one is illegal." By adopting these tactics, Generation Identity seeks to reframe their far-right agenda in a manner that resonates with broader activist techniques, thereby attempting to legitimize their cause and attract a wider audience. Richards' work adds depth to the understanding of GI's methods, illustrating how the movement blends traditional far-

right themes with contemporary activist strategies to enhance its visibility and appeal. This insight complements Anita Nissen's findings, providing a more nuanced picture of Generation Identity's operations and ideological positioning.

Last year was published a comprehensive study on Global Identitarianism, where the authors studied the development of this ideology and practice in different parts of the world. The authors however also highlight that the core of Identitarian ideology revolves around defining who does and does not belong to the community of Europeans, based on ethnic criteria (Zúquete and Marchi 2023, p.3). Unlike traditional political groups that seek to change specific policies, Identitarians aim to alter the system. They achieve this by embedding their members and ideas into mainstream political parties, nationalist and populist formations, and even media forums. This strategy of entryism, which means according to the Cambridge definition "the process or policy of members of a political group joining another party or group with the intention, often secret, of changing its principles and plans".⁸ This method allows them to gradually shift the discourse and policies of these entities towards their own agenda, thereby increasing their influence and visibility. The ultimate goal of entryism for Identitarians is to introduce and normalize their radical concepts, such as the Great Replacement theory and Remigration, to a broader public audience (Zúquete and Marchi 2023). By successfully penetrating mainstream platforms, they can subtly steer public opinion and political agendas in their favour. This study supports the argument that for Generation Identity, cooperation with the AfD is a way to "legitimize" their radical ideas and integrate them into mainstream political discourse. By aligning with a more established political entity like the AfD, GI can leverage the party's broader reach and political clout to further disseminate and normalize their ideologies.

The rise, electoral success, and communication strategies of the AfD have garnered significant scholarly interest. Berbuir, Lewandowsky, and Siri (2014) described the AfD as a 'projection screen', positioning it as a conservative-liberal and populist party rather than explicitly

⁸ "Entryism," May 29, 2024, Accessed 05.06.2024 <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/entryism>.

labelling it as right-wing. This suggests the AfD blends conservative-liberal policies with populist rhetoric, especially in family and identity policies, while also adopting nationalist discourses to appeal to voters concerned with migration and national sovereignty. Over the past decade, the AfD has continued to emphasize migration issues. Arzheimer and Berning (2019) identified the 2015 migration crisis as a turning point for the AfD, shifting it towards a more classic radical right stance, “mobilizing around the (perceived) ethnic threat, similar to other radical right parties”. (Arzheimer and Berning, 2019, p.8)

What distinguishes the AfD from other political parties is its strategic use of social media. Research by Medina Serrano et al. (2019) showed that the AfD’s online presence garnered the highest user interactions among German political parties. The study also highlighted the use of automated accounts to amplify the AfD’s rhetoric, concluding that the party effectively delivers its messages online. Additionally, the research found that, across various social media platforms, immigration is the most frequently discussed topic, far surpassing economic issues in prominence.

Manes Weisskircher (2023) provides additional insights into the AfD's strategies, specifically highlighting the party's need to cooperate with and support protest movements. Weisskircher is one of the few scholars who has thoroughly researched the connections between the AfD and non-parliamentary movements. He demonstrates how the AfD gained popularity by collaborating with other far-right groups to oppose Coronavirus restrictions. The AfD capitalized on widespread public dissatisfaction and fear related to the pandemic and the government's response. By aligning with protest movements, the AfD positioned itself as a champion of personal freedoms and civil liberties, resonating with individuals frustrated by lockdowns, mask mandates, and other restrictions. This strategy allowed the AfD to tap into a pre-existing network of activists and supporters within these movements, broadening its base. Additionally, the AfD's visible participation in protests and its vocal support for anti-restriction rhetoric amplified its message and extended its reach. The party leveraged social media platforms and alternative media channels popular among far right and anti-establishment circles to disseminate its viewpoints, further

increasing its visibility and appeal. In general, the far-right front appeared to share a unified approach to this challenge, critiquing government measures. The Generation Identity movement activists in Austria and Germany have also actively participated in protests against COVID-19 restrictions. During the demonstrations and actions in 2021-2022, Martin Sellner's Telegram channel gained several thousand followers, capitalizing on the heightened interest and activism around these protests (Figure 1).

Several factors contribute to the success of populist far-right parties, with their interconnections and links to protest and activist movements being particularly significant. These parties often engage in "controlled scandals" as a strategy to gain media attention and influence public discourse. Unlike mainstream parties, their discursive strategies are highly flexible and virtually unrestricted, allowing them to push boundaries and introduce radical ideas into the public sphere. At first glance, the Generation Identity Movement may appear to be just another radical right grassroots movement. However, it distinguishes itself through variety of methods used. Despite facing blockages from mainstream social media platforms, identitarian leaders in German-speaking countries consistently utilizes social media to maintain its presence, spread its message and mobilize people for demonstrations.⁹ Adopting different discursive strategies while having the simple core ideological basis let them survive and establish new links and connections.

Theoretical background

In this study, I rely on several theoretical approaches. The first approach concerns the normalization of ideas typically perceived as radical. For several decades, the "normal pathology" thesis dominated studies on populism and the far right. This thesis posits that populist radical right

⁹ Several demonstrations regarding Coronavirus restrictions were held in Austria and Germany during the period of 2021-2022. Many of these protests were organized under the name "Megademo" and received significant support from Martin Sellner (e.g., a Telegram post from November 6, 2022) as well as other less radical far-right groups, such as the Direktdemokratie movement. However, the slogans at these demonstrations were not always directly related to the Coronavirus, reflecting a broader range of issues and grievances. See, for example: "Corona-Maßnahmegegner Ziehen Erneut Durch Die Landeshauptstädte," DER STANDARD, n.d., <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000132384697/corona-querdenker-ziehen-erneut-durch-die-landeshauptstaedte>.

ideologies are pathological and generally do not gain significant support. This perspective was heavily influenced by post-World War II developments when far-right parties were far from mainstream acceptance.

However, Cas Mudde introduced a new perspective with the "pathological normality" thesis. Mudde argued that the core characteristics of the far right—nativism, authoritarianism, and populism—are actually “radicalizations of mainstream views” (Mudde, 2016, p.9). In other words, these ideas are part of a normal process. This shift in perspective is relevant to historical developments since the 1990s, a period marked by the rising popularity of populism and right-wing political discourse. This resurgence occurred within a changing political context and in response to new challenges such as global terrorism and financial crises. Mudde also concluded that the primary goal of the populist far right is to amplify the significance of their narratives and issues. They do this not by adapting to existing mainstream topics but by elevating their own issues to prominence (Mudde, 2016). This approach is evident in the policies and strategies of the AfD. A good illustration of the AfD's strategy of "bringing and elevating their own issues" is the concept and program of remigration. This concept highlights the perceived failure of multiculturalism policies and addresses the challenges posed by migration. The remigration program serves as an example of the radicalization of mainstream views, transforming concerns about multiculturalism and migration into a central and provocative policy issue. This approach underscores the AfD's tactic of setting the agenda with new, radicalized issues rather than merely responding to existing political discourses.

Another theoretical approach, introduced by Ruth Wodak, adds to the pathological normality thesis by emphasizing the conditions necessary for the acceptance of new norms and values and their discursive realizations (Wodak, 2013). Wodak argues that scandalization and crisis are essential for such acceptance. In other words, the process by which radical ideas become normalized often involves moments of crisis or scandal that disrupt the status quo, making space for new narratives and ideologies to take root. The rise of the AfD and its unexpected electoral

success can be linked to the "refugee crisis" of 2015-2017. During this period, the AfD capitalized on societal fears and uncertainties to promote its agenda. A scandal surrounding the Potsdam meeting in 2024, where the party was accused of having connections to neo-Nazi and radical right extremist Martin Sellner, who advocated for the forceful deportation of large numbers of people, is a notable example. This scandal forced the AfD to clarify its stance on Remigration, but it also provided an opportunity to present these radical policy ideas to a broader public. By framing Remigration in terms of national security and cultural preservation, the AfD was able to leverage the crisis and didn't get much reputational damage, but rather again attracted attention to its electoral program before the coming EU elections. We will discuss the consequences of this scandal more detailed further. Unrelated to AfD, but another recent scandal with German youngsters singing "Germany is for Germans, Foreigners out" which became viral on social media adds to the further broader discussion of migration challenge and interest to remigration, in Germany and Austria in particular (Figure 5).

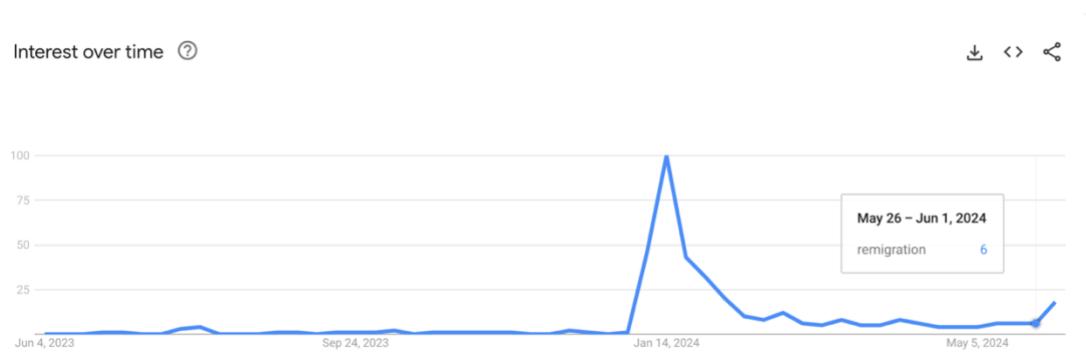


Figure 5. Screenshot of Google Trends indicating the search interest of the term "Remigration" worldwide in the timeframe 2023-2024

In the literature review, we have already mentioned the strategy of entryism utilized by Generation Identity (GI) to normalize their radical ideas and aim to change the system. This tactic, however, is not new to the radical far right, particularly in relation to the Generation Identity movement. The French neo-Nazi movement Nouvelle Droite (ND), considered a precursor to Generation Identity (Ico Maly, 2022), employed the same strategy in the 1980s and 1990s by

infiltrating the more mainstream Front National (FN). Tom McCulloch, in his article, described this confluence, arguing that the cooperation between ND and FN was mutually beneficial. ND influenced FN's ideological discourse and policy direction, introducing key concepts and perspectives that enriched FN's platform and attracted a broader support base. In return, FN provided a political platform and increased visibility for ND ideas, enabling ND to have a greater impact on mainstream politics. This collaboration strengthened FN's ideological depth and strategic positioning while elevating ND's profile and influence within the political landscape. McCulloch specifically states that "without this evolution in ND influence, it is highly unlikely the FN would have incorporated concepts such as 'national preference' into party policy" (McCulloch 2006, p. 159).

A similar dynamic appears to be unfolding today with the cooperation between AfD and GI. By aligning with the more established AfD, GI aims to leverage the party's broader reach and political clout to further disseminate and normalize their ideologies. This partnership not only enhances the visibility of Identitarian concepts but also embeds these ideas within the political mainstream, facilitating their acceptance among a wider audience. AfD, in turn, might gain ideological depth and strategic advantage from incorporating GI's radical ideas, much like FN did with ND. We will further evaluate whether the revelation of the Potsdam meeting and the open incorporation of the Remigration Policy have brought significant benefits to both parties.

However, it is important to note that the modern-day FN does not seem to have any connections with contemporary French Identitarians. This divergence can be explained by changes in the party's leadership and its established status by the 2010s, which reduced the need for external ideological influence. FN, having solidified its position in French politics, did not require the same entryism strategies that ND employed. A profound and detailed investigation is needed to fully understand these dynamics, which goes beyond the scope of this research.

The process of normalization of extreme discourse which was launched due to the entryism tactics can be framed using Krzyżanowski's model, which explains this phenomenon in three stages (Krzyżanowski 2020). The first stage, 'enactment,' involves the introduction of new discourse into the public sphere through a 'discursive shift.' The second stage, 'graduation,' marks the perpetuation of existing discourses while integrating and diffusing the new elements. At the final stage the discourse is normalized, and new norms become fully integrated and accepted within society (Krzyżanowski 2020, p.505). However, normalization does not always happen consistently. The 'graduation' stage often lasts longer, during which actors employ borderline discourse, blending radical language with more mainstream rhetoric. This transitional phase is crucial as it helps to gradually shift public perception and acceptance, paving the way for eventual normalization (Ibid).

The recent events with radical far right gathering in Potsdam can be seen as part of the 'enactment' stage. Currently, we are in the beginning of 'graduation' stage, evidenced by the ongoing EU elections and public discussions, including statements from political leaders like Chancellor Scholz regarding changes in migration law leading to the limitation of “irregular migration”.¹⁰ Sellner later referred to these changes as a way of justifying his ideas, indicating the integration of these new elements into mainstream discourse.

Methodology

Discourse Analysis

This study employs a comparative discourse analysis to identify the primary tropes and track their evolution. It concentrates on the pivotal topic of (re)migration, a key issue in far-right discourse. Given the focus on the Potsdam meeting as a major event for both AfD and GI this

¹⁰ “Talks Between the Federal Government and the Länder on Refugee Policy | Federal Government,” Website of the Federal Government | Bundesregierung, March 6, 2024, <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/news/refugee-policy-discussions-2264058>.

research examines predominantly the past nine months from August 2023 till April 15th, 2024, to trace the changes on the discourses, the emergence of new narratives.

Specifically, the argumentation approach of discourse analysis is used to uncover the main justifications for the Remigration policy. Nomination analysis is incorporated to deepen comprehension, examining how migrants are referred to and presented within the discourse.

Discourse analysis enables an in-depth examination of the language used by mainstream populist far-right parties and extreme grassroots movements. By analysing their discourse, the study aims to uncover how they frame issues related to migration, which topoi are used, and how they have changed over the past nine months. By comparing the discourses and narratives, this thesis also aims to examine how mainstream populist parties position themselves in relation to extreme radical movements, to what extent they legitimize or marginalize them, and the role of connections with mainstream parties in the sustenance of identitarian movement.

For this research, texts from Martin Sellner's Telegram channel “Martin Sellner {TELEGRAMELITE}”. related to migration and remigration topics were selected and analysed. Additionally, speeches and statements from AfD leaders Alice Weidel and Tino Chrupalla within the given timeframe were examined. Furthermore, a comparative discourse analysis was conducted on the AfD's EU election program and statements on remigration, alongside Generation Identity's remigration program. To see if there are changes in discourse the AfD's party programs of the year 2021 and 2024 were compared, together with the recent statement on Remigration.

Timeframe: Due to time and space constraints, this research focuses on the timeframe of four months before and after the Potsdam meeting reveal (January 10th, 2024), specifically from August 2023 to April 2024. This nine-month period allows for an analysis of potential changes in the discourse among both the AfD and GI, as well as an examination of how the AfD managed the fallout from the scandal.

Importance: This research contributes to the study of interconnections between radical social movements and populist political parties, arguing that these entities rely on each other to attract an electorate and advance their program goals. The continued existence of GI in German-speaking countries is at least partly explained by its strong discursive connections with the AfD. This study underscores the interconnections between the two groups, highlighting how mainstream parties can normalize and propagate radical ideas through strategic discourse alignment.

The topic of this research is up-to-date, highly dynamic and continually evolving, which leads to several limitations. Firstly, the recency and ongoing nature of the events make it challenging to draw definitive conclusions. The situation surrounding the AfD and GI is still unfolding, with new developments potentially altering the landscape significantly. Additionally, the study's focus on a specific nine-month period restricts the ability to conduct a long-term analysis of discourse evolution and its impact. Another limitation is the lack of comprehensive comparative data to fully answer why GI remains particularly active in German-speaking countries. While the study highlights strong discourse connections with the AfD as a partial explanation, it cannot entirely account for the persistence and specific dynamics of GI's activities compared to other countries. This constraint underscores the need for further research that includes comparative analysis with other European countries where similar radical movements have diminished or transformed differently.

Moreover, the reliance on selected texts from Martin Sellner's Telegram channel and statements from AfD leaders might not capture the full spectrum of discourse strategies employed by both entities. Future research should consider a broader range of sources and a more extended timeframe to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the interrelations and the factors contributing to the resilience of such movements in specific linguistic and cultural contexts.

Chapter 2. Analysis and findings.

Potsdam Meeting

The public found out about the meeting where Martin Sellner as representative of radical far right met some of the AFD representatives and other people sharing far-right ideas, in January 2024 through the profound report prepared by Correctiv, investigative journalism organization based in Germany. The report begins with the statement “It was the meeting that nobody was ever meant to find out about” (Bensmann et al, 2024). Probably. But the fact that the broader public found out about it sparked a great public discussion on the very ideas shared by Sellner. The Potsdam Scandal brought him numerous articles in world’s media: from Financial times¹¹ to Times of Israel¹² and LeMonde,¹³ all of which highlighted the concept of remigration. This exposure also gained Sellner 8,000 new followers on Telegram.¹⁴

This disclosure had far-reaching and complex consequences. Protests broke out across Germany and Austria¹⁵, condemning the far-right and calling for a ban on the AfD. In response, the AfD fired some of the people who were present at the meeting, among them an advisor to Weidel (Shelton 2024) and published a separate statement document outlining its position on remigration. This manifesto sought to disassociate the party from the more extremist elements affiliated with Sellner and his affiliates while maintaining the party's strong immigration policy. As a result, the issue of remigration attracted considerable public attention, creating renewed interest in Martin Sellner and his radical ideas. Following the scandal, GI launched a website

¹¹ “Martin Sellner: Austrian Extremist Stirs up Political Storm in Germany,” Financial Times, January 19., <https://www.ft.com/content/bbdf305d-0852-4c7c-8cb8-0ccb106ba812>.

¹² AfP. “German far-right party meets Austrian extremist, denies mass immigrant deportation plan”. *Times of Israel*, January 10, 2024, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/german-far-right-party-meets-austrian-extremist-denies-plans-to-deport-immigrants-en-masse/>

¹³ Jean-Baptiste Chastand, “Who Is Martin Sellner, the Identitarian Inspiring Europe’s Far Right?,” *Le Monde.Fr*, January 20, 2024, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/m-le-mag/article/2024/01/20/who-is-martin-sellner-the-identitarian-inspiring-europe-s-far-right_6450800_117.html.

¹⁴ “Subscriber Growth — Telegram Channel ‘🔵 Martin Sellner [TELEGRAMELITE]’ — @martinsellnerIB Statistics — TGStat,” TGStat.com, n.d., <https://tgstat.com/channel/@martinsellnerIB/stat/subscribers>.

¹⁵ Deutsche Welle, “Protests Against the Far Right,” *Dw.Com*, February 6, 2024, <https://www.dw.com/en/protests-against-the-far-right/a-68142665>.

dedicated solely to remigration, detailing what it entails, how it would be implemented, and who would be affected.

At first glance, the AfD did not seem to benefit from the disclosure of this scandal, but Martin Sellner did. How did the scandal influence the radicalization and discursive change within these groups? This remains a critical question for further research.

GI's Discourse on Remigration and Migrants

The term "remigration" was adopted by Generation Identity in 2015, but it gained significant attention only after the widely shared meeting in Potsdam. Before this event, the term rarely appeared in search queries. However, following January 2024, there was a noticeable increase in interest in this topic (Figure 5). Germany, Austria, and Switzerland lead the number of searches among European countries, with France closely following.¹⁶

Why remigration? Identitarians understand identity as "ethnocultural and organic, with culture and identity considered static, essentialist, and nativist" (Nissen 2022, p.90). According to this ideology, identity is perceived as solid and unchangeable, making assimilation and integration policies ineffective because they cannot change what is perceived as fixed. Essentially, for GI, European identity is something inherited from previous generations, now threatened by the supposed replacement by another fixed and unchangeable identity, that of the "non-European Muslim". And therefore, to introduce a policy of eliminating those with "foreign identity" is more logical than trying to integrate.

However, the concept of remigration was not initially at the forefront of Generation Identity's agenda. In the Telegram channel of Identitäre Bewegung Deutschland, the term was mentioned once in 2018, sporadically over the next few years, and only began to be regularly discussed starting in 2023. Interesting to notice that AfD included remigration to budget plan for

¹⁶ According to Google Trends, search term "remigration" applied worldwide for the time frame from 2004 till April 2024 <https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=all&q=remigration&hl=en> Accessed 20.04.2024

2018, suggesting it as an alternative to integration for those not entitled to stay in the country (“Nicht-Bleibeberechtigten”), as shared on the Bundestag's fraction website.¹⁷ Later the term Remigration appeared in the Party’s program document before the 2021 Bundestag elections and now in the similar document issued before the EU elections. We will discuss these more detailed in the next chapter. In Austria, the first mention of remigration by Identitäre Bewegung Österreich (IBO) was in June 2023, in a shared post about a Remigration demonstration planned for July 29th in Vienna.

Since 2023, the concept of remigration has come to the forefront of the Identitarian movement's agenda, especially following the Remigration DEMO. This idea, along with closing borders and replacing corrupt officials, has become the main narrative and the primary solution advocated by Generation Identity and Martin Sellner in particular.

For the period from August 2023 to April 15, 2024, namely 4 months before and after the Potsdam meeting, I selected all the posts related to migration, migrants, and remigration that Martin Sellner shared on his Telegram channel “Martin Sellner {TELEGRAMELITE}”. Audio and video materials were excluded from this selection. This resulted in approximately 130 texts for analysis. Each post was contextualized to identify the topic Sellner was addressing in relation to migration. I then traced the recurring topoi and arguments he referred to. For the purpose of analysis, this information was organized into a table, also noting the date each post was shared. Table 1 illustrates some excerpts from this table, providing a snapshot of the data collected.

¹⁷ “10-Punkte Plan Der AfD Zum Bundeshaushaltsplan 2018: Ideologie Runter – Realität Rauf - AfD-Fraktion Im Deutschen Bundestag,” AfD-Fraktion Im Deutschen Bundestag, June 28, 2019, <https://AfDbundestag.de/10-punkte-plan-der-AfD-zum-bundeshaushaltsplan-2018-ideologie-runter-realitaet-rauf/>.





| Date | Topic / Content | Text | Topoi / Argument |
|----------|--|---|--|
| 11.08.23 | Remigration/ incident report Criminal | Remigration statt Freiheit für Vergewaltiger!  Der afghanische Flüchtling Mohammad M. wurde für mehrfache sexuelle Belästigung und die Vergewaltigung einer Minderjährigen vom Regensburger Amtsgericht zu einer Bewährungsstrafe verurteilt.  Unsere Aktivisten hissten am 10.08. vor demselben Amtsgericht ein Banner mit der Forderung "Vergewaltiger abschieben!". Du bist auch dagegen, dass eingewanderte Vergewaltiger frei herumlaufen? Schliess dich uns an. Für ein konsequente Remigrationspolitik! | Threat / Either remigration, or violence |
| 21.09.23 | „Disturbing» Video, express support for AfD | Sie wundern sich warum die AfD über 20% ist. Ist wundere mich warum sie nicht über 50% hat! | |
| 21.10.23 | Pro-Palestinian demonstrations following the escalation of Israel-Palestine conflict | „ Arabische Massen vor dem Reichstag. Sie organisieren sich und zeigen wie viele sie sind“ | Threat |
| 08.11.23 | Remigration |  Remigration als humane Maßnahme zur Entwicklungshilfe und Völkerverständigung. | Remigration helps the people to live accordingly, we are helping them by sending them away (those who are not Europeans) |
| 14.02.24 | Critique of the government representatives who stated that Far right Extremism is a threat to the country. | „Sie sind machtlos gegen Massenmigration, islamistischen und linksextremen Terror, Gruppenvergewaltigungen und Messerstechereien.  Dieser ganze Unsinn wird Deutschland natürlich nicht sicherer machen – wer Sicherheit will, braucht Remigration!“ | Anti-government, argument of the inability of the system to solve the “problem”. Threat/Security |
| 19.03.24 | Criminal Incidents report | Zwischen den beiden Fällen war Innenminister Karner am Reumannplatz, um im Kampf gegen ausufernde Jugendkriminalität u.a. ein Messerverbot zu fordern. Aber: Helfen wird kein Messer- sondern ein Einreiseverbot! Und natürlich: #Remigration. | Threat/Security Inability of the system to provide solution. While the solution is clearly Remigration. |

Table 1. Collection of posts related to the topics of (Re)migration from Martin Sellner's Telegram

From August to January, Martin Sellner followed a very consistent strategy in his Telegram posts. Most of his posts focused on migrant-related crimes, such as reports about murder (e.g., post

from 10.09.23) or rape (e.g., post from 09.08.23). He portrayed individuals with migrant roots, refugees, or asylum seekers—without distinguishing between these groups—as clear threats to society and European citizens. By repeatedly presenting these cases and sometimes highlighting the same incident in multiple posts, Sellner aimed to create the impression that migrants are inherently criminal and that their remigration (deportation) is justified to maintain public order. This strategy consistently framed migrants in a negative light and aimed to create the image of a continuous threat, implying that the presence of migrants is inherently dangerous. By using terms such as “Ersetzungsmigranten” (replacement migrants), “Araber erobern Straße” (Arabs conquering the street), “Wutmigranten” (angry migrants), and “Araben Massen” (Arab masses), he further reinforces the topos of threat and labels migrants as a distinct and dangerous category. Sellner seeks to present migrants as a homogenous, collective "other," distinct from the European populace. This generalization dehumanizes migrants and echoes the narratives used by the Nazis to alienate and demonize groups of people, contributing to a dangerous discourse.

In addition to crime reports, Sellner also shared what I termed "disturbing videos." These videos, although not related to criminal activities, typically depicted people (of migrant roots) arguing or in conflict. Sellner used such content to portray migrants as loud, impolite, and alien to European society. The topics of these posts were often repetitive, but sometimes he addressed unrelated events, such as a football match. For instance, during a game between Germany and Turkey, he framed the support of the Turkish team by people of Turkish origin in Germany as a failure of integration (post from 20.11.23). So, Sellner uses all kinds of news stories to push his ideas on the threat of replacement, the economic burden migrants place on common citizens, and the security threat they bring to everyone. Even pro-Palestinian meetings are framed as “migrants mobilizing themselves and becoming a political force,” which is a fallacy. These protests were supported by a diverse group of people, not just Arabs and migrants, and showing support does not equate to forming a political force. Sellner's approach is highly manipulative.

Before the Potsdam meeting, Sellner announced that the concept of remigration "has a chance to be anchored in the mainstream" (In den nächsten Wochen besteht die Chance, das Begriff und Idee im Mainstream verankert werden" post from 05.11.23). This statement reflects his strategic intention to normalize and embed the idea of remigration within broader public discourse, leveraging the increased attention and controversy surrounding the Potsdam scandal to advance his agenda. By consistently portraying migrants as a homogeneous threat and framing various events to fit this narrative, Sellner aims to influence public perception and policy in favor of his extremist views.

Remigration is presented as the "alternativlos" (no alternative) solution and promoted with the slogan "Nur Remigration rettet uns" (Only remigration saves us). This involves the fallacy "Remigration rettet Leben" (Remigration saves lives), implying that a country without migrants would be safe and crime-free, which is misleading. According to the German Police Statistics for 2023, although the number of crimes committed by migrants (non-citizens) has increased compared to the previous year, Germans still account for 60% of the crimes.¹⁸ Additionally, statistics on migrant crimes include offenses related to migration laws, which Germans cannot commit.

After the expose of the Potsdam meeting in January, Sellner posted a detailed explanation, where he denied any direct links with the AfD, claiming that he was not paid and once again justified the concept of remigration. He stated, "Remigration betrifft nicht alle Migranten, sondern jene, die unserer Gesellschaft wirtschaftlich, kriminell, oder kulturell schaden" (Remigration does not affect all migrants, but rather those who harm our society economically, criminally, or culturally, post from 10.01.24). He explicitly mentioned that it does not apply to "westliche Migranten" (Western migrants). However, the term "kulturell schaden" (culturally harm) is vague and could technically apply to Western migrants if they are Muslim, for example. Sellner aims to

¹⁸ Die Innenministerinnen und Innenminister sowie die Innensenatorin und Innensensoren der Länder und des Bundes, "Polizeiliche Kriminalstatistik 2023," *Polizeiliche Kriminalstatistik 2023*, vol. V1.0, March 2024, https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/DE/publikationen/themen/sicherheit/pks-2023.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3.

frame remigration as a legitimate topic for discussion and debate and ignores the fact that those deporting people based on the grounds of suspected “cultural harm” violates recognized laws and human rights. And for those who violate criminal law, there is already an established procedure for deportation, with decisions made on a case-by-case basis.

The discourse has remained largely unchanged following the Scandal. Sellner simply incorporated some populist rhetoric to portray the idea of remigration as mainstream, using phrases like “das Volk will Remigration” (the people want remigration). He justified this by pointing to increased interest in the concept in news media and online. However, he failed to acknowledge that those searching for remigration do not necessarily support the program. From March onwards, Sellner continued his usual strategy of posting criminal records involving 'migrants.'

Following the release of the Collective's Report, Sellner swiftly launched the pre-sale of his book on remigration. By publishing books, aligning with more mainstream parties like the AfD, and consistently producing extensive content on his Telegram channel, he appears to be attempting what he previously tried with another key identitarian concept: inserting radical ideas into mainstream discourse to provoke discussion, if not the implementation of his program. "In a first step, we need to popularize the ‘Great Replacement’ in all of the patriotic camp and to infuse it into everyday usage. From there, it will more and more enter the media debate. In the past month, our actions already provoked some media reports where our term was used" (Martin Sellner 2015, quoted from Goetz 2021, p.66). The Great Replacement narrative was compromised when the New Zealand shooter issued his manifesto under the same name. Now, it seems that all efforts are focused on promoting remigration: as a concept, a program, and an idea for a “better future”. And this is the new frontline of the Identitarian movement, which also helps them to have media coverage, attract supporters and mobilize resources. The new Remigration DEMO is planned to happen in Vienna this summer. Remigration is portrayed as an appealing solution because it proposes to eliminate the problem entirely, rather than addressing the challenges of migration. Although this idea is unrealistic, it deliberately lacks clear criteria for determining who should be

"remigrated," leaving room for future radicalization by defining who brings cultural harm to the "native population."

After the Potsdam scandal Identitarians launched the website "Remigration.Jetzt" which presents a detailed and well-considered remigration program. Interestingly, the topos of threat is not dominant on this platform. Instead, remigration is portrayed as a policy solution to economic problems in Africa (and removing the burden from Europe). By returning people to their "homeland," the argument goes, it will foster economic growth there and reduce the reliance of migrants on the developed social security systems of Western European countries. Mainstream media comparisons of remigration to deportation are labeled as a "Lügenkampagne" (campaign of lies), invoking a victim narrative that portrays GI's "good intentions to easily achieve a better, more prosperous, and happier world for everyone" are not taken seriously and are misinterpreted. They blame the current crisis according to the website, is on those (politicians) who sell "false incentives and illusory promises" (falsche Anreize und illusorische Versprechungen) to poor migrants and refugees. This suggests, once again, that the elites are incapable of solving the problems and that their misguided policies have led to the crisis. Here, the GI positions itself as the problem solver, offering solutions and promising a better future, much like classic populist rhetoric.

The "charm" of the remigration solution quickly fades upon examining the concrete steps it entails. The website suggests 30 actions, ranging from immediate measures like closing the borders to long-term strategies such as establishing an Assimilation Institute. This Institute would assess whether citizens identify with the German nation („Wie viel Prozent der Einwohner identifizieren sich noch mit der Deutschen Nation?“).

By comparing the discursive strategies on remigration of Martin Sellner with the narratives presented on the website launched after the Potsdam meeting revelation, distinct approaches emerge. Martin Sellner consistently portrays migrants as foreign masses who harm European society and economically and physically threaten European citizens. In contrast, the website

presents a more “peaceful” narrative of remigration as a straightforward solution for humanity's benefit. This dual approach is highly manipulative and contradicts international laws and human rights. For example, point 22 calls for the cancellation of the individual right to seek asylum, and point 12 proposes the creation of an independent ministry for demography and population policy. This combination of strategies reveals the underlying contradictions and potential for further radicalization within the remigration agenda. But also let to attract broader audience, providing them a more “positive” justification of what is in its core discriminatory and racist idea.

Discourse on refugees

Martin Sellner has also mentioned in several posts and criticized Ukrainians who have come to Ireland, the UK, and other Western European countries. He has stressed out, that Ukrainian refugees should be accommodated in the East European countries, “where they fit better culturally” (Sellner, 31.03.2022). And the “real Ukrainian refugees” are staying in Poland and want to go back home.

Here we also trace another narrative: not only the identity matter, but also how the refugees behave. The good refugee does not want to stay long and is willing to come back home as soon as possible. (*„Die Asylanten sind gesetzestreu, europäisch und christlich. Kaum einer will nach Deutschland und alle wollen nach dem Krieg wieder heim“* - Sellner 01.03.2022). In general the radical far right rhetoric did not change much: they still do not want to discuss any potential ways of integration or any long-term ways of co-existence with migrants and are very strict about not crossing the borders of their nation states for those who do not belong. But they at least have some empathy towards people from Ukraine, because their identity is European.

However, it is interesting to mention another fact. In the abovementioned telegram channel there are in total 18 posts about “Ukrainische fluchtlinge” the first one from February 2022 and the last one is dated December 2023. Out of all 18 posts, 13 specifically address how “fake” refugees attempt to exploit the situation and migrate to Western Europe. As clearly stated by Martin Sellner,

"Africans and Arabs are shamelessly exploiting the war in Ukraine". He continues here the usual rhetoric of xenophobia pointing to the non-european nationalities as hostile.

This discourse just adds another layer to the discussion. We can infer that for the radical far-right, and to some extent for the populist far-right, the question of who belongs is not as important as the direct identification of who does not. Even when refugees and migrants share the same identity and, according to their logic, should be welcomed and supported (Ukrainians, as they are white, Christian and Europeans), they still focus on despising and securitizing those who are different, who do not belong. The embedded notion of given, fixed and absolute identity and the inability or unwillingness to accept that that labeling and categorizing individuals based on their descent or ethnic origin lies at the core of far-right discourse.

The recent campaign initiated by the German branch of Generation Identity vividly exemplifies this stance. In their campaign titled "No Way," they advocate for the placement of posters in African countries with the message "Do not come to Europe." The website explicitly states that they are targeting Uganda, Ghana, Somalia, and "many more" countries. However, they do not provide an explanation for why these specific countries were chosen over those in the Middle East and Asia.¹⁹

In her study, Nadja Jaworsky delves into the fluid and context-dependent nature of categories such as "migrant" and "refugee," emphasizing that they are neither fixed nor neutral constructs but rather by people, depending also on the context they are in (Jaworsky 2023, p. 30). The case of Generation Identity exemplifies how narratives surrounding migrants and refugees extend beyond simplistic dichotomies of "good" and "bad," revealing a more nuanced dynamic. Even among those deemed as "good" migrants or refugees, who supposedly fit into the preconceived notion of "belonging by identity," their portrayal can be easily manipulated to align with the prevailing narrative of hatred and exclusion. This highlights how identity constructs can

¹⁹ Fis, "NO WAY - Identitäre Bewegung Deutschland e.V.," *Identitäre Bewegung Deutschland e.V.*, May 15, 2023, <https://www.identitaere-bewegung.de/themen/no-way/>. Accessed 02.05.2024

be manipulated and how even individuals considered as fitting within the accepted framework of belonging are vulnerable to discriminatory narratives.

AfD's anti-immigration discourse and Remigration

To trace the changes of discourse of (re)migration and compare them with identitarian we focused on analysing 3 party documents: the program document of 2021 before the Germany's federal elections, the program document 2024, prepared for the EU elections in June 2024 and the Remigration Statement itself, issued in January 2024 following the Potsdam scandal. Additionally I have selected Party Leaders's joint press releases which are related to the topics of migration in the given timeframe: from August 2023 till April 15th 2024. In total there were 11 press-releases on the given criteria, most of them were shared before Potsdam and only two in March.

Remigration is found in the AfD's program for the 2021 German Parliament elections. However, within the extensive 200-page document, it is mentioned only briefly in the migration section. The AfD framed remigration in context of providing support to refugees in their regions of origin and transit, following the principle of "help on the ground": "AfD calls for a national and a supranational 'remigration agenda' to provide protection in regions of origin and transit according to the principle of 'help on the ground'" (Programm der Alternative für Deutschland für die Wahl zum 20. Deutschen Bundestag, 2021, p.95). Remigration is specifically mentioned in the context of closing what the party terms the "asylum paradise" in Germany (ibid, p. 93). Additionally, the AfD advocates for voluntary return (Freiwillige Rückkehr), criticizing the government's failure to manage the refugee flow and attributing the responsibility for deaths in the Mediterranean to the elites. By doing so, the AfD attempts to present their "return back" approach as more humanitarian. This rhetoric flips the typical humanitarian argument used by liberals, who campaign for welcoming refugees based on the value of human life and the necessity to escape death. The AfD, leveraging the humanitarian argument, advocates for closing borders to prevent refugees from reaching Europe. The statistics shows that the peak of refugee deaths in the

Mediterranean was in 2016, with over 5,000 fatalities²⁰. In contrast, around 2,000 deaths were recorded in 2021. When comparing these figures to the number of lives saved by those who successfully reached Europe and found refuge (148,223 first time asylum applicants in 2021)²¹, the AfD's discourse can be seen as a distortion of humanitarian principles. This strategic shift in narrative attempts to position the AfD as a protector of life, while fundamentally supporting restrictive immigration policies. And also distance them from more traditional far right threat and security of the homeland narrative.

However, this very common for far right topoi of threat is illustrated by the party's ongoing initiative of tracing crimes committed by migrants. Here we point to the very same discursive strategy as has Martin Sellner with his almost everyday reports of criminal records. Unlike Sellner, however, the AfD does not call for immediate remigration in each case. Instead, the party aggregates these incidents on their website, mapping them across the country to highlight the widespread nature of such crimes (Figure 6). By presenting the sheer volume of these cases, the AfD implies an escalating security threat posed by migrants, thereby reinforcing their narrative of a consistent danger to public safety.

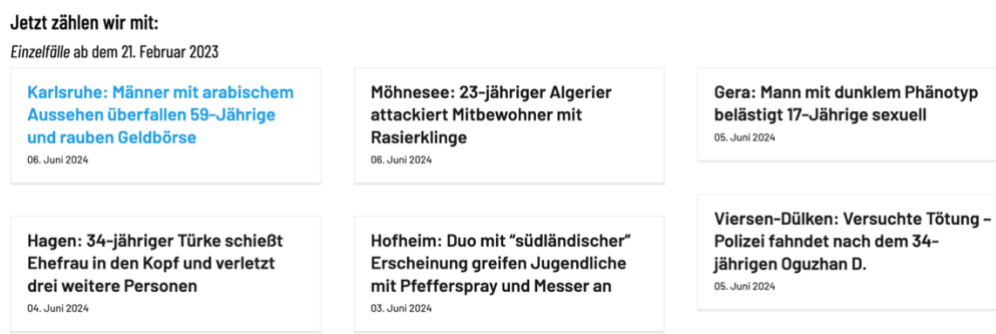


Figure 6. Screenshot from the AfD's website, where the Migrant-related Criminal News are collected.
Source: <https://www.AfD.de/einzelfallticker/>

The AfD's 2024 party program, prepared before the Potsdam Scandal in summer 2023, dedicates a section to remigration titled "Remigration statt Talentabwerbung" (Remigration instead

²⁰Statista, "Deaths of Migrants in the Mediterranean Sea 2014-2024," May 24, 2024, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1082077/deaths-of-migrants-in-the-mediterranean-sea/>.

²¹ Federal Statistical Office, "Migration Report 2021," 2021, https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Forschung/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2021-zentrale-ergebnisse.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=6.

of Talent Acquisition). Here the argument for remigration is linked with the “care” for the Global South countries which suffer from “brain drain”. By shifting the focus from Germany to the migrants' countries of origin, the AfD seek to presents the need for remigration from a more positive and even altruistic side. They argue that returning migrants and refugees to their home countries will contribute to those countries' development, continuing a logic from their 2021 program. This stance frames remigration as beneficial for the migrants themselves. The program states that “uncontrolled migration from these countries causes new migration movements (“ungesteuerte Emigration aus diesen Ländern ist selbst eine Ursache für weitere Migrationsbewegungen”) (AfD Europawahlprogramm 2024, p. 17), suggesting that as soon as conflicts end, migrants should return home, negating the need for resettlement. Remigration program would shift the focus from adaptation and assimilation policies that currently dominate.

The AfD's 2024 party program includes also a call for strengthening borders to prevent migrants from entering Germany, framing this as a care for migrants who, due to easy access to Europe, cannot resist coming here, leading to a brain drain. Interestingly, the typical far-right topoi of threat is less prominent in this document. Instead, the focus is on the supposed benefits of remigration for the migrants' home countries and the preservation of German and European identity. The program mentions security concerns mainly in relation to Islam, using the term “Identität” (identity) to discuss the need to halt migration from “culturally foreign” regions, claiming that Islam is a security issue. This aligns directly with the identitarian agenda. So in this document we can trace the “alternative”, more positive arguments in favour of remigration which are still align with the classical populist far right threat discourse.

Following the uncovering of Potsdam meeting in January AfD published a separate document titled “7 Punkte zur Remigration” where they outlined their policy and justifications for remigration. In this document, “remigration” is defined as “all measures and incentives” to repatriate foreigners who are required to leave Germany. Notably, the AfD uses the term “foreigners” (Ausländer) rather than asylum-seekers or migrants, implying a broad definition of

those who do not belong in Germany. By this paper AfD seemed to persuade the broader audience that they are alligning with the law and aiming to use only legal instruments in their actions. This is confirmed by the quantity of the law-connected words in the first 3 sentences: terms such as rechtsstaatlichen (constitutional), gesetzlichen Regelungen (legal regulations), Geltendes Recht (applicable law), and rechtsstaatliche Remigration (constitutional remigration). This repetitive emphasis suggests an attempt to legitimize their policy within the framework of the law, despite the absence of any existing "remigration" law in Germany.

The document utilizes various topoi to justify the remigration:

1. **Topos of Security:** The AfD advocates for the deportation of all criminals and those breaking the law, framing migrants as a security threat. – point 4
2. **Topos of Law:** By repeatedly referencing legal terms, the AfD manipulates the discourse to suggest their actions are lawful, despite criticizing the current legal framework on migration.
3. **Topos of Threat:** The statement "der Import ausländischer Konflikte gefährdet zunehmend den inneren Frieden" (the import of foreign conflicts increasingly endangers internal peace) suggests that migrants bring conflict into Germany. – point 5.
4. **Topos of Burden:** The AfD argues that those who remain in Germany should be self-sufficient and not rely on state resources. – point 6.

To summarize, the AfD's stance distinguishes between "good migrants" and "bad migrants," meaning those who integrate, contribute economically, and follow the law. According to the law, the latter group—which as said includes Syrians and Afghans—should be remigrated. Nonetheless, there is currently no law in Germany that permits the wholesale deportation of individuals based just on their nationality, indicating a substantial difference between the AfD's plans and the current legal structures.

Discourse on refugees

The AfD initially showed more tolerance towards Ukrainian refugees at the onset of the full-scale war. Unlike the situation in 2015, Ukrainian refugees were permitted entry into Germany without requiring a visa and were exempt from the asylum procedure; instead, they were granted humanitarian protection status under Section 24 of the Residence Act. Throughout 2022, a total of 828,885 individuals were admitted under this protection status.²² Initially, there were no loud calls to "protect the borders" from either populist or radical far-right groups. The AfD leader Tino Chrupalla, supported the refugees, arguing that Ukrainians were not responsible for the war and should find support in Germany and across Europe.²³

However, this welcoming stance did not last long. By September 2022, the term "social tourism" was used by the AfD to describe the influx of Ukrainian refugees, implying exploitation of the social welfare system²⁴. In October 2022, the AfD called for the cancellation of the special status and access to Hartz IV for Ukrainian refugees, arguing that the program served as a "pull-factor" attracting thousands. In February 2023, the party commented on a case in Lörrach, where German citizens were allegedly forced to cancel their rental contracts for Ukrainian refugees, framing it as an injustice against locals. By May 2023, party leaders asserted that increasing financial support for refugees would only prolong the crisis. Finally, in April 2024, the AfD claimed that an absolute majority of Germans reject giving Ukrainian refugees direct access to citizen's money, presenting this as evidence of widespread support for their stance. The AfD's rhetoric quickly shifted from initially supporting Ukrainian refugees to viewing them as a burden, leveraging public dissatisfaction to promote their anti-refugee stance. In just one year, the party's discourse evolved dramatically, positioning themselves as the voice of the people.

²² Federal Statistical Office, "Migration Report of the Federal Government 2022 Executive Summary," 2022, https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Forschung/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2022-kurzfassung.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=9. – P. 5

²³ RedaktionsNetzwerk Deutschland, "Krieg in Der Ukraine: AfD Für Aufnahme Von Flüchtlingen," *RND.de*, February 28, 2022, <https://www.rnd.de/politik/krieg-in-der-ukraine-afd-fuer-aufnahme-von-fluechtlingen-2E656TZUND652TWFK7M2HAV5QM.html>. Accessed 03.05.24

²⁴ Here and after the source are the texts from official Telegram-channel AfD Fraktion im Bundestag/ <https://t.me/Afdfraktionimbundestag/179>

Through the speeches of AfD's leaders shared on the party's website we can see the discursive shift towards more direct and radical approach in relation to remigration. As mentioned earlier the following analysis is based on 11 texts covering the period from August 2023 till April 2024.

Initially, the party leader's rhetoric centred on criticizing the government's handling of migration, particularly focusing on the economic and social burden imposed by migrants. For instance, in August 2023, Alice Weidel²⁵ argued against the reform of the naturalization law, stating it would attract more "poverty migration" and strain the social system. The party's rhetoric grew increasingly oppositional, highlighting what it described as the government's failure to protect Germany's borders and accusing it of policies driven by interests rather than the welfare of the German people. In September 2023, the AfD claimed that the EU was incapable of stopping the "illegal migration wave" and emphasized the need for stronger border control measures. Following the HAMAS attack in October 2023, the AfD adopted a more security-focused argument, asserting that most Germans opposed mass immigration from Muslim countries, which they framed as a threat. This period saw the AfD calling for migrants to commit to German values and integrate, yet they still expressed hopes for integration rather than remigration.

By November 2023, the discourse had shifted to a more concrete stance on deportation. The AfD criticized the government's attempts to ease deportation procedures as "symbolic politics" and began advocating for a comprehensive migration overhaul, including robust border protection and mass deportations. They portrayed themselves as the only party capable of implementing a true migration policy shift. In early 2024, the AfD's rhetoric became even more radical. For example, they explicitly called for the immediate deportation of all "obliged to leave" individuals and stringent border controls to prevent illegal entries. This marks a significant shift towards advocating for remigration as a de-facto policy. The AfD's narrative consistently positions itself

²⁵ See Appendix to access table with the texts and links

against the current government, portraying it as incapable of handling the migration crisis and presenting their own solutions as the only viable options for Germany's future.

This evolving discourse illustrates how the AfD has moved from general opposition to specific, radical proposals, increasingly aligning with the rhetoric of groups like Generation Identity. The Potsdam meeting and subsequent events have likely influenced this shift, bringing the concept of remigration into mainstream political discourse and amplifying its prominence within the AfD's platform.

How did the Scandal influence AfD? After almost half a year we can evaluate if the close ties with Identitarian rhetoric, which also found its reflection in Party Program 2024 and Remigration paper had any negative effect on the AfD positions. The most recent polls Forsa polls show that AfD has not lost much electoral support and while having some decline is still keeping its position as second preferable party²⁶. AfD has also gained +2700 new members following the days of the scandal (Vorreger, 2024). And + 3300 in total for the first month of 2024, which made it most fast-growing party in Germany (Vorreger, 2024). Sellner has also proudly shared in his telegram (post from 23.01.24) The scandal and ensuing media attention allowed the AfD to attract significant public interest. Through the position paper on Remigration, the party strategically framed themselves as the “alternative” to the current political system, emphasizing their commitment to fundamental systemic changes rather than merely introducing policy adjustments and restrictions. The emphasis on a systemic change aligns with the party's broader populist narrative, which often involves criticizing the establishment and presenting themselves as the true representatives of the people's interests. They portrayed their approach to remigration as a thorough and necessary reform that would not only address the symptoms of migration issues but also tackle their root causes.

Similarities and Differences Between AfD and GI on Migration and Remigration Policies

²⁶ Forsa Poll, 08.23-04.24 Accessed 06.06.2024 <https://politpro.eu/en/germany/polls>

Both the AfD and Identitarian call for a fundamental rethinking ("umdenken") and implementation ("umsetzen") of current migration policies. They do not differentiate between refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers, advocating for a new version of laws regarding citizenship and asylum seeking. Both groups support immediate border closures and emphasize the principle of "helping locally" thus stopping migrants from coming to Germany. However in case of Identitarian the local help is only should be provided to those who share same European identity, e.g. Ukrainian refugees.

| AFD Definition of Remigration | GI Definition of Remigration |
|---|---|
| „Remigration umfasst alle Maßnahmen und Anreize zu einer rechtsstaatlichen und gesetzeskonformen Rückführung ausreisepflichtiger Ausländer in ihre Heimat“ | „Remigration - Paradigmenwechsel in der Migrations- und Bevölkerungspolitik“ |
| The term „ausreisepflichtiger“ gives a broad spectrum to manipulate, as it literally means “required to leave the country” – does it include those who got denial of the asylum status, those who committed crime or those who do not belong to the country according to the law, which might change. This definition gives a lot of space for adjectment and manipulation. | This implies a fundamental systematic approach, a change of system. The word "Bevölkerungspolitik" refers to the policies or techniques that a government or organization uses to influence the population. So this definition also gives a lot of space for adjectment and manipulation. |

Similarities:

- Both AfD and GI call for a fundamental change in migration policy, emphasizing the need for remigration.

- Both use terms like refugees, migrants, and foreigners interchangeably, avoiding specific distinctions.
- Both advocate for closing borders and supporting local aid to prevent migration to Europe;
- Both AfD and GI agree that factors contributing to increased immigration, such as easy access to citizenship and generous social benefits, need to be eliminated.

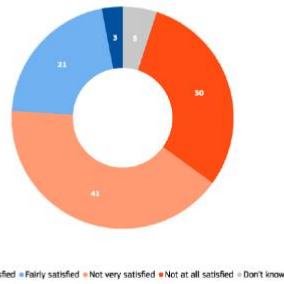
Differences:

- **AfD:** Emphasizes a legal framework, focusing on law and order, and presents remigration as a regulated process. They also incorporate economic arguments, suggesting that remigration is beneficial for Germany and the migrants' home countries.
- **GI:** Advocates for a more radical and systematic revision of migration policies, driven by nativist and cultural preservation motives. They propose more aggressive measures and institutions to enforce remigration.

To preliminarily evaluate the extent to which the radical idea of remigration, as advocated by GI or AfD, has influenced the broader audience, we will examine the survey data. It is important to acknowledge that individuals may have concerns regarding migration issues without being aware of the Potsdam scandal. Although a specific survey or in-depth interviews would be more appropriate for achieving this goal, our intention here is to establish a framework for future research and provide an initial analysis of the data.

Eurobarometer Survey held in 2024 shows that only 24% of respondents are satisfied with the EU's response to migration crisis (Figure 7). And the majority find the EU policy unsatisfying.

Over the past 15 years, Europe has experienced several major crises. How satisfied or not are you with the EU's response to each of the following ones? - Migration (EU27) (%)

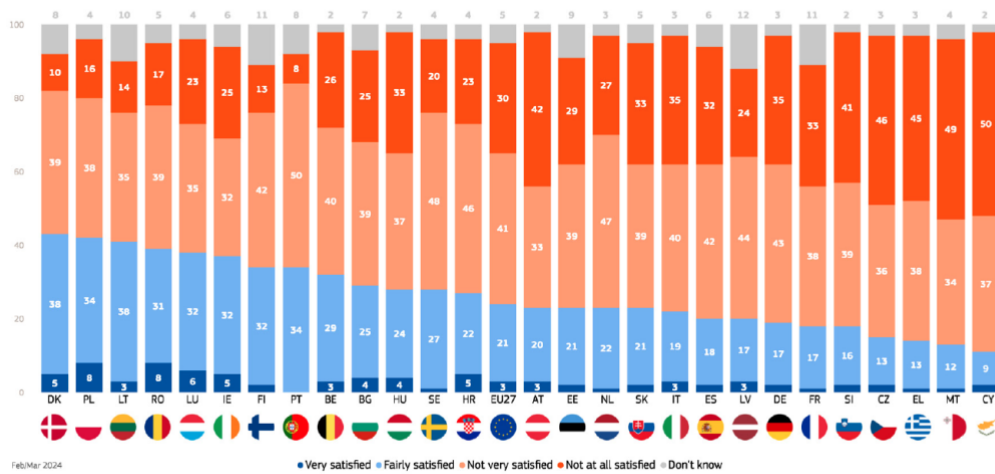


Feb/Mar 2024

Figure 7. Responses to the Eurobarometer Survey. Source European Parliament's Spring 2024 Eurobarometer survey: p.179

Interestingly is that the German population is less satisfied with the EU response to migration than Austrian (Figure 8):

QA8.5 Over the past 15 years, Europe has experienced several major crises. How satisfied or not are you with the EU's response to each of the following ones? - Migration (%)



Feb/Mar 2024

Figure 8. Responses to the Eurobarometer Survey 2024. Source: European Parliament's Spring 2024 Eurobarometer survey: p.183

According to the same research the topic of “migration and asylum” is one of the key topics for the coming EU Elections. In Germany in Austria, however, the key topic to be discussed during the electoral campaign is not the migration, but defence and security and future of Europe respectively (European Parliament's Spring 2024 Eurobarometer survey, p. 54) Migration however

is on the second place, which may indicate that these topics are very much connected and are in concern of the population.

In the Eurobarometer report from Spring 2023, 43% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the EU's actions towards migration. This figure represents a significant change within just

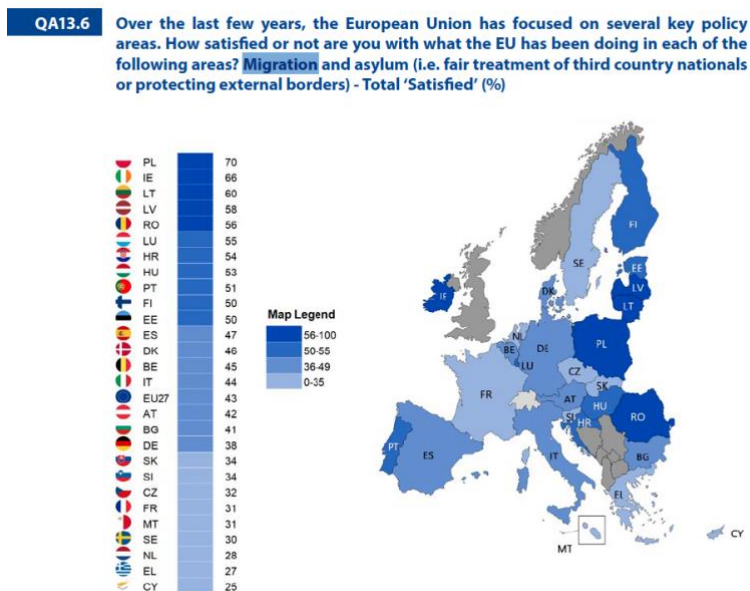


Figure 9. Responses to the Eurobarometer Survey 2023. Source: European Parliament's Spring 2023 Eurobarometer survey: p.106

one year: dissatisfaction doubled in 2024, indicating a marked increase in public discontent with the EU's handling of migration issues.

Despite the significant increase in dissatisfaction with the EU's migration policies from Spring 2023 to Spring 2024, indicated in the survey, Europe did not experience any new major migration waves during this period. The influx of Ukrainian refugees had primarily occurred in 2022. And without profound research may only guess what stands behind this change and to what degree did the Potsdam Scandal influence this. This growing dissatisfaction however creates a good opportunity for alternative ideas and approaches, such as remigration, to be presented and normalised among broader public, making it easier for populist far-right parties to normalize previously radical programs. While public discontent with EU migration policies doesn't necessarily translate into support for the AfD and its remigration agenda, it indicates a potential demand for change. Far-right parties can leverage this sentiment to promote their discriminatory

solutions, rebranding them with new arguments. This strategy is evident in the AfD's 2024 Party Program, which frames remigration as a policy beneficial for migrants and their countries' prosperity, presenting it in a more "altruistic" and positive light instead of classical argument of security threat.

The disclosure of strong connections between the radical identitarian movement and the populist far-right AfD has not resulted in significant reputational or electoral loss for the latter. In the short term, the AfD even gained new members and media coverage, which further integrated the concept of remigration into public discussion. For GI and Martin Sellner, this disclosure was even more beneficial. As a grassroots movement, they rely heavily on media attention to propagate their ideas and attract new followers. The increased visibility also bolstered Sellner's personal branding as the movement's leader. Unlike other GI branches across Europe, the Austrian and German branches remain highly active, partly due to Sellner's prominent and productive presence on platforms like Telegram. The survival of the identitarian movement seems contingent on these factors unless another "lone wolf" radical commits an attack in favour of remigration, similar to what happened with the Replacement Theory. Such an event could provide authorities with the grounds to finally ban these extreme radicals.

Conclusion:

The Identitarian discourse on Remigration is being adapted by AfD but not fully integrated, leaving more extreme and radical aspects aside and thus providing space to attract different audiences. After the Potsdam Scandal and disclosure of remigration idea to the broader public, some individuals followed Martin Sellner's channel after, others became AfD members, and some protested against the far-right. However, the first step of normalization has occurred: now, remigration is being discussed by a broader audience rather than being a single word buried in a 200-page document or limited to Sellner's followers.

The scandal allowed or forced the AfD to introduce a separate document and statement on migration, where they repeatedly referred to the legal argument, aiming to calm their broader electoral base. The AfD also did not deny the ideas of sending people back but used this scandal to deliver their message and program goals in the important election year. This base includes individuals who are not ready for the immediate deportation of German citizens but are dissatisfied with the current EU migration policy and open to new perspectives. This strategic move enables the AfD to present themselves as a rational alternative to more extreme views, appealing to a wider audience while maintaining their core anti-migration stance.

The upcoming EU elections will serve as a crucial indicator of the AfD's electoral success or failure following the Potsdam scandal. Given that this research deals with an evolving topic, it is challenging to make definitive conclusions or solid argument. However, it is essential to map and highlight the current developments and connections between GI and AfD, a relatively new party that is increasingly radicalizing its discourse. This radicalization represents a shift from simply opposing mainstream policies to advocating more extreme solutions.

The AfD of 2013 was not initially associated with ideas of deportation. Over time, the focus has moved from stopping refugee flows and closing borders to proposing more radical measures like remigration of foreigners. While the AfD, as a parliamentary populist party, aims to garner broader electoral support and thus exercises caution in its language, the existence of GI plays a

dual role. First, it provides a clear representation of what "remigration" entails for the more radicalized supporters while allowing the AfD to differentiate itself from neo-Nazi groups. By positioning themselves as a less radical entity that operates within democratic frameworks and legal boundaries, the AfD can appeal to a broader public dissatisfied with current EU migration policies yet wary of overt extremism and radicalization.

This research may serve as a foundational study for future, more comprehensive investigations into the interconnections between radical grassroots movements and populist far-right parties, as well as the strategic use of scandals to normalize radical ideas. The concept of remigration, central to this study, demonstrates how extreme ideas can be subtly integrated into mainstream discourse.

How the AfD's discourse and program statements on remigration will evolve and whether the revealed connections with extreme radicals will influence upcoming election results remain areas for continued observation and analysis. This study highlights the importance of understanding these dynamics to anticipate and respond to shifts in political rhetoric and public perception. Future research could expand on these findings to offer deeper insights into the mechanisms of radicalization and the role of political scandals in shaping public discourse.

Appendix A.

Table 2. Working Table on the AfD's statement on (re)migration with links to the selected texts

| Date | Topic | Text | Argument |
|----------|---|--|---|
| 23.08.23 | Reform of the naturalization law | die Innere Sicherheit kontinuierlich erodiert; macht die Ampel Deutschland mit dem geänderten Einbürgerungsrecht zu einem noch beliebteren Ziel für Armutsmigration. noch mehr Migration zu provozieren. | The social system is on its limit, and AfD stands against it. |
| 30.08.23 | Meeting of the federal government in Meseberg | Deutschland deindustrialisiert. Einen Neustart für Deutschland und seine Wirtschaft wird es nur mit einer neuen Bundesregierung geben. Interessengeleitete Politik. Unternehmen massenhaft ins Ausland flüchten | Anti-government The rhetoric is very oppositional to the government. An idea of politics driven by Interests is similar to the argument expressed by GI. But here the focus is on Economy, not security. |
| 21.09.23 | Lampedusa | Ist die EU weder willens noch dazu in der Lage, ihre Außengrenzen zu schützen; die illegale Migrationswelle zu stoppen; illegalen Wirtschaftsmigranten | Threat argument: there are masses waiting on the other side to “invade” Europe |
| 13.10.23 | Comment regarding migration policy change | Massenzuwanderung in die Sozialsysteme beenden. Muss sich die Bundesregierung an der Abschirmung Europas durch Grenzzäune und Seeblockaden beteiligen. Die Burg Europa muss sicher sein Die Bundesregierung muss sich diplomatisch dafür einsetzen, dass es gar nicht erst zu großen Fluchtbewegungen kommt. | Argument: migrants are taking over the Social system and benefits – Economic argument. Against the current government and politics Security argument: we must be protected from the new waves of migrants coming from Gaza and other parts of the world. |
| 18.10.23 | Following the HAMAS attack | „Eine große Mehrheit der Bundesbürger lehnt die Masseneinwanderung aus muslimischen Ländern ab und empfindet diese als Bedrohung. Deutschland muss deshalb jetzt das klare Signal senden, dass eine Aufnahme weiterer Migranten aus dieser Region ausgeschlossen ist. Migranten | The argument of the masses, that we share the popular point of view: most of the citizens are afraid of and do not want any further muslim migrants. Claim that migrants must commit to the values of Germany. No remigration of those who do not belong. Still hopes for integration |

| | | | |
|----------|---|--|---|
| | | müssen sich zu Deutschlands Werten bekennen. Jeder Einwanderer hat eine unabdingbare Bringschuld, sich zu integrieren; er muss sich seiner neuen Heimat anpassen, nicht umgekehrt. | |
| 25.10.23 | Draft law from Internal Minister to make the deportation and returns easier | Solange illegale Migranten nicht konsequent an den Grenzen zurückgewiesen, sondern mit hohen Sozialleistungen, unbegrenztem Familiennachzug und vereinfachten Aufenthaltsregeln wie mit einem Migrationsmagneten auch noch angelockt werden, sind die vorgestellten Korrekturen an den Abschieberegeln bloße Symbolpolitik. | They criticize the document and actually point that the government is trying to solve the consequences of the problem and not root of the problem itself, which is open borders. |
| 01.11.23 | Cooperation of Scandinavian countries on migration issues | Zukünftig wollen die Nordstaaten den Grenzschutz in die eigene Hand nehmen und Abschiebeflüge gemeinsam organisieren , um effizientere Abschiebungen zu ermöglichen. Eine echte Migrationswende , deren oberste Prämisse wirklichen Grenzschutz und das Vorantreiben von Rückführungen vorsieht, ist nur mit der AfD möglich. Wir sind bereit, uns dieser Verantwortung zu stellen | Deportation of the asylum-seekers Call for unified solution for the whole Europe and for the first time since months talk openly about return politics. Criticizing the government: Alibipolitik Argument of the Volk: this policy is in the interest of german citizens |
| 7.11.23 | Draft Law | Asyl-Chaos mit noch mehr Geld vom Steuerzahler zuzukleistern. Das zeigt, dass die politisch Verantwortlichen in Bund und Ländern die Dimension der Migrationskrise noch immer nicht begriffen haben. Migrationskollaps | Anti-government, economic argument. Threat argument Solution for migration crisis: border control, legal reforms and cancellation of financial and social support to them. |
| 3.11.23 | Meeting of Scholz and Friedrich Merz on Migration Policy | Die Zeit der Migrationsgipfel und Gesprächskreise muss ein Ende haben. Der unkontrollierte Zuzug von Ausländern nach Deutschland muss umgehend unterbunden und die Zahl der Abschiebungen drastisch erhöht werden. Muss Unions-Fraktionschef Friedrich Merz seiner Verantwortung gerecht werden und Farbe bekennen, mit der | They don't call for remigration yet, but here we witness the call for increasing the number of deportations. Similar argument of "we are the majority here" |

| | | | |
|---------|--|---|--|
| | | <p>unseligen Merkelschen Willkommenspolitik kompromisslos brechen und sich für neue Mehrheiten öffnen, mit denen eine Migrationswende möglich wird.“</p> | |
| 5.03.24 | <p>Alice Weidel comment on Prime Minister's Conference</p> | <p>Erstens sind Ausreisepflichtige sofort und ohne zeitlichen Aufschub in ihre Heimatländer abzuschicken. Zweitens müssen unsere Grenzen kontrolliert werden, um illegale Einreisen durch Abweisung zu unterbinden. weniger so genannte Flüchtlinge aufzunehmen</p> | <p>More direct and radical, call to remigration de-facto</p> |
| 6.03.24 | <p>Prime Minister's Conference</p> | <p>Bund und Länder endgültig dazu übergegangen sind, die Migrationskrise zu verwalten, statt sie zu lösen; Wir bei der Migrationskrise in Deutschland nicht mit einem Kontrollverlust, sondern mit einem Kontrollverzicht zu tun haben. Abschiebung abgelehnter Asylbewerber im großen Stil zu beginnen. Deutschland braucht... sondern eine wirkliche Migrationswende.</p> | <p>Anti-government rhetoric</p> |

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