

Occasion and Objective

In recent years churches and diaconia in Europe have been important actors and partners in civil society, politics and educational institutions to fight right-wing extremism, discrimination and hate. The extent of involvement varies, but in times of growing populist tendencies, this common cause and engagement is more important than ever. There is also an increased desire to form alliances, exchange of ideas and come together to fight hate in all its forms.

The phenomenon of right-wing populism poses a relatively new challenge to European politics and societies, as populists are not only in the margins of our societal and political structures any more. Populism is increasingly mainstreamed and many European countries have seen the rise of populism in society and in government. Populist parties and movements are aiming to influence the European agenda in a negative way and in extreme cases can sabotage and paralyse well-established democratic structures and decision-making processes.

Situations vary from country to country, and so do the counter strategies and approaches. Networking, joint strategy planning and the exchange of knowledge and plans of action are vital to strengthen positive democratic powers in the whole of Europe.

This conference wants to bring together high-profile stakeholders from the churches and diaconia in Europe, from civil society and politics to join in a mutual effort to keep human dignity, civil rights and democratic values at the heart of our societies. It wants to provide a space for exchange, for debating which strategy is working and which one is not. We will discuss recent developments under the hypothesis that the different things happening might not be so different after all – that there are at least some common roots and similar causes.

Organisers:

National Working Group on Church and Rightwing Extremism (BAGKR)
Diakonie Deutschland, Project »Shaping diversity - Resisting exclusion: Diaconia in post-migrant society«
Eurodiaconia
Friedrich Ebert Foundation, EU Office Brussels
Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Project against right-wing extremism

Conference venue

House of the Protestant Church in Germany (EKD)
Rue Joseph II 166
B-1000 Brussels

Registration

Participants are asked to organise their travel arrangements individually. Costs of board and lodging for registered participants will be covered by the organisers. There is no participation fee for this event. Please register at: <https://bagkr.de/applicationeurope/>

Contact and Information

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Demokratie *leben!*

BAG
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KIRCHE & RECHTS-EXTREMISMUS

FRIEDRICH
EBERT
STIFTUNG

Diakonie
Deutschland

Eurodiaconia

RIGHT-WING POPULISM IN EUROPE

Networking conference for
activists and multipliers from
churches, christian social service
organisations and related partners

6th-7th December
2018
Brussels

Programme

Thursday, 6th December 2018

- 10:00 am** Introduction & Welcome by the Organisers
- 10:30 am** Opening Input
»What we are dealing with?« Terminology, phenomena and a general overview on the current situation in Europe regarding right-wing populism and extremism
[Prof. em. Dr. Hajo Funke](#), Political Scientist, Freie Universität Berlin
- 11:30 am** Country Reports
Austria
[Martin Schenk-Mair](#), Deputy Director Diakonie Austria
Sweden
[Anna-Lena Lodenius](#), Journalist and Author
- 1:00 pm** Lunch
- 2:00 pm** Country Reports
Hungary
[András Bíró-Nagy](#), Co-Director and Head of Research of Policy Solutions
France
[Prof. Dr. Jean-Yves Camus](#), Political Analyst and Associate Research Fellow at The French Institute for International and Strategic Affairs (IRIS)
- 3:00 pm** Coffee Break

- 3:30 pm** Panel Discussion
»Is Europe turning right? How to tackle right-wing populism together«
[Michaël Privot](#), Director European Network Against Racism (ENAR)
[Heather Roy](#), Secretary General of Eurodiaconia
Representative of the European Parliament (tbc)
Representative of the European Commission (tbc)
- Moderation:**
[Katharina Wegner](#), EU-Representative of Diakonie Deutschland
- 5:30 pm** Free Time for Networking
- 7:00 pm** Reception & Evening Event

Programme

Friday, 7th December 2018

- 9:30 am** Introduction into Day 2
- 9:40 am** Input
»The Russian influence on the Far Right in Europe«
[Dr. Andreas Umland](#), Political Scientist, Institute for Euro-Atlantic Cooperation Kyiv, Ukraine
- 10:40 am** Coffee Break
- 11:00 am** Presentation
»How the programme „Demokratie leben!“ (Live Democracy!) shapes democracy and civil society in Germany«
[Thomas Heppener](#), German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
- 12:00 pm** Lunch
- 1:00 pm** Exchange and Cooperative Consultation
»What to do, what not to do«
[Henning Flad](#), Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Kirche und Rechtsextremismus
[Ingo Grastorf](#), Diakonie Deutschland
[Franziska Schröter](#), Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
[Florian Tuder](#), Eurodiaconia
- 3:00 pm** End of Conference

Wednesday, 5th December 2018

For those arriving in Brussels early, there will be a non-formal, unofficial opening of the conference (at own cost) with a get together dinner (7pm) and a reception (9:30pm)