



Federal Ministry for  
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,  
Women and Youth

Demokratie  
leben!



# Live Democracy!

Active against Right-wing Extremism,  
Violence and Hate



„With the federal programme ‚Live Democracy!‘, I want to make civil society strong in its fight against any tendencies in our country that are anti-democratic and contemptuous of human rights.

I want to support the people on the ground who stand up and speak up for an open and diverse country. At the same time, I want to encourage all citizens to become active against right-wing extremism, violence and hate. Get involved to put a personal face on our democracy and let us live democracy together!“

Manuela Schwesig  
Federal Minister for Family Affairs,  
Senior Citizens,  
Women and Youth

## Active against Right-wing Extremism, Violence and Hate

Attacks on democracy, freedom and the rule of law as well as ideologies of inequality are perennial challenges to the entire society. Right-wing extremism, racism and anti-Semitism, the challenges posed by islamophobia, antigypsyism, homophobia and transphobia, violent Islamism and jihadism, left-wing militancy and other movements illustrate the spectrum of anti-democratic and hate phenomena. For us to take a powerful stand against them, the State and civil society must stand shoulder to shoulder.

Day by day, many initiatives, associations and committed citizens throughout Germany are actively working towards their aim of a diverse, non-violent and democratic society. In this important work, they are being supported by a federal programme launched by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. Named ‚Live Democracy!‘, it specifically sponsors projects that seek to encourage democracy and prevent extremism.

The programme operates on various levels, setting out to support projects with not only local, but also regional and supranational missions.

### The programme is structured into the following areas

Local partnerships for  
democracy

Democracy Centres at Federal  
State Level

Structural development of  
nation-wide NGOs

Pilot projects on selected  
phenomena of group-related hate  
and approaches to strengthening  
democracy in rural areas

Pilot projects on ways to prevent  
radicalisation

## Local Partnerships for Democracy

The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth is supporting, throughout Germany, towns and cities, municipalities and rural districts in developing and implementing, within the framework of local ,partnerships for democracy‘, action concepts to promote democracy and diversity.

These ,partnerships for democracy‘ bring together decision-makers from local politics and administration and active civil society actors. Starting from local conditions and problems on the ground, they jointly develop a strategy tailored to address the concrete situation at hand.

Sponsored communities receive annual funding from the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth - with a five-year perspective - for an action and initiative fund that can then be used to pay for concrete individual measures. Moreover, they will get funding for a liaison office and specialist unit, for activities to promote participation, networking and public relations as well as for a youth fund that will specifically strengthen children’s and youth’s participation opportunities in a yet-to-be-established youth forum.

## Democracy Centres at Federal State Level

The existing counselling and support services in the Federal Laender have been networked in an effort to better support people in dealing with right-wing extremist, racist or anti-Semitic incidents. Specifically, for instance, victims‘ counselling services support persons affected by rightwing violence in coping with the fallout from the experience. Additional services include mobile counselling teams and exit counselling services.

The democracy centres support - in close co-ordination with the Land governments - the further development of concepts and strategies to strengthen democratic culture and prevent extremism in their Federal Land. They do the networking of local activities, especially of the partnerships for democracy.

## Structural Development of Nation-wide NGOs

This marks the first time that the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth is providing long-term support to a selection of NGOs whose work against right-wing extremism, violence and hate and for democracy and diversity is relevant throughout Germany. In doing so, it promotes the development of a nationwide infrastructure that enables professional support from experts and advances good practice approaches.

Within the framework of a continuous dialogue and co-operation, the nation-wide NGOs help to take the programme’s thematic priorities forward and to identify and address new, current challenges.

**Additional information (in German)  
at [www.demokratie-leben.de](http://www.demokratie-leben.de)**

## Pilot Projects on Selected Phenomena of Group-related Hate and Approaches to Strengthening Democracy in Rural Areas

Pilot projects develop and field-test innovative approaches towards promoting democracy and prevention work. The prime aim is to advance teaching practice in working with children, adolescents and young adults. The federal programme ‚Live Democracy!‘ supports pilot projects that address selected phenomena of group-related hate:

### Current Forms of Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism as hostility towards Jews manifests in many ways and various ‚lines of argument‘ are put forward in an attempt to ‚justify‘ it. The supported projects fight against current anti-Semitism and develop concrete approaches and services. Projects against anti-Zionist and secondary anti-Semitism receive special support.

### Antigypsyism

Antigypsyism as hostility towards Sinti and Roma reaches all the way from the peddling of traditional prejudice towards latently violent harassment. The sponsored projects aim to encourage civil society engagement and counteract the ethnicisation of social policy problems by scapegoating Sinti and Roma.

### Current Forms of Islamophobia

Islamophobia is the aversion to persons whose actual or alleged religion is Islam. The sponsored projects aim to enhance appreciation and understanding and to resolve conflicts where culture, ethnicity, origin or religion play a role.

### Homophobia and Transphobia

Homophobia and transphobia manifest in the stigmatisation of and aversion to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (LGBTI). Support goes to measures that encourage the acceptance of

same-sex lifestyles, reduce prejudice and hostility towards LGBTI persons and address violence on grounds of sex or gender, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Support also goes to pilot projects against right-wing extremism, violence and group-related hate that focus on the special framework conditions obtaining in rural, structurally weak areas. The aim is to strengthen the democratic culture of, first and foremost, young people, and to field test novel forms of conflict and problem resolution.

## Pilot Projects on Ways to Prevent Radicalisation

Another group of pilot projects is looking at ways to prevent radicalisation processes mainly in the field of right-wing extremism, ultranationalism, latently violent Islamism, salafist phenomena as well as latently violent and antidemocratic manifestations of left-wing militancy.

The projects are based in social settings that are conflict hotspots and develop conflict management strategies with the aim of identifying constructive, democratic ways of addressing problems and conflicts. In line with social prevalence patterns, the pilot projects seek to trial heterogeneous accesses, different social settings-based approaches as well as a variety of de-escalation and distancing strategies in respect of the foregoing phenomena and the various manifestations, interactions and root causes of radicalisation processes in young persons.

The projects include, for instance, the testing of measures to prevent radicalisation online and through social media and the discussion of online services with radical political contents, the piloting of peer-based distancing strategies, the further development of programmes for working with the parents of vulnerable youth or coaching politically or religiously motivated violent juvenile offenders.

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