



Annual Report **2023**



Violence
Prevention Network

Subject matter of the report

Scope of validity

The subject of the present report is Violence Prevention Network gGmbH. The organisation works with ideologically vulnerable persons, de-radicalises offenders with extremist motivations and provides support for their re-integration into democratic society.

Report period and reporting cycle

The reporting period is the financial year 2023 from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023. This report is prepared annually. This report was completed on 06/11/2024. All information is correct as at 06/11/2024, except where it relates exclusively to the previous financial year 2023.

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CONTENTS

Vision and Mission

page 5

At a glance

page 6

Where we are active

page 8

The year in review and looking ahead

page 11

Reports from our departments

page 13

Evaluation

page 27

Organisation

page 29

Finances

page 35



Judy Korn

Thomas Mücke

VISION

Strengthening democracy by preventing extremism.

MISSION

We lay the groundwork for people who are susceptible to ideologies and perpetrators of violent crimes with extremist motivations to be enabled, through disengagement work, to modify their behaviour, to lead an independent life and to become a part of democratic society. We give them tools and resources that enable them to reflect on and overcome their former behavioural patterns. They are empowered to lead a life in which they harm neither themselves nor others.

We develop new methods and approaches to preventing extremism and talk to community stakeholders and political decision-makers in order to create sustainable conditions for combating extremism both online and offline.

AT A GLANCE



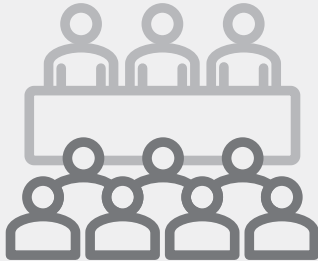
193
Colleagues



10
Our locations



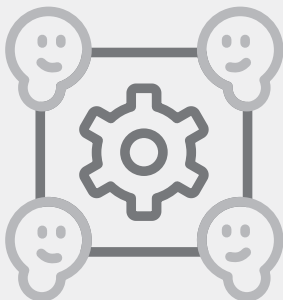
33
Projects



3
Conferences



33
Publications



187
Workshops for
schools and
youth welfare



€10.8 m
Resources committed



364
CPD for
professionals



477
Group and individual
trainings in prisons



118
Consultations
with relatives



16
E-Learnings
(Modules and Workshops)



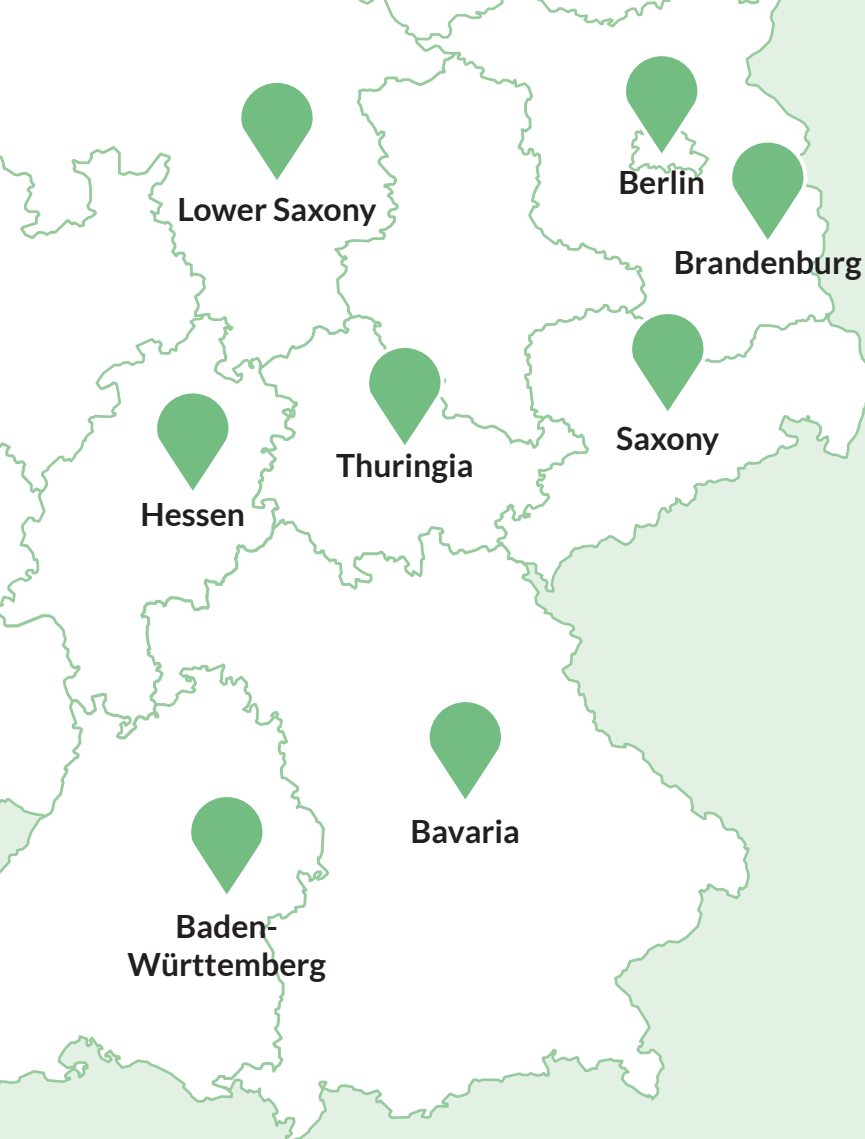
131
Consultations with
institutions



199
Cases of disengagement
assistance



7,712
People reached through
our activities (total)



Brandenburg:

- ♥ Exchange Brandenburg – Mobile Prevention and De-Radicalisation Services in the Justice and Probation System
- ♥ FAIR STÄRKEN – Communication in Value-Based Conflicts

Hessen:

- ♥ Hessen Advice Centre
- ♥ KOgEX Hessen 2.0 – Fighting Smart Against Extremism in the Justice and Probation System

Lower Saxony:

- ♥ Fokus ISLEX – Mobile Prevention and De-Radicalisation Services in the Justice and Probation System in Lower Saxony

Saxony:

- ♥ Saxony Advice Centre
- ♥ FAIRhandeln – Practical Skills for Dealing with Group-Focused Enmity
- ♥ Prisma Sachsen – Identifying Radicalisation, Assisting with De-Radicalisation, Bundling Skills

Thuringia:

- ♥ Thuringia Advice Centre

Nationwide:

- ♥ Prison and Probation Working Group
- ♥ EVOLUO – Psychology Expertise and Coaching for Counsellors Working with (De-)Radicalisation
- ♥ KN:IX – “Islamist extremism” expert network
- ♥ PrEval – Evaluation Designs for Preventive Measures
- ♥ RADIS – Researching the Social Causes and Effects of Radical Islam in Germany and Europe

Online:

- ♥ Gaming and Right-wing Extremism – How Right-wing Extremists Exploit Gaming Platforms
- ♥ Islam-ist
- ♥ RE:GAIN Gaming Platforms and Right-wing Extremism – Online Intervention and De-radicalisation
- ♥ VIVA – Understanding and Intercepting Conspiracy Thinking at an Individual Level

Last updated: 2023

WHERE WE ARE ACTIVE

Projects across Germany (selection):

Baden-Württemberg:

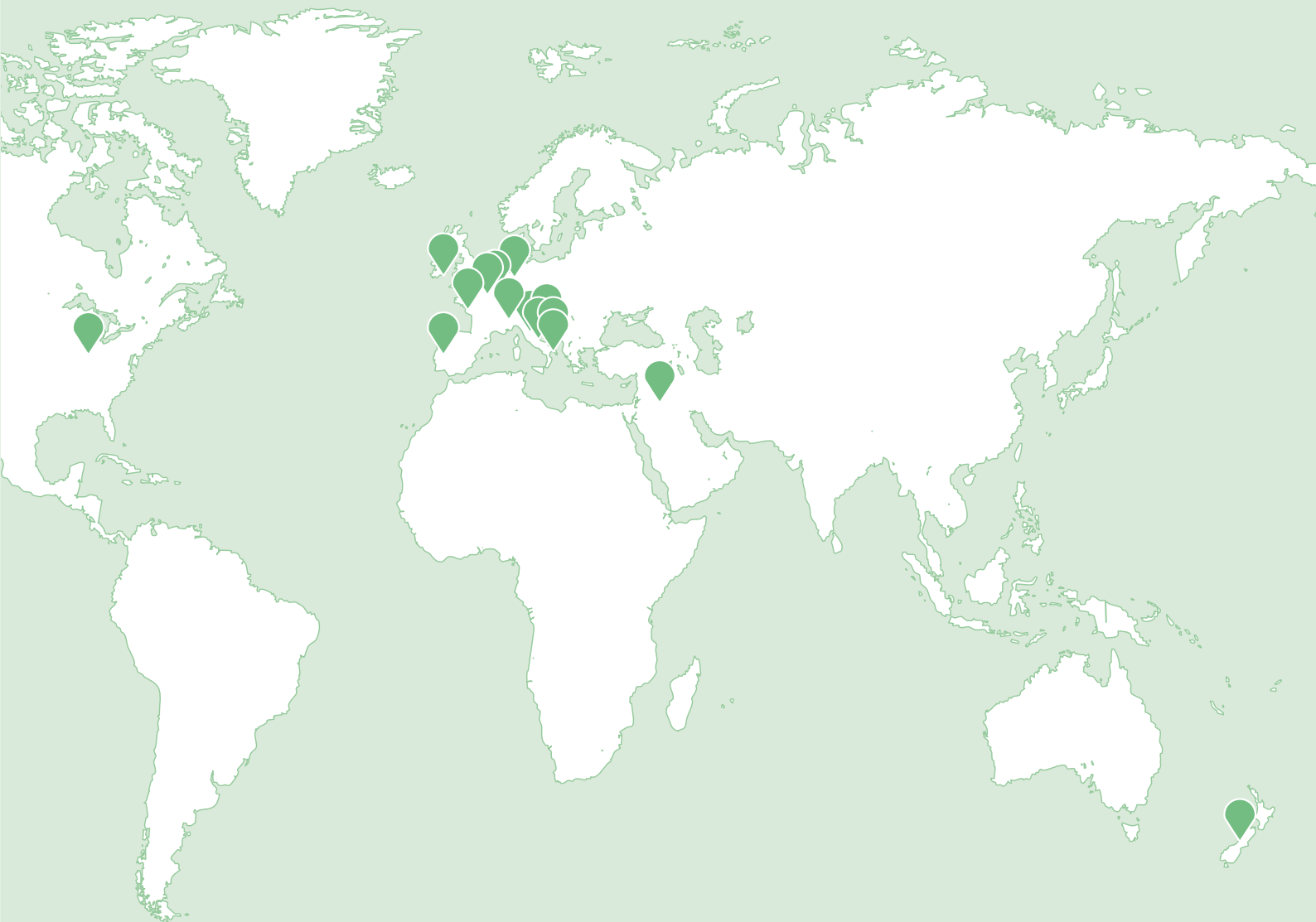
- ♥ PräWo Justiz – Series of prison workshops for young detainees at risk of radicalisation

Bavaria:

- ♥ Bavaria Advice Centre

Berlin:

- ♥ Berlin Advice Centre – Ways Out of Extremism
- ♥ Prevent Berlin 2.0
- ♥ CROSSROADS – Leaving Right-wing Extremism Behind
- ♥ proRespekt – A Democratic Path to Violence-Free Schools
- ♥ JUST X Berlin – Prevention and De-Radicalisation in the Berlin Justice and Probation System
- ♥ REE! – Change of Direction for Right-wing Extremists



International projects:

European Union and Western Balkans

- ♥ FRISCO (EU)
- ♥ icommit – Improved Commitment of Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration through Model and Interactive Training Development (Dublin/Ireland, Luton/UK, Strasbourg/France, L'Hospitalet de Llobregat/Spain, Skopje/North Macedonia, Mechelen & Liège/Belgium, Liège/Belgium, Berlin/Germany)
- ♥ RAN Practitioners – Radicalisation Awareness Network and RAN in the Western Balkans (EU Member States, plus Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia)
- ♥ CCAN – Christchurch Call Advisory Network (France)
- ♥ PARTES (EU)

West Asia/Middle East and North Africa

- ♥ SIMVEX (Iraq)

USA/North America

- ♥ Violence Prevention Network USA Inc. (Pittsburgh/Pennsylvania)

Oceania

- ♥ CCAN – Christchurch Call Advisory Network (New Zealand)

Last updated: 2023

THE YEAR IN REVIEW AND LOOKING AHEAD

At the start of this year, we saw once again how people with far-right views are not afraid to back up their dehumanising attitudes with frightening plans. Not for the first time, deportation fantasies were expounded against an ornate villa backdrop. We have seen far-right ideas expressed ever more matter-of-factly in recent years, accompanied by concrete plans for making those ideas a reality. This trend is on the rise and we are monitoring it very closely. The far right continues to pose the greatest challenge and the greatest threat to democracy. During the pandemic, we saw ideologies collapsing; at the same time, new alliances and third positions coalesced across the far right. The landscape continues to break up into ever smaller pieces, further fragmenting work in this area. Surveys also show that far-right forces are becoming increasingly influential in government and politics. This trend poses a threat to democracy and requires political and social action.

Far-right actors and organisations are polluting the political and social mood in this country with their racist, anti-Semitic and anti-democratic narratives, creating uncertainty and anxiety among many people, especially those who live in fear of being ostracised and stigmatised. The emboldening of the far right also poses a challenge for Germany as an economic centre and with respect to attracting the overseas labour that is so desperately needed.

Democracy must prove its ability to defend itself when extremist actors and organisations set their sights on overturning the democratic constitutional state. It is this ability that is fundamental to people's trust in government bodies as representatives of democracy. In light of the acute danger our democracy finds itself in, we believe it is absolutely necessary to introduce a process for outlawing unconstitutional actors and parties, in order that human rights and the basic principles of our constitution remain intact.

In addition, the so-called Promotion of Democracy Act (*Demokratieförderungsgesetz*) must finally be pushed through so that initiatives aimed at promoting democracy and preventing extremism can be rolled out long-term and independently of political majorities.

Particularly important initiatives include expanding and consolidating the roll-out of disengagement counselling and preventive measures for combating extremism – especially when working with people who do not have any intrinsic motivation to break away from the far-right milieu.

Violence Prevention Network sees itself as a community of values. As a civil society organisation, our core concerns are the fundamental principles of democracy and the inviolability of human dignity. For that reason, we will never take on projects which require their content or financing to be signed off by representatives of a political party that is pursuing anti-democratic aims. We will continue to advocate for democracy and to support social and political activities intended to safeguard democracy.

Judy Korn and Thomas Mücke
November 2024

REPORTS FROM OUR DEPARTMENTS



Digital



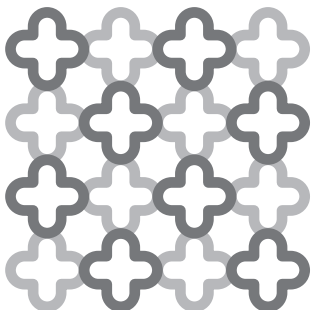
International



Psychotherapy



Right-wing Extremism



Religiously Motivated
Extremism



Research

DIGITAL DEPARTMENT

Sebastian Ehlers/Franziska Kreller

Violence Prevention Network's digital arm – *Violence Prevention Network Digital* – brings together findings and experiences collected from a number of the network's offline and online projects, developing new digital projects which supplement the existing structures of prevention practice meaningfully and testing new approaches to web-based radicalisation prevention.

The Department's work this year was heavily influenced by the Hamas attack on Israel on 7 October 2023 and the latest escalation in the Middle East conflict that followed. In Germany and across the globe, incidents of anti-Semitism and racism increased dramatically – both online and offline. As so often after an intensification of the conflict, we received a large number of queries in this regard. What stood out this year, however, were questions about the role “the internet” plays: What impact are relevant social media “preachers” having on the atmosphere here? How convincing are their arguments? How do their communication strategies work?

Below is a more detailed description of the *KN:IX plus* monitoring service which is devised and managed by the Digital Department. *KN:IX plus* provides concrete answers to the questions that people looking around for advice ask us.

You can learn more about exactly how *KN:IX plus* works and what findings the team have made so far in this podcast episode of *KN:IX talks*:



Project insight

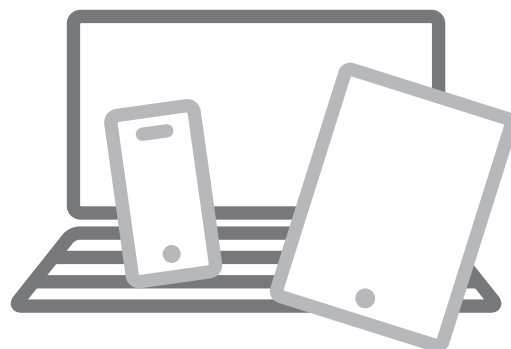
KN:IX plus is the online information service from the “Islamist Extremism” expert network (*KN:IX*) which gives prevention practitioners simple access to insights into the social media activities of Islamists and actors engaged in Islamist discourse and offerings.

The information service is divided into three modules: *KN:IX monitor*, *KN:IX trend* and *KN:IX context*.

With the *KN:IX monitor*, users can view information on selected actors and their social media channels. Actors' online activities are summarised in a brief text and – as far as possible – assigned to movements or groupings within Islamist extremism. Users are presented with a selection of quantitative data which allows them to assess the popularity of content and trends in follower numbers.

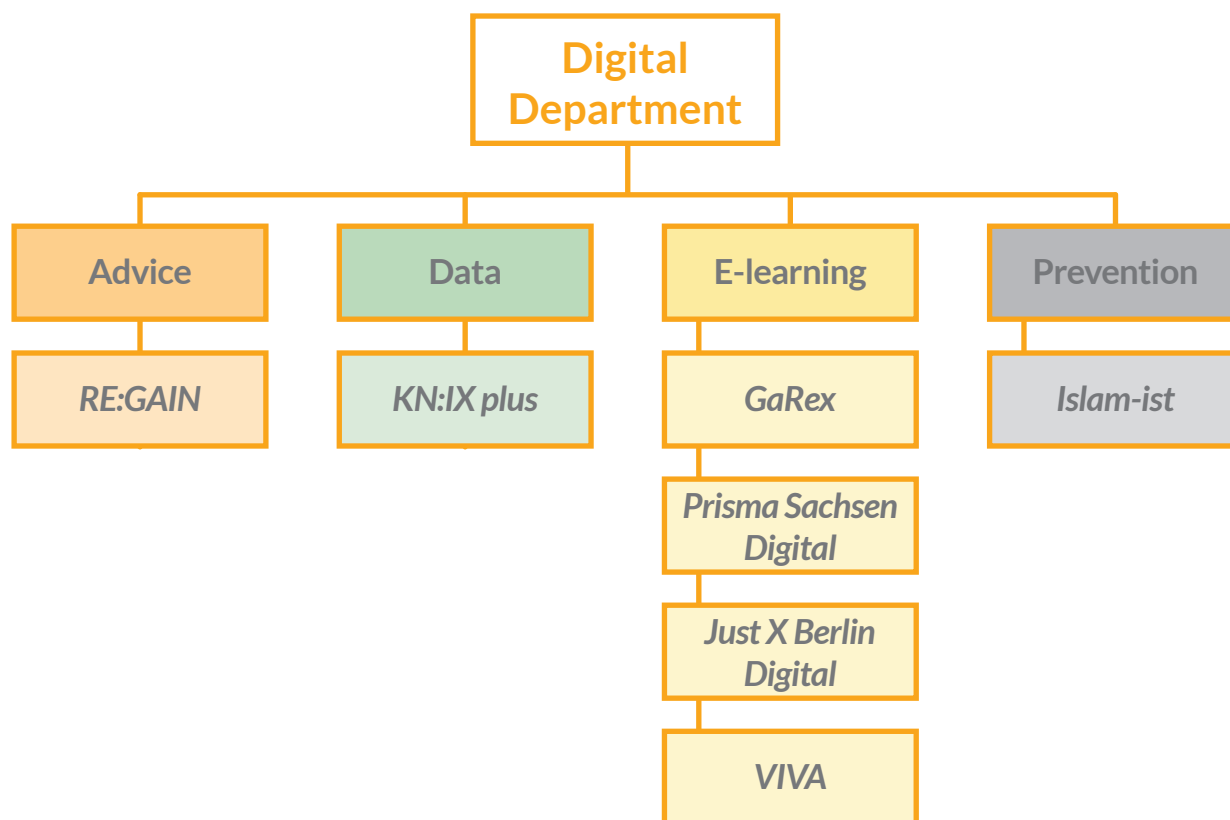
KN:IX trend provides brief monthly summaries of the latest trends and issues from relevant social media channels, offering users a compact overview of the full spectrum of these channels and their online activities. *KN:IX context* highlights recurring terminology, phrases, references and narratives circulating on Islamist social media channels and the wider environment, providing social, political and historical context.

All of the data analysed by the *KN:IX plus* monitoring team is taken from *YouTube*, *Instagram* and *TikTok*. Channels are selected based on a scientific or pedagogical assessment of how relevant each account is with regards to preventing radicalisation. Relevance is not necessarily determined based on content being extreme, extremist or inciting violence, and may also be determined according to the communication strategies employed or overlaps identified between non-extremist and Islamist channels. A further aim of *KN:IX plus* is to highlight recurring narratives and their references, and to shed light on their internal logics and connections.



Structure

As in previous years, the Digital Department's work in 2023 was focused on four main areas: advice, data, e-learning and prevention. The projects below were managed by a total of 15 colleagues. In terms of projects and colleague numbers, the Department saw its biggest increase in the area of e-learning.



Networking

The Digital Department also benefited from its network in 2023. In addition to partnering on projects with *Meta* and *TikTok*, our Digital colleagues are also industry partners to the *National Committee on Hate Online* and *Level Up!*, the network project from *modus | zad - Centre for Applied Research on Deradicalisation*. As a member of the Online Working Group overseen by the National Committee on Religiously Motivated Extremism, the Department collaborated with other civil society organisations on the publication “Rahmenbedingungen und Standards für gelingende Onlineprävention gegen religiös begründeten Extremismus” (Framework Conditions and Standards for Successful Online Prevention of Religiously Motivated Extremism).

The Digital Department was also admitted to the Berlin Network Against Conspiracy Theorists as a permanent member, working on the project *VIVA – Understanding and Intercepting Conspiracy Thinking at an Individual Level*.

A highlight of the year was *re:publica 2023*, the festival for digital society, where the Department got the opportunity to present its digital services, like the e-learning platform <https://elearning-vpn.digital>, to a wider audience.

INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT

Jonathan Russell with Rositsa Dzhekova/Sophie Scheuble

There was a change of leadership in the International Department at the start of 2023. Under its new management, the Department widened and grew its core strategic areas. This included reviving the *Violence Prevention Network Academy*, a training and education centre that provides international practitioners with access to the full breadth of expertise the organisation has gained from more than 20 years of prevention and disengagement work. Alongside its previous areas of focus (1. Empowering civic actors to prevent extremism, 2. Establishing and expanding multi-agency co-operations, 3. Stemming the flow of extremist and terrorist content online), the International Department has this year increased its work on the intersection between online and offline interventions. Improving outreach concepts for radicalised or at-risk users, such as by using technology-assisted initiatives, is an important new pillar of our work.

As an implementation partner for the *European Commission's Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN Practitioners)*, we continued to foster dialogue and skill-sharing among more than 6,000 prevention and disengagement practitioners across Europe in 2023. *Violence Prevention Network* also helped run 'RAN PRISONS' and 'RAN REHABILITATION', and hosted more than 25 events across the European Union (EU) and West Balkans (including trainings, webinars, study visits, working group meetings, expert meetings for facilitating dialogue among practitioners, and interdisciplinary events for practitioners, researchers and political stakeholders). Through this work, we have helped shape the EU-wide debate on preventing extremism, including in the following areas: gender aspects in disengagement work in the justice system and in risk assessments, the impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine on preventing extremism, and ethical guidelines in prevention work. As in previous years, there was an in-depth focus on child and young returnees coming back from the former territories of the so-called Islamic state and on the role of civil society organisations in disengagement work with extremist offenders during detention and after release.

In the past year, we have had the opportunity to expand our networking activities beyond Europe, focusing increasingly on South-East Asia and North America. We gave talks on the Reichsbürger movement and multi-agency work at the *Public Safety Canada Conference*, while at the *Eradicate Hate Summit* in Pittsburgh, we were able to strengthen existing partnerships and meet many new allies who we are collaborating with on cross-border prevention initiatives. We also further expanded our collaboration with UNODC, including in a workshop with prevention practitioners in The Maldives on working in the justice system. Our Department also contributed to ESIWA (Enhancing security co-operation in and with Asia), an initiative funded by the EU and the German Foreign Office. In Singapore, we presented *Violence Prevention Network's* experiences working with returnees, extremist online activities and current counter-narrative strategies.

International delegation visits, such as the *Study Visit* from the North Macedonian *National Committee for PVE & CVE* in March, also represented important opportunities for us to engage in dialogue with experts from other geographical contexts, to present the work of *Violence Prevention Network*, and to work together on developing concepts.

The EU-funded *icommit* project came to a successful conclusion with a wrap-up conference in September. The combined experiences gained from almost two years of work on the project informed the practical guidelines we published for multi-agency actors working on preventing extremism and the *DesistKit*, a case analysis and reflection tool for counsellors.

In December, we held an information event for hosting service providers and relevant industry associations as part of the EU-funded *FRISCO* project (Fighting Terrorist Content Online) which runs until the end of 2024. In co-operation with the German regulatory body, the Federal Network Agency, the Federal Criminal Police Office and the European Commission, we began by providing an overview of legal obligations, both those that were already in effect (TCO Regulation) and those that came into force in February 2024 (Digital Service Act). Our partner organisation, Tremau,

then gave an update on the tools which they have developed as part of their own project as a way of helping hosting service providers implement the TCO Regulation.

The number of attacks against places of worship and members of religious communities has sky-rocketed across Europe in recent years.¹ The *PARTES* project, also funded by the EU, represents a reaction to this alarming development. *PARTES* began in March 2023 with a comprehensive research phase. The project is being overseen by an inter-faith expert committee, with Jewish, Muslim and Christian representatives.

In the past year, our focus was again on the intersection between misogyny, anti-feminism and extremism. In partnership with *Swisspeace* and the *Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (CFFP)*, we organised an info evening on “International Anti-Feminism & Violent Extremism” with diplomatic representatives from Mexico, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

We continued our activities as part of the independent advisory panel to the *Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT)* and the *Christchurch Call member network*.



¹ Samirah Majumdar (2023): In 2020, properties in 102 countries and territories were targeted in incidents tied to religion, Pew Research Center, last accessed 15/04/2024

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

Hannah Strauss/Marvin Stipp

Many of the clients we see in our case work at *Violence Prevention Network* report experiences that have a psychological impact on them. These often include particularly harrowing experiences of violence (while fleeing or within the family, for example) or of loss as a child or an adult following the death of a close relative. These interactions between a person's internal mental state and their external social reality also come up in radicalisation and disengagement processes. Falling into and disengaging from extremist scenes can both have an impact on the mental health of those directly affected and their families.

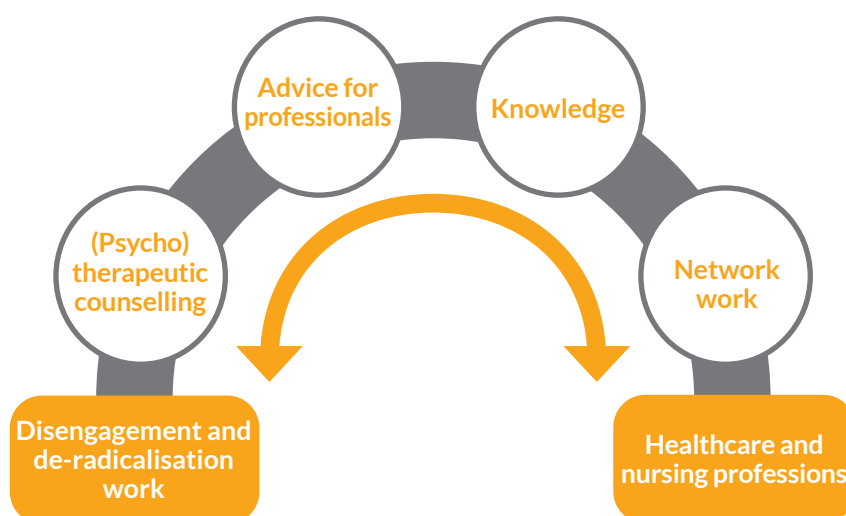
In the Department of Psychotherapy, we support radicalised and at-risk people with psychological abnormalities and disorders, as well as relatives and sector professionals. We want to help those affected access needs-based disengagement and healthcare services. These services include direct care from the Psychotherapy team and assistance with transitioning to (psycho)therapy services provided by the healthcare system. The entire Department follows a culturally and religiously sensitive approach which also ensures that (psycho)therapy practitioners have sufficient cultural awareness.

The Department has successfully established itself since its launch in 2020 and interest in our work has grown continuously. This trend continued in 2023. We have seen a rise in requests for support with case work, for workshops and for publications. We again welcomed several new colleagues. In our project work, we further expanded our four working areas:

(Psycho)therapeutic counselling for people affected and their relatives

As in previous years, we enjoyed excellent co-operation with the *Berlin Advice Centre* in 2023. As part of the *TRIAS Berlin – New Forms of Multi-Professional Co-operation in Extremism Prevention* sub-project, we assisted with counselling for clients experiencing psychological abnormalities. We also offered (psycho)therapeutic counselling to clients in the justice system and their families as part of the *JUST X Berlin – Prevention and De-Radicalisation in the Berlin Justice and Probation System* project which we are running in partnership with *Denkzeit-Gesellschaft*.

This close project-based co-operation between counsellors and therapists is unique within disengagement work and benefits enormously from the positive experiences of previous years and the increased level of trust. This means that appropriate services in the healthcare system, for example, were arranged for all clients in accordance with their needs.



Advice for professionals

A variety of advice services for professionals have also proved a success, offering information on a range of different subjects, from assessing cases to handling challenging situations. Regular colleague case reviews have been set up in co-operation with the team at the *Berlin Advice Centre*. Counsellors can talk to our Department's therapists in one-to-one or group settings.

Professionals from adjacent sectors can also reach out to us any time they have questions relating to their case work, by contacting either the *Berlin Advice Centre* or *JUST X Berlin*. In 2023, for example, we ran one-to-one and group consultations for professionals working in the probation service.

Knowledge

As part of our third nationwide *EVOLUO project – Psychology Expertise and Coaching for Counsellors Working with (De-)Radicalisation*, we devised a training programme that gives counsellors knowledge and practical skills which they can apply directly to their case work. We are running this project in partnership with *IFAK e. V.* (as part of the *Cross-Border Advice Network*). Both organisations have years of experience with and comprehensive expertise in psychological and therapeutic approaches to disengagement work.

2023 saw another round of workshops for colleagues working at extremism advice centres and youth welfare practitioners, as part of *TRIAS Berlin* and *JUST X Berlin*. We also published a paper on “*Suizidprävention – Impulse zum Umgang mit Suizidalität in der Distanzierungsarbeit*” (*Suicide Prevention – Ideas for dealing with suicidal tendencies in disengagement work*) as part of *JUST X* and the *Violence Prevention Network* publication series.

Looking ahead

We are delighted by the opportunity to continue our successful work in 2024, co-operating even more intensively with the *Berlin Advice Centre*. The *JUST X Berlin* project will carry on as in previous years, while the nationwide *EVOLUO* project will also be continued and expanded. Starting in 2024, this initiative will include not only trainings, but also *case-specific psychotherapeutic consultations* Which counsellors across Germany who work in the area of Islamist extremism can take advantage of.

As previously, therefore, we will continue to support clients and practitioners around all questions of mental health in disengagement work.



DEPARTMENT OF RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM

Peter Anhalt/Elisabeth Hell

The phenomenon of right-wing extremism was once again a key area of work for *Violence Prevention Network gGmbH* in 2023. Right-wing extremism continues to pose serious threats and challenges to democracy – not least due to the increasing hybridisation and divergence of ideologies, the fragments of which are coalescing to create new third positions.

In 2023, we managed to expand the *PRISMA Sachsen* project on two levels. Firstly, we established a new partnership with Dresden Prison, making it the third facility where we provide regular trainings for radicalised and at-risk inmates. At Waldheim Prison, meanwhile, we developed a new format consisting of series of talks on different social issues, held jointly by inmates from a variety of different backgrounds and (specialist) service providers.

In expanding our range of services, we also managed to add our *PRISMA Sachsen DIGITAL* service to our *PRISMA Sachsen* project, putting the content from our trainings online on a learning platform that is available to anyone working in the Saxony justice system.

Together with our network partners, who work on disengagement and de-radicalisation in the Saxony justice and probation system, we put together a dossier of everything we offer which was distributed to prisons and probation officers.

At the start of the year, we launched our new *FAIRhandeln – Practical Skills for Dealing with Group-Focused Enmity* project which is aimed at both educators and young people at vocational colleges and open children's and youth facilities. The focus of our project work is on strengthening practical and communication skills for dealing with discrimination and group-focused enmity by providing skills training for professionals. Another core building block of the programme involves the constructive preparation and engagement of young people who want to get involved as "peer helpers" at their school or college as part of a peer-to-peer approach.

In addition to a range of services, our work on the *FAIR STÄRKEN* project in the Cottbus region is focused on two main areas.

Firstly, we ran qualification courses for professionals currently working in the field. These were aimed at educators working at childcare facilities, shelters, primary schools and youth welfare facilities who wanted a practical tool for combating or preventatively countering a rise in discriminatory and degrading phenomena and democratic scepticism in their places of work.

We were also commissioned by the city and civil society stakeholders to relaunch and moderate a process for creating a plan of action for the city of Cottbus and its citizens, a job we will continue in 2024.

As part of the *Exchange Brandenburg* project, we ran subject-specific trainings, alongside our standard services (client work and trainings, primarily for prison officers but also social services).

On the *Berlin Crossroads* project, we saw a significant level of interest in our services as a whole. In addition to a large number of trainings, we offered a series of qualification courses under the header "Staying in touch – How to deal with right-leaning young people" which was so well received that we will be running it again in spring 2024.

Our work on the *Berlin REE! Change of Direction for Right-wing Extremists* project has been consolidated, with our professional co-operation with security agencies taking the lead. The project remains the only model project on right-wing extremism in Germany which focuses on working with people at risk of engaging with right-wing extremism.

In 2023, alongside our projects, we reviewed and made preparations for offering an online assistance programme for people who want to leave the far-right scene. This programme launched in 2024.

Our knowledge and experiences inform a variety of different committees which we are involved in at a national (e.g. *National Committee on Leave to Return*, *KompRex*) or regional (e.g. *Diverse Saxony Regional Working Group*, *Berlin Advice Network*) level. We monitor trends in extremist phenomena year-round and adapt our services accordingly.



DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUSLY MOTIVATED EXTREMISM

Feride Aktaş/Thomas Mücke

The Department of Religiously Motivated Extremism has been one of the pillars of our work at *Violence Prevention Network* since 2007. The aim of our work is to get young people who are exhibiting tendencies towards radicalisation in religiously motivated extremism or who are already committing ideological offences out of the radicalisation process. Preventive approaches are supplemented by intervention at the early stage of radicalisation processes and targeted disengagement and exit work both within and outside of the justice system.

Approaches to prevention work and counselling vary from region to region, so as to accommodate the wide range of needs. We have our own Advice Centres in five of the Bundesländer in Germany, while we offer prevention and disengagement programmes in prisons and detention centres in seven Bundesländer and are engaged in the field across a total of eight Bundesländer.

While our work began focusing on the issue of so-called *Foreign Terrorist Fighters* (people who travelled to war zones in Iraq and Syria for the so-called “Islamic State”) back in 2014, we soon began to also address the more pressing issue of *Returnees*, people who had become disillusioned by the realities of war and returned to their home countries with physical and psychological wounds.

Since then, we have seen a significant increase in the number of underage individuals in our target group and the problems we are tackling have become more distinct. The psychological and social issues are many: (very) young people have mental health concerns, are more susceptible to conspiracy narratives, frequently live in isolation, and their worries about the future are dominated by war and global crises. Assistance has been provided here by our complementary psychotherapy services. The linguistic diversity of our services has also proven useful, as the demand for counselling in languages other than German has risen. The trends described here are also reflected in

our counselling work. Requests for counselling have increased enormously, from both institutions and family members.

This is in part a result of the fact that *Violence Prevention Network* set up a nationwide advice hotline in 2023 that is available around the clock. The advice hotline is receiving a particularly high number of calls from family members and the programme has led to an increase in consultations at our advice centres. The need for counselling for family members and institutions has increased dramatically, in particular following the Hamas attack on Israel and the subsequent war in Gaza. This increase in counselling for schools and for child and youth welfare pushed our colleagues' capacities to the very brink at the end of 2023. Despite this, they managed to successfully run all prevention workshops and respond to all requests for counselling. The feedback from teachers and pupils confirmed the impact the workshops have on supporting participants in conflict-heavy situations at school in the context of the conflict in the Middle East.

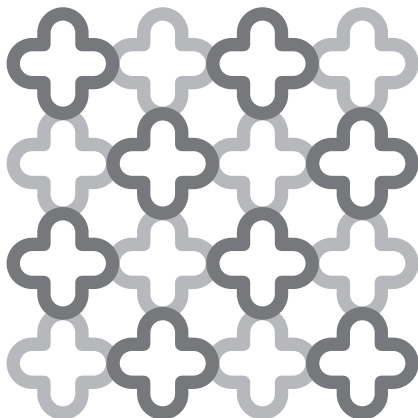
In the justice system, we provided prevention, counselling and disengagement work at detention centres in Baden-Württemberg, Berlin, Brandenburg, Hessen, Lower Saxony and Saxony. A particular challenge in this area of our work remains counselling for returnees.

Thanks to our proprietary Social Diagnostics tool, we guarantee a high standard of quality in our advice and counselling work. So far, our interdisciplinary and diagnostic approach to disengagement work has resulted in zero recidivism among the returnees we have looked after.

Our training programmes for prison officers and trainee teachers are still integrated into seminar plans and in 2023 we achieved a good level of outreach among people working in the justice system and social services and (trainee) teachers. We also provided training to police officers who described the programme as enriching, adding that it helped them to tackle the issues and to reflect on and change their own thinking.

The Department of Psychotherapy was further integrated into our counselling work. Disengagement clients accepted our services voluntarily. The co-operation between the *Berlin Advice Centre* and the Department of Psychotherapy is firmly established and our therapists were able to provide support on individual projects by consulting on colleagues' cases, including those involving persons in the justice system.

The Department also provided its knowledge and experience to the *BAG RelEx* and the *Working Group on Disengagement Work During and After Detention*. Additional areas of focus were identified for 2024, including online services for people exiting the right-wing scene and their family members, and improving personal safety for colleagues in a challenging work environment.



RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

Svetla Koynova/Maximilian Ruf

Internal quality management and process development

Our research colleagues are all about providing continuous needs-based support to prevention practitioners, and 2023 was no exception. Together with our counselling teams, they analysed disengagement case documentation using our Social Diagnostics tool. 2023 also saw the publication of *Soziale Diagnostik in der Extremismusprävention – Diagnose, Fallverstehen, Intervention und Wirkungsmessung (Social Diagnostics in Extremism Prevention – Diagnosis, Case Analysis, Intervention and Impact Assessment)* by Annika von Berg, Gloriett Kargl, Maximilian Ruf and Dr Dennis Walkenhorst as part of the Springer series on “*Ideology and Violence – Writings on De-Radicalisation*”. The book explains the diagnostic process, from understanding a case to closing it, and illustrates how to derive actions from diagnostic analysis. Also this year, an app developed to make it easier to apply Social Diagnostics underwent internal quality assurance. We had opportunities to present our work at a conference dedicated to Social Diagnostics in the autumn and at knowledge-sharing events in German-speaking countries and internationally.

Co-operative research as part of research network projects

As a network partner on *PrEval Future Workshops*, *Violence Prevention Network* continued its research on practical approaches to quality assurance and evaluation in political education, promoting democracy and preventing extremism, and developed recommendations for future formats in partnership with the research network. Extensive use and needs analyses of existing knowledge networks conducted in the first half of 2023 resulted in innovative creative workshops in the second half of the year. Based on these outcomes, *PrEval* presented concrete support formats at the conference in November 2023, including short/long-term counselling services, methodical transfer workshops, reports on strategic

adjustments based on evaluation aims from a practical perspective, and further opportunities for networking existing knowledge networks with a methodological and subject-specific focus.

Research colleagues from *Violence Prevention Network* also conducted a participative pilot study, in co-operation with *APro Sachsen*. As part of this study, they tested a client-centric evaluation designed within the framework of *PrEval Future Workshops*. This design aims to map the multiple influences and interactions of all actors involved in a case of disengagement as a way of producing a realistic picture of complex disengagement processes. The research team also assisted *i-unito gUG* in the development of an evaluation concept for investigating the quality of explicit and implicit forms of agreement in multi-agency co-operations.

As part of the *RADIS* research network, *Violence Prevention Network* again took charge of important knowledge transfer modules, in which findings from the research network are disseminated among practitioners. This included preparing a large-scale conference on applied findings from social work contexts with implications for preventing Islamism in practice, and running multiple workshops in co-operation with the other research projects in the network. As part of their advice and counselling services, our research colleagues also devised curricula for developing holistic prevention schemes at a municipal level and provided advice on the appropriate scope of relevance analyses in the affected social spaces.

Continuous and mutual knowledge transfer and dialogue between practice, research and administration

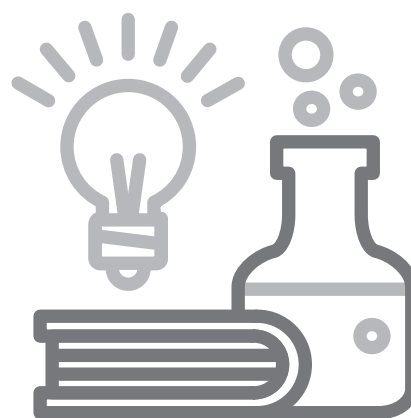
Violence Prevention Network also collaborated on a number of different projects and formats for knowledge transfer and dissemination in 2023, as a way of encouraging dialogue between practitioners and stakeholders in research and administration. In addition to the ever-growing range of services offered by the *KN:IX plus* monitoring platform, which provides monthly trend analyses and two annual context analyses on

online behaviour among extremist actors from the Islamist spectrum, research colleagues also ran *KN:IX Analyses* and *KN:IX Ideas* and contributed papers to *Violence Prevention Network's* publication series.

Violence Prevention Network also co-edits the online publication *ZepRa – Zeitschrift für praxisorientierte (De-)Radikalisierungsforschung* (*The Journal for Practical (De-)Radicalisation Research*). The aim of this publication is to bring together academic papers in German on the subject of (de-)radicalisation which have practical applications and to make these freely available to all stakeholders so that junior and practice-based researchers, in particular, can share their findings with the wider sector. The second edition of *ZepRa*, which came out in 2023, included reviews of important publications in the field and papers on the areas of education in Islamic theology with a teaching option, on research into the causes of radicalisation processes, on approaches in social work to fighting anti-Semitic attitudes among young people, and on the propaganda potential of gaming services offered by the far-right *Identitarian movement* based on a case study of *Heimat Defender: Rebellion*.

The 17th edition of *Interventionen. Zeitschrift für Verantwortungspädagogik* (*Interventions. The Journal of Education Responsibility*) was also published in 2023. *Interventions* is focused on current challenges in prevention practice and facilitates a dialogue between practice, research and administration by shedding light on the latest developments based on reports from practitioners. The 17th edition of *Interventions* included reports on challenges relating to preventing anti-Semitism in the justice system, the demands for specific prevention and intervention services for counselling with an international context, and the key hallmarks of conflict situations in a counselling setting with regards to identifying a de-escalating approach to dealing with one's own and others' emotions. The experiences described in this publication directly inform internal concept and project developments at *Violence Prevention Network*.

In 2024, the Department is devoting itself to further disseminating the results of the *PrEval Future Workshops* and *RADIS* research projects, continuing the development of communication and referral structures for information, prevention and counselling settings relating to conspiratorial thinking, internally evaluating and overseeing on-going practical projects, and further developing the qualitative indicators for our counselling and advice work based on the Social Diagnostics tool.



EVALUATION

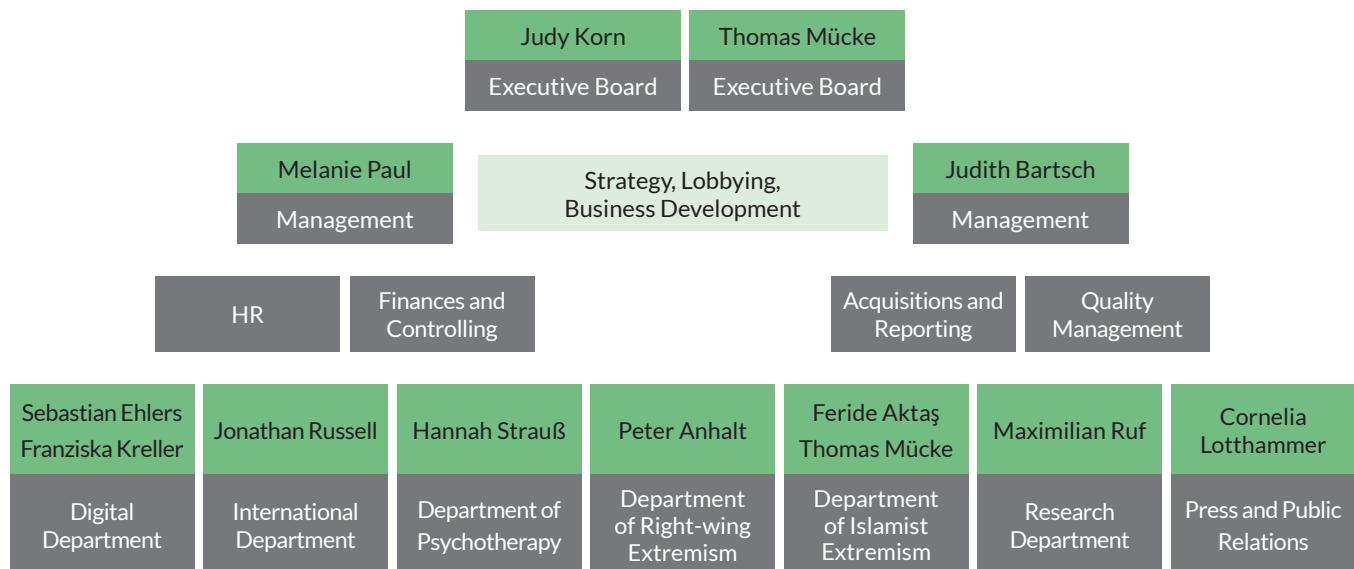
Continuous participation in external evaluation is an indispensable part of the work we do at *Violence Prevention Network*. Our effective and high-quality project work is certified as part of evaluations conducted by independent institutions. These evaluations are mandatory for certain projects. These evaluation reports can be accessed via our website, under the menu item “Publications”.

External evaluations and process monitoring initiated, ongoing or completed in 2023

Project evaluated	Evaluation period	Conducted by
Projects relating to “Prevention and De-Radicalisation in the Justice and Probation System” funded as part of the Nationwide “Live Democracy!” programme	2020 – 2024	Deutsches Jugendinstitut
Projects relating to “Extremism prevention” funded as part of the nationwide “Live Democracy!” programme	2020 – 2024	Institut für Sozialarbeit und Sozialpädagogik
KN:IX – “Islamist extremism” expert network	2020 – 2024	IMAP GmbH
Berlin Advice Centre – Ways Out of Extremism	2021 – 2022	Camino – Werkstatt für Fortbildung, Praxisbegleitung und Forschung im sozialen Bereich gGmbH
proRespekt – A democratic path to violence-free schools	2021 – 2023	Camino – Werkstatt für Fortbildung, Praxisbegleitung und Forschung im sozialen Bereich gGmbH

ORGANISATION

Violence Prevention Network organigram



Governance

The gGmbH structure is formed of two bodies – the **General Assembly** and the **Executive Board**.

The **General Assembly** consists of:

- Judy Korn
- Thomas Mücke
- Christian Pfeffer-Hoffmann

The gGmbH is represented by two **Directors** jointly or by one Director acting jointly with an authorised officer. The following persons have been appointed to represent the company:

- Judy Korn (Director)
- Thomas Mücke (Director)
- Melanie Paul (Power of Attorney)
- Judith Bartsch (Authorised Representative)

Violence Prevention Network is affiliated with VPN *Wissenschaftsgesellschaft mbH*.

Employees

	2022	2023
No. of employees	173	193
of which full-time	128	131
of which freelancers/paid a fee	45	62
of which volunteers	0	0

Environmental and social profile

Violence Prevention Network strives for gender parity in its staffing and recruitment of permanent and freelance employees. Persons who do not identify with any gender are also welcome at *Violence Prevention Network*. We place a great emphasis on a work-life balance. Colleagues decide for themselves (in consultation and in accordance with the requirements) where they will work and what hours. So far, this has led to an above-average level of commitment and willingness to accept responsibility in individual areas of work. When travelling, employees of *Violence Prevention Network* use public transport (local and long-distance) wherever possible.

All persons employed by *Violence Prevention Network* are remunerated on the basis of the collective agreement for the public sector (TVöD Bund, TV-L, TV-H). Classification for remuneration is based on the area of responsibility. Procurement procedures are in accordance with statutory and other applicable regulations.

Partnerships, co-operations and networks

Violence Prevention Network has maintained trusting relationships with various partners for many years.

Ashoka Deutschland is an important trademark and seal of quality for *Violence Prevention Network*. The fellowship opens doors to policymakers and authorities and facilitates conversations with potential supporters.

The **Bavarian State Ministry of the Interior, for Sport and Integration** and **Bavarian State Criminal Police Office** have been partnering with us on implementing

intervention and de-radicalisation measures in Bavaria since 2016.

The **Brandenburg Ministry of Justice** has been partnering with us since 2016 on implementing prevention and de-radicalisation measures in the justice and probation system.

The **Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)** funds *EVOLUO – Psychology Expertise and Coaching for Counsellors Working with (De-)Radicalisation*.

The **Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ)** finances the implementation of pioneering model projects with *Violence Prevention Network* and supports both a series of projects in the justice system and also the “*Islamist Extremism*” expert network (KN:IX), the and the *REE! Change of Direction for Right-wing Extremists* project.

The **Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community** serves as an informal professional supporter of our work and periodically invites *Violence Prevention Network* to presentations of its work in national and international contexts.

The **Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb)** is our partner on the *Gaming and Right-wing Extremism* e-learning project.

The *PRISMA Sachsen* project is being conducted with the support of the **Eduq Foundation**, under the aegis of the **Fondation de Luxembourg**.

The **European Commission** supports the *icommit* (until end of 2023) and *FRISCO (Fighting Terrorist Content Online)* projects with funds from the Internal Security Fund.

On the *RADIS – Researching the Social Causes and Effects of Radical Islam in Germany and Europe* project, we have partnered up with **PRIF – Peace Research Institute Frankfurt**.

The **Hessian Ministry of the Interior and Sport** has been partnering with us since 2014 on implementing prevention, intervention and de-radicalisation measures in the State of Hessen.

The **Hessen Ministry of Justice** partners with us in the area of prevention and de-radicalisation in the justice and probation system.

In the interests of co-operating more closely on P/CVE, *Violence Prevention Network International* has teamed up with the **International Organisation of Migration (IOM) Iraq** as part of the *Supporting Iraqi National Efforts for Enhanced Implementation of the National Strategy to Prevent Violent Extremism (SIMVEX)* project.

The **Centre of Excellence for Countering Extremism in Baden-Württemberg** has been partnering with us since 2016 on implementing preventive measures in detention facilities.

The **Kurt and Maria Dohle Foundation** supports *Violence Prevention Network* on projects related to religiously motivated extremism and right-wing extremism.

The **Berlin Against Violence State Committee**, under the **Senate Department for the Interior, Digitisation and Sport**, has been partnering with us since 2016 on implementing prevention and de-radicalisation measures in the State of Berlin.

The **Lower Saxony Ministry of Justice** has been partnering with us since 2016 on prevention and de-radicalisation in the justice and probation system.

The **Senate Department for Education, Youth and Family** and *Violence Prevention Network* launched *proRespekt* in 2019, in association with the *German Children and Youth Foundation* and *Gangway e.V.*

The **Senate Department for Labour, Social Affairs, Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination** and the **Senate Department for Justice and Consumer Protection** of the State of Berlin have been partnering with us for many years

on prevention and de-radicalisation in the justice and probation system. The latter also funds the *CROSSROADS Advice Centre*.

The **State Ministry of Saxony for Social Affairs and Social Cohesion** has been partnering with us since 2017 on implementing prevention, intervention and de-radicalisation measures in the State of Saxony as part of the state-wide *Cosmopolitan Saxony* programme.

The **State Ministry of Saxony for Justice** partners with us on prevention and de-radicalisation in the justice and probation system.

The **Thuringian Ministry for Education, Youth and Sport** has been partnering with us since 2017 on implementing prevention and intervention measures.

At an international level, *Violence Prevention Network* maintains close relationships with actors working on de-radicalisation in Europe. As part of the consortium charged with organising the **European Commission's Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN Practitioners)**, we are fostering the sharing of knowledge and experience on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) among more than 6,000 practitioners across Europe.

General information

Name	Violence Prevention Network gGmbH
Registered office of organisation pursuant to Constitution	Alt-Reinickendorf 25, 13407 Berlin
Founded	2004
Other offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bergmannstraße 5, 10961 Berlin • Langhansstraße 146, 13086 Berlin • Anger 35, 99084 Erfurt • Leipziger Straße 67, 60487 Frankfurt • Ferdinandstr. 3, 30175 Hanover • Werner-Hilpert-Straße 21, 34117 Kassel (until 30/09/2023) • Stieglitzstraße 84, 04229 Leipzig • Schillerstraße 27, 80336 Munich • Reinsburgstraße 4, 70178 Stuttgart (until 30/09/2023) • Karlstraße 3, 72072 Tübingen (since 30/09/2023)
Legal form	gGmbH
Contact details	Address: Alt-Reinickendorf 25, 13407 Berlin Tel.: Tel.: + 49 30 91 70 54 64 Fax: Fax: + 49 30 39 83 52 84 E-mail: post@violence-prevention-network.de Website (URL): www.violence-prevention-network.de
Link to Articles of Association (URL)	https://violence-prevention-network.de/ueber-uns/jahresberichte-und-mehr/
Registry	Register court: District Court Charlottenburg Register no.: HRB 221974 B Date of registration: 12 October 2020
Non-profit status	Non-profit status declared under Sec. 52 of the Fiscal Code (Abgabenordnung) Date of notice of exemption: 24/01/2024 Issuing tax office: Finanzamt für Körperschaften I, Berlin Declaration of non-profit purpose: To promote prevention of crime as well as education and training, including student support
Employee representative	None

FINANCES

Resources committed

In 2023, staff costs totalled €7,760,732.53 for 131 members of staff, including 54 trainers. Material expenses and fees totalled €3,008,465.36, including fee-based costs for 62 trainers.

Accounting and invoicing

The accounts are kept according to double-entry accounting using DATEV accounting software. The annual report is compiled according to the regulations of the German Commercial Code (HGB). The annual report is compiled by an external tax advisor (C.O.X. Steuerberatungsgesellschaft und Treuhandgesellschaft mbH, Berlin) in close collaboration with the internal accounts team and internal controlling team, and subsequently audited by an external auditing firm (Hamburger Treuhand Gesellschaft Schomerus & Partner mbB). The internal audit of the financial statement is performed by the authorised officer of *Violence Prevention Network gGmbH*.

Statement of assets

Assets

kEUR	2021	2022	2023
I. Intangible assets	55	146	119
II. Fixed assets	45	48	47
of which real estate	0	0	0
III. Financial assets	0	2	0
IV. Receivables	533 ¹	321 ²	792 ³
of which due from members or shareholders	0	1	0
V. Liquid assets	2,974	2,291	1,958
Total assets	3,607	2,808	2,916

Liabilities

kEUR	2021	2022	2023
I. Loans taken out	0	0	0
of which from members or shareholders	0	0	0
II. Trade payables	5	17	11
III. Other liabilities	1,300 ⁴	435 ⁵	510 ⁶
Total liabilities	1,305	452	521
Balance of assets less liabilities (= equity + provisions + extra-ordinary items)	2,302⁷	2,356⁸	2,395⁹
of which earmarked funds	19.3	49	11

¹ Receivables for 2021 include accruals to the amount of €13.7 k.

² Receivables for 2022 include accruals to the amount of €18 k.

³ Receivables for 2023 include accruals to the amount of €10 k.

⁴ Including €1,258 k of unused funds which were repaid in 2022.

⁵ Including €398.2 k of unused funds which were repaid in 2023.

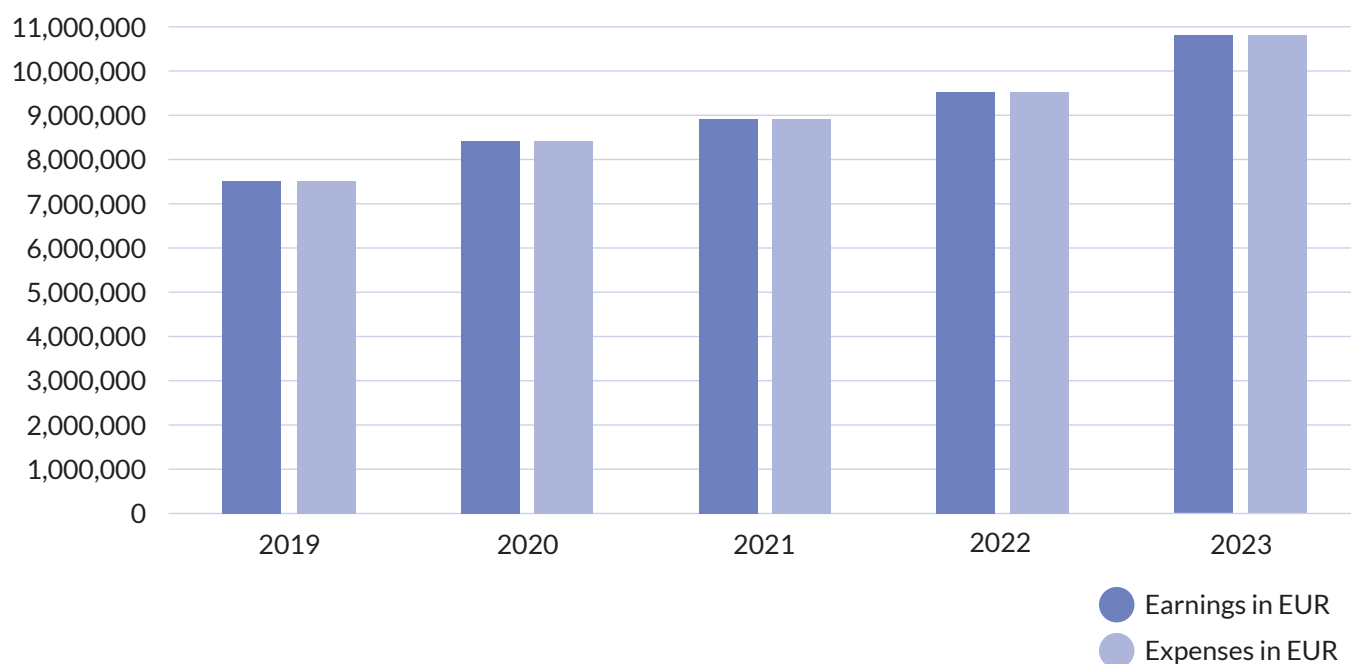
⁶ Including €485.0 k of unused funds which were repaid in 2024.

⁷ Including staff provisions of €400.5 k and extraordinary items of €74.6 k with a reserve portion.

⁸ Including staff provisions of €464.7 k and extraordinary items of €124.8 k with a reserve portion.

⁹ Including staff provisions of €572.0 k and extraordinary items of €88.0 k with a reserve portion.

Earnings and expenses



Earnings

kEUR	2021	2022	2023
1. Revenue	1,629	1,608	1,626
of which from public contracts	1,517	1,337	1,456
2. Grants	7,063	7,721	8,900
of which from the public sector	6,987	7,428	8,426
3. Contributions	0	0	0
4. Other earnings	172	244	247
Total earnings	8,864	9,573	10,773

Expenses

kEUR	2021	2022	2023
A1. Project costs	7,485	8,616	9,737
A2. Advertising costs	173	152	173
A3. Administrative costs	487	543	450
4. Financing costs	0	0	0
5. Taxes	1	3	0
6. Other expenses	718	259 ¹⁰	413 ¹¹
Total expenses	8,864	9,573	10,773
"Cash carry-forward" Annual profit (earnings less expenses)	0⁹	0¹²	0

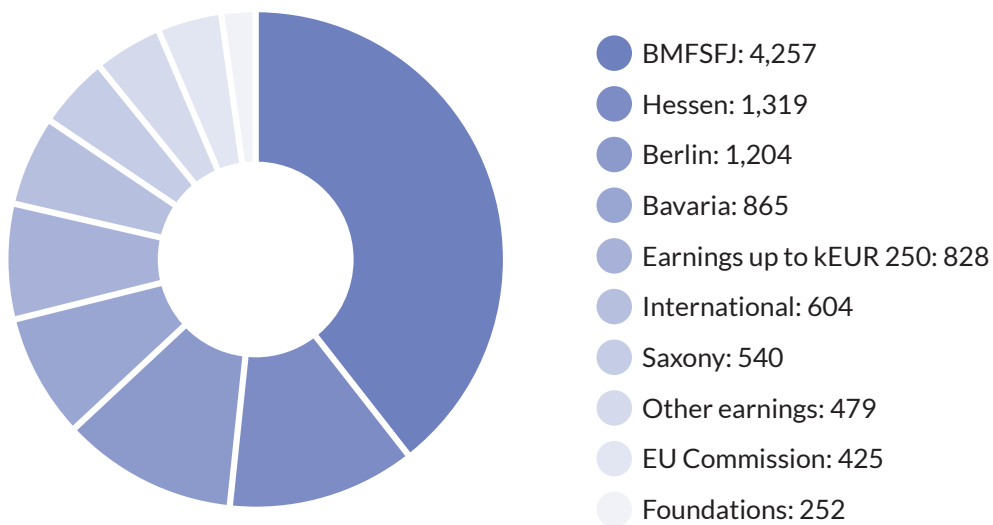
¹⁰ incl. withdrawal of €237.7 k from reserves

¹¹ incl. withdrawal of €17.8 k from reserves

¹² Net profit from the years 2021 and 2022 was allocated to the reserves.

Where does the money come from?

Amounts in kEUR



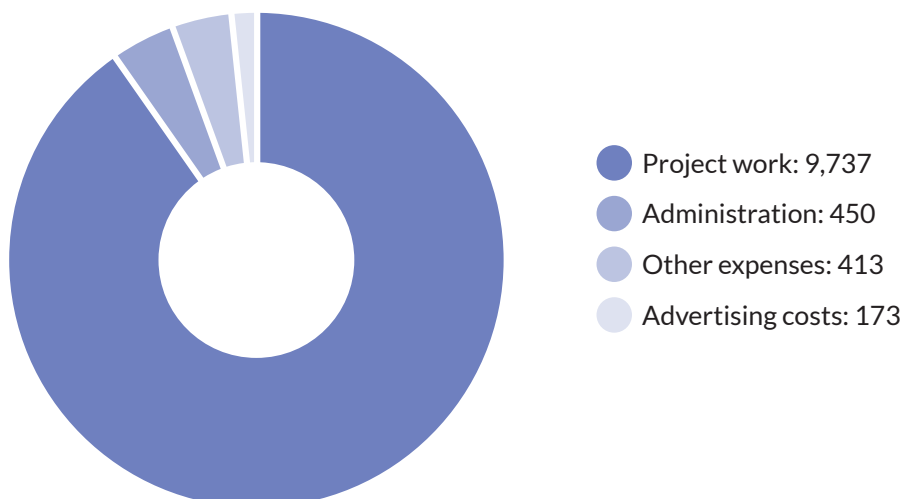
Total budget 2023 = EUR 10,772,751.30

*Earnings up to kEUR 250:

- Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF): kEUR 199
- Federal Agency for Civic Education: kEUR 189
- Thuringia: kEUR 188
- Donations: kEUR 127
- Lower Saxony: kEUR 69
- Brandenburg: kEUR 32
- Baden-Württemberg: kEUR 24

Where does the money go?

Amounts in kEUR



Total budget 2023 = EUR 10,772,751.30

Imprint

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Donations are always welcome!
Account for donations:
Bank für Sozialwirtschaft
IBAN: DE14100205000001118800
BIC: BFSWDE33BER

Or online at www.violence-prevention-network.de



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Check out our blog: www.interventionen.blog



www.violence-prevention-network.de