Jugend - Medien - Extremismus

Engl. transl.: Youth - Media - Extremism

# Keywords

* Extremism and young people
* media and extremism
* extremism on the internet
* extremism in social media
* radicalisation of young people
* extremist attitudes

# Details

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## Topics

## Sample

Sub-study 1
"A total of 1,061 young people between the ages of 14 and 19 were surveyed. The respondents were on average 17 years old. The distribution of educational qualifications, political positioning and other socio-demographic variables largely correspond to the data of the current Shell Youth Study (2015a), which suggests a high degree of representativeness and quality of the available data." (cf. Reinemann et al. 2019, 77)

Sub-study 2
"A total of 23 young people aged between 14 and 19 were interviewed. The sample consisted of eight girls and 15 boys. Of them, ten were aged 14-15 years, six were aged 16-17 years and seven were aged 18-19 years. Ten of them attended a Hauptschule, seven the Realschule, five a Gymnasium and one a Gesamtschule. Five lived in the village, nine in a small town, three in a suburb of a large city and six in a large city." (cf. Reinemann et al. 2019, 155)

Sub-study 3
"In the end, four 8th, three 9th and one 10th grade took part. Classes from two grammar schools, one intermediate school and one secondary school took part in the information event and the survey, which took place on eight different dates in a seminar room at the LMU Munich. (...) In total, the data of 249 students were included in our analysis." (cf. Reinemann et al. 2019, 198)

[translated by the coder]

## Implications For Parents About

Other

## Other Parent Implication

Supporting their children in learning about extremism, being a role model

## Implications For Educators About

Other

## Implications For Policy Makers About

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Industry

# Abstract

"Young people are the most important target group of extremist radicalisation attempts, which mainly take place on the internet. For the first time, this study examines how often young people are confronted with extremist attitudes and messages in various media and their environment and how well they recognise extremism. The study identifies four types of young people, classified as "unconcerned", "interested", "reflective" and "at-risk", who differ significantly, among other things, in their political literacy, media literacy and attitudes. The study concludes with a series of recommendations, which are deducted from the findings and directed at politics, schools, media and platform operators." (cf. Reinemann et al. 2019)

[translated by the coder]

# Outcome

"The activities of extremist actors on the internet have increased significantly in recent years. Extremist organisations target young people in particular, also by covert means. Young people are generally considered to be easily influenced and, due to certain personal and social predispositions, can be particularly receptive to the ideological, personal, emotional and social offers of extremists. (...) However, many fundamental questions about media contact with extremist attitudes, messages, content and actors as well as their perception by or impact on adolescents in Germany have remained unanswered to date. This was the reason for the research project presented here, which approached these questions by employing a combination of methods consisting of an oral personal representative survey (sub-study 1), qualitative interviews (sub-study 2), as well as a controlled reception and impact study (sub-study 3). The findings can be summarised as follows:

Our representative survey has shown that extremist attitudes and messages are present in the lives of many young people in Germany. Almost half of the young people come into contact with extremist messages and attitudes at least sometimes - be it in public, in everyday encounters or the media." (cf. Reinemann et al. 2019, 217-218)

"Our representative survey also showed that young people perceive extremist attitudes and messages on the internet on the one hand. Here it is above all social networks, online news sites and video platforms (YouTube) where young people most often come into contact with extremism. (...) However, the most frequent contact with extremism takes place through the reporting of journalistic media. The most important of these is television, which underlines its continuing importance as a medium of current information." (cf. Reinemann et al. 2019, 218)

"The role of the journalistic media, to which one can also count the online news offerings, is quite ambivalent. On the one hand, they can strengthen young people's extremism-related skills by drawing their attention to currently active extremist actors or characterising certain positions as extremist. (...) On the other hand, journalistic reporting may make some actors and positions interesting for young people in the first place, especially if extremist stagings are conveyed without reflection or remain uncommented on. (...) The more detailed analysis of the last conscious contact with extremism in media offerings (last contact) revealed that almost two-thirds of the contacts with extremism occur during routine media use." (cf. Reinemann et al. 2019, 219)

"A central result of the representative survey is that young people come into contact with extremism consciously to very different degrees and in different ways. Patterns emerge that allow the formation of a typology of media contact with extremism. On this basis, we have named the groups the "Unaware" (biggest group), the "Informed", the "Reflective" and the "Vulnerable"." (cf. Reinemann et al. 2019, 219-220)

"If we look at the results of both sub-studies together, it becomes clear that many young people are not in a good position to identify extremist messages as such. This is especially true if the corresponding content is rather subtle, i.e. does not contain clear calls for violence or attacks against certain groups. (...) Politically interested young people, who in the best case are also involved in conversations about current events and use traditional news media - "informed" or "reflected" - tend to evaluate extremist content more negatively and recognise it as problematic." (cf. Reinemann et al. 2019, 225)

"The first important finding in this context is that confrontation with extremist content hardly motivates young people to react actively, for example in the form of follow-up communication or even a counter-speech. The young people were most likely to be encouraged to research the source of the content." (cf. Reinemann et al. 2019, 225)

"If one looks again at the results of the representative survey against the background of these findings, then one must assume that due to their comparatively lower competencies, their attitude patterns and the (partial) acceptance of violence, not only the young people who are "at-risk" anyway but also a part of the "unsophisticated" represent a potential risk group at least for a subtle influencing of attitude patterns, especially if the corresponding messages start at the measurable scepticism towards politics and institutions." (cf. Reinemann et al. 2019, 226)

[translated by the coder]