“The Great Replacement”

A conspiracy claiming white Europeans are under threat
WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT?

This document provides an overview of “The Great Replacement” conspiracy theory and is one in a series of extremism briefing notes produced by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) out of a long-running partnership with Microsoft*. The purpose of these documents is to provide entry-level context and background about various extremist and conspiratorial narratives and movements. These are not intended as comprehensive deep-dives. Rather, they present key concepts, (conspiracy) theories, terminology and imagery deployed by the given movements or narratives. Further reading recommendations are provided at the end of each document, should readers want to learn more.

*Microsoft makes no statement as to the accuracy of the contents of this document. The contents herein are a product of ISD and are provided for informational purposes only.

FAQ

How are these briefing notes produced?
They are informed by both literature review and digital research using publicly accessible websites, social media pages, channels and forums. This briefing note was published in August 2020 and is based on research conducted by ISD after the attacks against two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2019.

What topics do they cover?
Topics span the ideological spectrum, covering prevalent extremist theories and narratives, as well as specific extremist movements. The scope ranges, with some briefing notes covering specific conspiracy theories like “The Great Replacement”, and others looking at broader, overarching issues like extreme misogyny online.

Additional questions?
Get in touch with ISD at info@isdglobal.org.
**“The Great Replacement” Conspiracy Theory**

“Proponents of the so-called ‘Great Replacement’ theory argue that white European populations are being deliberately replaced at an ethnic and cultural level through migration and the growth of minority communities” - [ISD, 2019](#)

---

**“The Great Replacement” theory was first coined by French writer Renaud Camus. Identitarian movements across Europe (including in Austria, the UK, Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Germany) have used the theory to recruit others to their cause, claiming their countries and national “identities” are under threat due to increasing immigrant populations. The theory has also spread into North American and Australian extreme-right circles. The theory featured heavily in - and was the title of - the “manifesto” of the Australian perpetrator of the attacks on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2019, for example.**

---

**RELATED NARRATIVES AND TERMINOLOGY**

**White Genocide or White Extinction:**
The idea that there is a conscious effort to replace white populations through immigration, integration, abortion and violence against white people.

While similar to “the Great Replacement” theory, white genocide was coined and popularized in the US by David Lane (see also “14 words”). White genocide theory historically singles out Jewish communities as its “orchestrators”.

**Eurabia:**
A conspiracy theory that argues Western countries are being “Islamized”, or slowly being brought under Islamic rule.

“Islamification” and “Shariafication” imply the same.

**Remigration:**
In extreme-right circles, this refers to “forced deportation of migrant communities, with the intent of creating an ethnically or culturally homogeneous society”.

“Essentially a non-violent form of ethnic cleansing”.

These narratives feed into a dystopian, conspiratorial theory that spurs xenophobia and racism. It has mobilized into violence, evident in the attacks on the Muslim community of Christchurch in 2019.
**RELATED NARRATIVES AND TERMINOLOGY**

**Ethno-nationalism:**
Related to “the Great Replacement” theory, ethno-nationalism argues for the segregation of people according to ethnicity. Related terms include “white ethno-state” and “universal ethno-nationalism”.

**Miscegenation:**
Believers of “the Great Replacement” and/or “white genocide” theories are likely to be fundamentally opposed to miscegenation or any form of inter-racial/inter-ethnic relations.

Extreme-right arguments against miscegenation are rooted in racism, claiming it causes a “dilution” or “degeneracy” of whiteness that, in turn, contributes to “white extinction,” “cultural suicide”, and the end of Western civilization.

**Birth Rates:**
Declining birth rates amongst white people (and, in contrast, high birth rates amongst other populations) are often referred to as proof that white genocide is happening.

**Remove Kebab:**
A meme referring to a Serbian anti-Muslim propaganda song still nodded to in extreme-right circles. The song featured in the Christchurch attacker’s livestream.

**14 Words:**
Coined by David Lane, 14 words refers to the white nationalist slogan: “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children.”

**The Kalergi Plan:**
A conspiracy that claims immigration is a deliberate tool used to replace white European populations.

**Examples of Affiliated Groups**

- **Generation Identity – Europe:**
  Generation Identity is a youth movement born in France out of “Les Identitaires”. The group argues for the need to preserve (white) European cultural identity, and that this is under threat due to immigration (especially from Muslim-majority countries). The group has since spread across the continent, with prominent chapters in Austria, Italy, the UK and Germany.

- **Alternative fur Deutschland (AfD) – Germany:**
  AfD is a German political party that is anti-Muslim and anti-immigration. AfD purport Islamophobic conspiracies of “Shariafication” and incompatibility of Islam with the West. In a recent political campaign, AfD visualized this narrative in large posters that read “Europe must not become Eurabia”.

- **National Justice Party - USA:**
  The NJP is a recently formed political party that claims ideas of freedom, liberty and justice are fundamentally (white) European and American traits and can therefore only survive in a white-majority country. As per their website, their stated aim is “political self-determination for White Americans and the restoration of European values”.

Produced by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) with support from Microsoft.
Further Reading

- **“The Great Replacement’: The Consequences of Mainstreamed Extremism”** - by ISD
  ISD’s report presents the findings of an investigation into the prevalence, scale and nature of the ideologies and narratives that motivated the attacks on the Al Noor Mosque and the Linwood Islamic Centre in Christchurch, New Zealand.

- **The International Identitarian Movement** - by Hope Not Hate
  Hope Not Hate investigates the Identitarian movement and how they have helped popularise “the Great Replacement” theory.

- **The Deadly Myth of the “Great Replacement” - the shootings in El Paso are the latest expression of an unfounded and racist mythology** - by Eleanor Penny for the New Statesman
  An overview of “the Great Replacement” theory, its history and its role in motivating violence in North America.

- **A National Blueprint to End White Supremacist Violence** - by Katrina Mulligan, Brette Steele, Simon Clark, Asha Padmanabhan and Rachel Hunkler for the Center for American Progress
  An overview of contemporary white supremacist narratives and tactics in the US, with recommendations for mitigating and responding against this threat.

- **“The Great Replacement” Theory: a Historical Perspective** - by Paul Stocker for the Center for Analysis of the Radical Right
  A historical overview of “the Great Replacement” theory and other demographic-related conspiracies.

- **Hate Acronyms** - by the Anti-Defamation League
  A database of symbols, slogans and terminology frequently used by white nationalist and supremacist movements.