

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT?

This document provides an overview of the “**white genocide**” 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, 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.

Content Warning: this document contains material that may be harmful, triggering or traumatizing to some readers.

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 October 2022 and is based on research conducted in July 2022.

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

WHITE GENOCIDE CONSPIRACY THEORY

Summary

The “white genocide” or “white extinction” conspiracy theory holds that there is a deliberate plot, masterminded by the Jewish people, to erase whiteness, white culture and white civilisation. Its proponents define whiteness not in terms of skin colour per se, but rather [through the prism of cultural identity](#), identifying Christian and Euro-American heritage as the key demarcator of whiteness. They believe that a radical transformation of society, in which diversity is set to replace whiteness, is underway and that immigration, eugenics, racial integration, abortion and a plethora of other tools [are being purposefully employed](#) to bring about a world in which whiteness becomes extinct. Proponents of the theory see [diversity](#) as one of the most harmful ideologies and maintain that it lies on a binary with, and is thus mutually exclusive to, whiteness. Their [political goals](#) include drastic restrictions on immigration as well as racial intermixing and integration in the short-run, in order to ultimately restore the United States (US) and all “white-founded” countries to a state of ethnic homogeneity.

Background

The white genocide conspiracy was popularised by the American neo-Nazi and convicted terrorist [David Lane](#). A former member of the Ku Klux Klan and the Aryan Resistance Movement, Lane held that white people in the US are under threat of organised extermination and that racial diversity as well as demands for racial equality should be resisted at all costs. He called for his followers to treat whiteness as their primary political identity and deemed the defence of its political status to be the paramount political goal. It was Lane who [coined the “14 words” slogan](#) which became the foundation of the movement. The theory remains most commonly held in the US but it has spread globally, attracting followers in [the United Kingdom, Ukraine, Russia and Germany](#).

The Great Replacement theory

The white genocide conspiracy shares ideological foundations with the “great replacement” theory. [First articulated](#) in French intellectual circles in the early 2010s, the great replacement holds that white Europeans are under threat of ethnic and cultural replacement by immigrant communities from Africa and the Middle East and their subsequent integration into European societies. [Its proponents highlight](#) long-term demographic changes as well as cultural incompatibility as proofs that whiteness and the white “civilisation” are being purposefully replaced. The theory has spread around the world since, gaining significant political influence in the US.

How does it differ from the “Great Replacement” theory?

Ideologically, white genocide is closely linked to the great replacement theory, coined by the French theorist, [Renaud Camus](#). Both hold that white civilization is under attack from multiculturalism and that race forms a primary axis along which contemporary conflicts in the Western world play out. What makes the white genocide conspiracy distinct, however, is its [explicitly antisemitic orientation](#). Whereas the great replacement originated out of fears linked to non-white immigration from Africa and the Middle East to Europe, [by members of all ethnicities](#), it is a Jewish cabal that leads the effort at a global scale. [Another difference](#) is that while great replacement theory holds that white

populations are threatened by an influx of ethnic minorities from the outside, the white genocide conspiracy places a larger emphasis on the oppressed minorities that are already present within the country, seeing them as the primary agents of violence towards the white majority.

Related Narratives and Terminology

“14 Words”

The white genocide conspiracy theory has its ideological foundation in David Lane’s [“14 Words” slogan](#) which holds that: “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children”. It has now become the most popular right-wing slogan globally. Another version of the slogan, also comprising 14 words, states: "because the beauty of the White Aryan woman must not perish from the earth".

#whitegenocide

The conspiracy theory has become a tool of the far-right’s hashtag activism, with right wing actors associating it with trending political events in order to insert extremist narratives into the political mainstream. An [example](#) of this tactic could be seen in 2015 when members of the far-right forum stromfront.org encouraged the use of #whitegenocide under tweets related to the Paris terrorist attacks in their immediate aftermath. The campaign’s goal was to frame the attacks as an assault on whiteness and prove that a genocide of white people is indeed underway. Other related hashtags include [#WhiteLivesMatter](#) and [#StandUpForEurope](#).

Influence in the US

The white genocide conspiracy theory has seeped into the American political mainstream. Constituting a [modern reiteration](#) of a long intellectual tradition of racist, anti-immigration narratives in the country, it is now providing ideological fuel for a variety of far-right, white supremacist factions in the US. The genocide rhetoric was prominent during the 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville and was explicitly invoked by the 2018 [Pittsburgh synagogue shooter](#) on his social media immediately prior to the attack. It also continues to be invoked by political actors at the highest levels, including repeatedly by [Donald Trump](#), as well as by mainstream media, in particular [Fox News](#).

Further reading

[‘White Genocide’ and the Ethics of Public Analysis](#)- A. Dirk Moses

[‘As the Pittsburgh synagogue massacre shows, fears of “White Genocide” are incitement to murder’](#) - ABC News

[White Nationalism’s Deep American Roots](#) - The Atlantic

[14 Words](#) - Anti-Defamation League

[Diversity = White Genocide](#) - Anti-Defamation League

[White Genocide](#) - Anti-Defamation League

[#whitegenocide, the Alt-right and Conspiracy Theory: How Secrecy and Suspicion Contributed to the Mainstreaming of Hate](#) - Andrew F. Wilson

[Great Replacement Theory](#) - Counter-Extremism Project

['Tucker Carlson is the No. 1 champion of this leading far-right conspiracy'](#) - MSNBC

[White Genocide](#) - European Center for Populism Studies

['The 'Great Replacement': The Violent Consequences of Mainstreamed Extremism](#) - ISD

[David Lane](#) - Southern Poverty Law Center

[Terrorist, '14 Words' Author, Dies in Prison](#) - Southern Poverty Law Center