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Generative AI and the German Far Right: Narratives, Tactics and Digital Strategies

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To conduct this research, ISD analysts monitored posts using generative artificial intelligence (AI) from official Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) accounts and the social media accounts of other far-right actors in Germany. This investigation revealed that generative AI enables these actors to seamlessly integrate established narratives within tailored social media strategies. AI is not a 'silver bullet' in the far-right's playbook but rather a powerful complement to these established strategies. This allows far-right groups to create large amounts of engaging material in a cost- and time-effective manner, taking advantage of a lack of compliance with the EU Digital Services Act (DSA) by platforms.

Key Findings

- **ISD identified 883 posts by German far-right accounts incorporating AI-generated content (AIGC)** since April 2023.

- **The Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party, which is likely to become the second strongest party in Germany's February 2025 federal election, was observed to be a key source of AIGC.** This content came from the main, party-operated AfD account, state-level AfD accounts, and from individual AfD politicians on a federal and state level. AIGC content was posted on Facebook, Instagram, X, TikTok, and YouTube. In October 2024, the latest month sampled, AfD accounts published more than 50 posts featuring AIGC across platforms.

- **Far-right community groups on Facebook and far-right music channels on YouTube also made heavy use of AIGC**. The content they create, along with material produced by the AfD, is widely shared and re-posted by individuals on Facebook, Instagram, X, and TikTok without official affiliation to organised far-right groups.

- **Common narratives found in the AIGC included attacks on refugees, immigrants, LGBTQ+ and climate activists, and opposition parties, as well as content which idealised Germany as a strong country under threat that needs to be saved.** Content calling for "remigration" – the widescale deporting of ethnic minorities regardless of immigration status – was among the narratives which received the highest level of engagement.

- **AI-generated images, memes and songs are used to create a sense of identity among members of far-right groups and followers of far-right pages.** Within the sample of 883 posts, ISD found 102 AI-generated far-right music videos.

- **Far-right users were observed using generative AI to illustrate their messages and to create video sequences and images to depict scenes for which real images might not be available, for example migrant crime.**

- **ISD identified the profiles of three female 'influencers' that were created with the help of generative AI.** The profiles share images and reels with far-right narratives and take a stance on current affairs from a female position, aiming to build a parasocial

relationship with their audience through sharing personal information and creating a false sense of intimacy.

- **Far-right actors take advantage of a lack of platform compliance to the EU's Digital Services Act (DSA) requirement to label certain AIGC, and of limitations in the AI Act's ability to halt the spread of AIGC.** None of the AIGC posts in our dataset were labelled by the platforms a month after reporting. Only 4 percent of posts were labelled as AI-generated at the time of writing.

Introduction

To conduct this research, ISD collected a total of 883 posts from 92 accounts containing AIGC published by AfD affiliated far-right actors across Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok and YouTube between April 2023 and November 2024 (see below for detailed methodology). Previous ISD research had already identified the far-right political party Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) to be a prolific user of this technology, which motivated a deep dive on the use of generative AI by the AfD.

The AfD's use of AI generated content (AIGC) was first referenced in the German media in March 2023, when Norbert Kleinwächter MP posted an AI-generated image depicting migrants as a public threat, although the AfD's first AI-generated image was posted on his Facebook page in August 2022. Since then, far-right actors have adopted generative AI to create content for social media campaigns. Official AfD accounts use AIGC across platforms to create images and short video sequences for YouTube shorts. The images and short videos depict immigrants as a threat to "native" Germans – typically represented as blonde and blue-eyed – while also mocking mainstream political parties.

An investigation by Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ) has revealed that the AfD often works with the media agency Tannwald Media – founded and owned by Alexander Kleine, a well-known actor on the German far-right – to produce AI-generated content. The SZ investigation also revealed connections between Tannwald Media, the AfD and other pages sharing far-right AI-generated content that are discussed below.

While the AfD is central to this trend, other far-right actors are also increasingly adopting AIGC. This includes "Neue Rechte" (New Right) information outlets such as Junge Freiheit, far-right online communities and individual accounts. This report examines how different groups of far-right actors have adopted AIGC, as well as the narratives and tactics they use.

In this report, TikTok stood out as a platform where far-right AIGC is successfully disseminated, as evidenced by the volume of far-right AIGC and the AfD's unique dissemination strategy on the platform. In a 2024 study, Bildungsstätte Anne Frank labelled TikTok as a "parallel universe" used by the far-right to spread extremism. Through TikTok videos, the AfD presents itself as a saviour for Germany and especially for young people. Researchers have found common tactics such as "provocative language, conspiratorial rhetoric, and fearmongering, simplifying complex issues and undermining rational discourse".

Although the federal-level AfD party account was banned from TikTok in May 2022, individual politicians and parliamentary groups on the state level continue to share content. The AfD has also benefitted from numerous unaffiliated far-right accounts reposting its content, accounts that share other far-right content using #afd hashtags, and accounts that have called on people to vote for the AfD in local and national elections. AfD supporters and far-right users amplify content by liking, sharing and saving posts, and commenting with blue hearts (the signature colour of the AfD). Far-right content is also frequently downloaded and re-uploaded by other accounts to extend its reach. AfD politicians and other far-right content creators call on their followers to use this engagement strategy to maximise visibility and to ensure that content remains available on the platform, even in the case that the account originally sharing it has been taken down. Generative AI permits the AfD and their supporters to produce and share more far-right content than could be created without the use of AI.

In consideration of these developments, questions arise on both the suitability and interoperability of regulations like the Digital Services Act (DSA), the AI Act, the Terrorist Online Content (TCO) regulation and the Guidelines for Providers of VLOPs and VLOSEs on Mitigating Systemic Risks in Elections in addressing AIGC's circulation on social media. Key concerns range from ensuring that users deploying AIGC respect fundamental rights, safety, and ethical principles, to evaluating its appropriateness for political purposes both on- and offline.

Following a deeper analysis of AIGC detection, the online far-right actors deploying it, and the narratives they promote, this research aims to assess the interplay of the aforementioned regulations. Consequently, it will propose recommendations to address any gaps aimed at mitigating the negative effects of far-right AIGC.

Glossary

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

ISD follows the OECD's definition of AI as a "machine-based system that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments. Different AI systems vary in their levels of autonomy and adaptiveness after deployment."[1]

Conspiracy narratives

Conspiracy narratives are attempts to explain events or circumstances as the result as a secret plot orchestrated by alleged (usually elite) conspirators with malign intent.

Digital Services Act (DSA)

The DSA is a European Union regulation covering online intermediaries and platforms such as marketplaces, social networks, content-sharing platforms, app stores, search engines, online travel and accommodation platforms. Its main goal is to prevent illegal and harmful activities online and stop the spread of disinformation. It ensures user safety, protects fundamental rights, and creates a fair and open online platform environment.

Discriminatory speech

Speech that discriminates against individuals based on personal characteristics which can lead to marginalisation and exclusion.

Disinformation

False, misleading or manipulated content spread with the intention to deceive or harm.

Far-right extremism

ISD defines far-right extremism as "a form of nationalism that is characterised by its reference to racial, ethnic or cultural supremacy". In line with academic and far-right expert Cas Mudde, ISD defines the far right as groups and individuals exhibiting at least three of the following features: nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-democracy, or strong state advocacy.

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming has been embraced internationally as a strategy aimed towards realising gender equality. It involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, with a view to promoting equality between women and men and combating discrimination.

Generative AI

Generative AI systems are built on deep-learning models trained on raw data which could include books, articles, webpages, Wikipedia entries and images scraped from the internet. These models are designed to detect statistical patterns in their training dataset and

[1]Russell, S., Perset, K., & Grobelnik, M. (November 29, 2023). Updates to the OECD's definition of an AI system explained. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. https://oecd.ai/en/wonk/ai-system-definition-update

"generate statistically probable outputs when prompted," which are similar though not identical to the data that they are trained on.[2] This report focuses on examples of generative AI systems that can be used to generate synthetic text, images, audio and video.

Misinformation

Misinformation is false, misleading or manipulated content shared irrespective of an intent to deceive or harm.

Neue Rechte (New Right)

The Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BfV), Germany's domestic intelligence service, defines the Neue Rechte (New Right) as "an informal network of groups, individuals and organisations, from nationalist conservative to right-wing extremist, which work together to promote their sometimes anti-liberal and anti-democratic positions in society and the political sphere. The parliamentary and extraparliamentary movements and metapolitical theory and practice which the network uses to seek to influence the pre-political sphere and lay the groundwork for successful political realisation of their antidemocratic positions are closely intertwined with their use of protests and demonstrations. The figureheads of the New Right are well connected with each other, fulfilling different and sometimes complementary roles within this network to bring about a "cultural revolution from the right" by addressing different target groups."

Targeted harassment

Harassment targeting a specific individual or group with the intent to threaten, provoke or cause distress.

[2] IBM Research. (2023). What is generative AI? Retrieved from: https://research.ibm.com/blog/what-is-generative-AI.

Methodology

Data collection

ISD collected a total of 883 posts from 92 accounts containing AIGC (images, videos, audio) published by far-right actors across Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok and YouTube between 13 April 2023 and 18 November 2024. The posts and comments were identified and collected manually, starting with a seed list of official AfD accounts and accounts belonging to other online far-right communities posting in German or about Germany specifically.

The sample comprised three types of content:

1. Content containing AIGC posted by the AfD or AfD politicians
2. Content containing AIGC produced by Neue Rechte (New Right) information outlets associated with the New Right ('Neue Rechte') such as Junge Freiheit and Compact Magazin
3. Content containing AIGC that was shared by online communities and individuals that support AfD.

Detection of AI-generated content (AIGC)

The detection of AIGC has become increasingly challenging. The models and tools used to produce it are consistently iterated and improved; therefore, the content itself appears more authentic. However, there are several indicators ISD used to determine whether content had been AI-generated or not. These include:

- Spatial and visual inconsistencies, including differences in noise patterns in videos and colour differences between edited and unedited portions of images
- Time-based inconsistencies, such as mismatches between speech and mouth movements for videos
- Deformed hands and limbs, including hands and limbs that are unnaturally articulated or do not connect to the rest of the body, particularly in the background of an image
- Misspelled words and garbled letters that are not part of any real alphabet on objects, posters and walls in images and videos
- Inconsistent hair texture in images and videos
- Overly glossy, "rendered" quality that gives an unnatural skin texture and makes images and videos appear oversaturated or like paintings
- Socially or culturally unlikely events and unrealistic scenes, such as members of the Ampelkoalition (Traffic Light Coalition[3]) being depicted as homeless people in images and videos.

[3] Ampelkoalition or 'Traffic Light Coalition' is the term used for a German coalition government formed by the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Free Democratic Party (FDP) and Alliance 90/The Greens, as was the case during the drafting of this study. The term stems from the coalition partners' party colours, which resemble a traffic light given they are red (SPD), yellow (FDP) and green (Greens).

In addition to these guidelines, ISD used TrueMedia.org[4] to test individual social media posts for being AI-generated deepfakes. Based on a set of different AI detectors, TrueMedia analyses video, image and audio. The detectors looked at four categories:

1. Face manipulation – Distinguishes deepfakes from real faces or if other methods were used such as face blending, swaps, or re-enactment
2. Generated AI – Detects if the image was created with popular tools, such as Dall-E, Stable Cascade, Stable Diffusion XL, CQD Diffusion, Kadinsky, Wuerstchen, Titan, Midjourney, Adobe Firefly, Pixart, Glide, Imagen, Bing Image Creator, LCM, Hive, Deepfloyd and any Generative Adversarial Network (GAN)
3. Visual noise – Detects if artifacts from manipulation or generation are present in an image, including variation in pixels and colour variation
4. Audio – Detects if there are traces that audio has been manipulated or cloned.

Posts and comments that showed one or more of the characteristics mentioned in the list above and/or yielded a TrueMedia score that suggested "substantial evidence of manipulation" were included in the sample.

ISD observed that the difficulty of detection increased between April 2023 – the date of the first post featuring AIGC in the sample – until the time of writing (February 2025), due to significant technical improvements in the quality of content. At times, users added aesthetic filters or text to the content or presented it as artwork. AIGC becomes harder to detect if large font text is added over and obscures the composition of a video or image. All of these factors have further complicated the process of detecting AIGC; as such, the level of AIGC is likely higher than this report's findings show.

Qualitative and quantitative analysis

AIGC identified by ISD was coded qualitatively to allow for thematic analysis and to identify shifts in user behaviour and exploitation of social media platform features. Quantitative analysis was used to ascertain the potential reach and distribution of the content.

Representativeness of the sample

With the AfD, Neue Rechte (New Right) information outlets, far-right community groups and content creators, far-right music channels, individuals, and AI-generated 'influencers' as the focus of study, ISD aimed to collect a similar number of posts across each of the five platforms. Around 200 posts were collected per platform with the exception of YouTube, where ISD documented only 85 AIGC-featuring videos. The lower number of YouTube posts may be explained by the fact that there are less AIGC posts available on the platform as YouTube is video-based and AIGC video content requires more sophistication than image-based AIGC content. As ISD analysts were aiming for a balanced sample across platforms, the sample may not necessarily be representative of the actual distribution of AIGC content across platforms.

A seed list of official AfD accounts was used as a starting point for far-right AIGC discovery on X, Instagram and Facebook. Posts from main and local AfD accounts, as well as accounts of individual AfD politicians, accounted for 50 percent (approximately 100 posts) of the sample

[4] TrueMedia.org ceased operations on January 14, 2025. All research associated with this piece, including the use of Truemedia.org for the analysis of AI content, was conducted before this date.

for these platforms. The sample is therefore not representative in terms of which actor is the most active in posting AIGC.

The official federal-level AfD party account has been banned from TikTok since May 2022. As a result, data collection on TikTok was based on recommendations made by the algorithm via the 'For You Page'. Analysts relied more heavily on accounts belonging to individual AfD politicians, which typically contained less AIGC than the main AfD accounts on other platforms. Therefore, the AIGC by local AfD and individual AfD politicians' accounts on accounted for 19 percent of all posts collected from TikTok.

For YouTube, the data collection was based on a seed list of AfD accounts similar to Facebook, X and Instagram. However, as AfD accounts generally focus on image-based rather than video-based AIGC, we found a significantly lower level of content by main, local and individual AfD politicians' accounts on YouTube than on the other platforms (8 percent of all posts).

Main Actors and Their Usage of Generative AI

The Alternative für Deutschland (AfD)

Over the monitoring period, ISD collected a sample comprising over 350 posts featuring AIGC from social media channels associated with the AfD on Facebook, Instagram, X, TikTok and YouTube.

Across all platforms, these posts predominantly came from the AfD's main party channel and from an account associated with MP Norbert Kleinwächter, whose social media output heavily features AIGC. Other AfD members actively deploying AIGC on selected platforms included MP Maximilian Krah (TikTok and YouTube), as well as AfD's state election candidate Sebastian Wippel (YouTube) and local election candidate Sven Hämisch (TikTok). Outside of this sample, the earliest AIGC posted by the AfD's main account across all platforms recorded by ISD was in August 2022.

Figure 1 depicts the monthly number of posts by AfD accounts featuring AIGC across Facebook, Instagram, X, and TikTok between May and October 2024.[5] YouTube was excluded from this visualisation as only two of its seven sampled AIGC posts were published within the specified timeframe. October saw the highest activity on X (26 posts) and Instagram (21 posts), while Facebook (4 posts) and TikTok (1 post) recorded significantly lower AIGC publications by AfD accounts. Instagram and X consistently led in monthly AIGC activity except for July and August, when Facebook achieved its highest monthly level. September recorded the lowest overall AIGC activity by AfD accounts across platforms except for TikTok, which published three AIGC posts, the same as its highest output in May. Despite variations in individual platform performance, AfD accounts consistently posted 43 to 47 AIGC posts across all platforms between May and June 2024.

[5] Since sampled posts per actor were not collected within a consistent date range, the percentage of posts featuring AIGC by the AfD was calculated starting from May 2024, the earliest month when AIGC posts from party-operated AfD accounts were consistently recorded across all platforms.

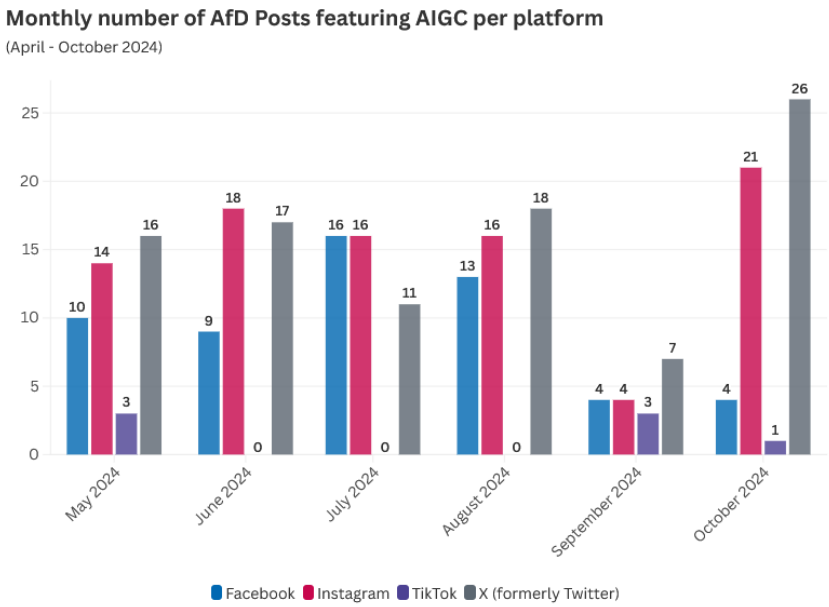


Figure 1: Monthly number of AfD posts featuring AIGC per platform within ISD sample, recorded by postdate.

ISD determined the percentage of posts containing AIGC posted by party- and politician-operated AfD accounts on each of the three major platforms studied between May and October 2024. X topped the list with 23 percent, followed by Instagram (19 percent) and Facebook (17 percent). TikTok and YouTube were excluded as the main AfD account has been banned on TikTok since 2022 and there were very few posts available on the AfD's equivalent YouTube accounts.

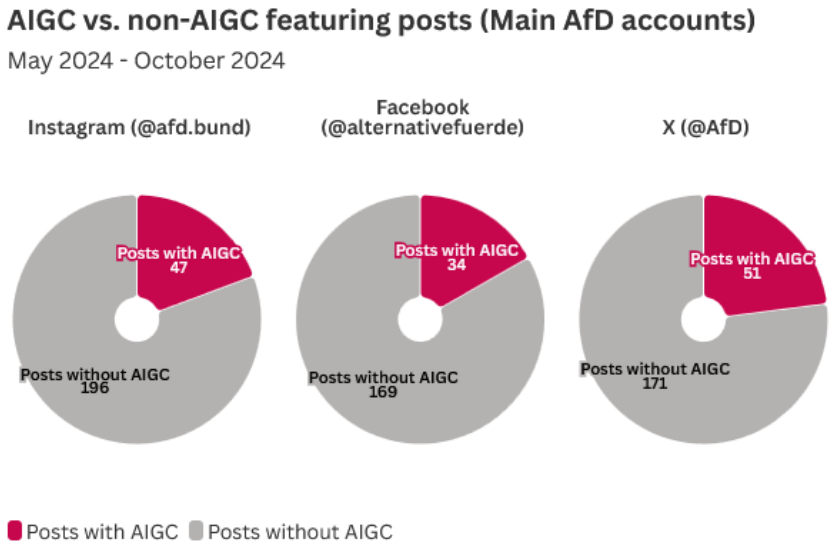


Figure 2: Proportion of total posts featuring AIGC from main (party-operated) AfD accounts

The AfD AIGC posts sampled frequently spread anti-migrant sentiment, either depicting migrants as the root cause of crime in Germany (particularly knife attacks and sexual violence) or by accusing them of exploiting social benefits and public services. Content also often included imagery calling for "remigration" – the widescale deporting of ethnic minorities regardless of immigration status.

ISD also found anti-government or anti-CDU (Christian Democratic Union) narratives; AI was used to alter politicians' physical appearances, their apparel and surrounding, with the apparent objective of provoking personal and/or political aversion towards these groups. As noted in subsequent sections, at times this content amounted to the targeted harassment of individual officials. Other uses for generative AI included posts promoting anti-climate sentiment (depicting climate activists as terrorists), anti-LGBTQ+ narratives, and opposition to the EU.

While article 35.1.k. of the Digital Services Act (DSA) encourages platforms to label AI-generated or manipulated content that could falsely appear authentic, less than 2 percent of the AfD's recorded posts featuring AI had any form of labelling across all platforms. In posts that did state they were generated using AI, the content creator most often did not make use of the platform's own system for labelling; instead, they did so using particularly small-sized font on the edges of the images or videos. This apparent obfuscation appears at odds with the public comments of AfD officials, for example Sandro Scheer, AfD District Chairman of Göppingen, who was transparent about the party's use of AI in an interview with SWR Aktuell.

Neue Rechte (New Right) information ecosystem

During the data collection phase, ISD identified videos and images containing AI-generated elements posted by the German Neue Rechte (New Right) information outlets Junge Freiheit, Compact Magazin and Deutschland Kurier.

- Junge Freiheit is a weekly publication sharing content for far-right audiences that has been labelled as the "flagship publication of the New Right" by the German Federal Agency for Civic Education. The outlet regularly publishes articles presenting Muslim immigrants as a threat to German culture and promoting traditional family values. Its readership significantly increased after September 2015, when then Chancellor Angela Merkel opened Germany's borders to refugees. Most recently, the outlet has focused on crimes committed by foreign citizens and Islamists in Germany to drive a populist agenda.

- Compact Magazin has been declared a far-right extremist organisation by the German domestic intelligence services (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz). In July 2024, it was temporarily banned by the German Federal Ministry of the Interior for inciting hatred against Jews, Muslims and migrants, undermining Germany's constitutional democracy. The ban was later lifted by a court. Jürgen Elsässer, Compact Magazin's chief editor, openly supported far-right political organisations such as Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes (PEGIDA), the Identitäre Bewegung (Identitary Movement), AfD, and Ein Prozent (One Percent) over many years. The magazine shares far-right narratives, antisemitic conspiracy narratives and Islamophobic messages.

- Deutschland Kurier is a far-right pro-AfD newspaper founded in 2017. The outlet labels itself as a "tabloid from the right" and drives a populist agenda through criticism of current immigration policies, sensationalist reporting about crimes committed by immigrants, fear mongering about the current economic situation in Germany, and the sharing of pro-Kremlin positions on the Russia-Ukraine war. It calls on to its

readers to support and to vote for the AfD in the upcoming elections and criticises established political parties such as the Social Democratic Party (SPD), Green Party (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen), the Free Democratic Party (FDP), and the Christian Democratic Party (CDU) in a defamatory manner.

For media and information outlets, generative AI presents an opportunity to easily create visual content. For outlets that share far-right content such as Junge Freiheit, Compact Magazin and Deutschland Kurier, generative AI additionally presents an opportunity to create visual material about real-world events that have the effect of fabricating or exaggerating security threats which stoke fear and division.

ISD analysts found examples of Junge Freiheit using AI to create video sequences and images in short-form videos published on YouTube, Instagram and TikTok. These sequences and images portray immigrants as criminals and a threat to Germany; others depict large crowds protesting immigration and supporting the AfD. Compact Magazin was also found to have used AI-generated cover images for their YouTube videos, which depict people of colour as a threat to security and cohesion. The outlet also claims to have hired an 'influencer' named Larissa Wagner, who is an AI-generated character. In several online posts, the outlet says she is currently interning at Compact Magazine and use AI-generated video sequences of her giving and conducting interviews (also see 'AI 'influencers''). Deutschland Kurier frequently posted AI-generated images to illustrate their reporting about migration and alleged crimes committed by non-Germans across their social media channels.

Community groups and content creators

ISD identified several far-right community Facebook pages that share both AIGC and non-AIGC content. There were several pages that appear dedicated to sharing far-right AIGC. Two pages share content in a style that resembles German propaganda from the 1920s and 1930s. According to radio station Deutschlandfunk, one of them is in the far-right milieu and labelled as one of the most reposted content creators. ISD also found a TikTok page producing videos featuring AIGC showing imaginary future scenarios of life in Germany with the AfD in power. The videos are positive and present the party as a saviour for all societal and economic challenges that Germany faces.

Music

There are several AI-generated far-right songs circulating on TikTok that are part of the AfD fan culture on the platform. Far-right accounts use these songs as background music for their videos; clicking on this soundtrack when watching a video directs users to more far-right extremist content. The songs are often catchy, creating a feeling of identity and belonging, and ultimately contribute to finding new audiences for far-right content and reinforcing existing ones.

ISD analysts found a YouTube channel with almost 9,000 followers. It repeatedly publishes glossy, fully AI-generated far-right music videos showing scenes in which blonde, blue-eyed Germans are threatened by migrants. Among the most distressing is one that claims that large amounts of Muslim immigrants who travel to Germany are doing so to commit murder, alleging that they are "following the call of Islam". The video features AI-generated images of children, implying that they are Muslim and training to commit stabbings, implying that killing

is ‘in their nature’ (Figure 3). These fabricated images reinforce harmful stereotypes rather than depicting real individuals or situations.

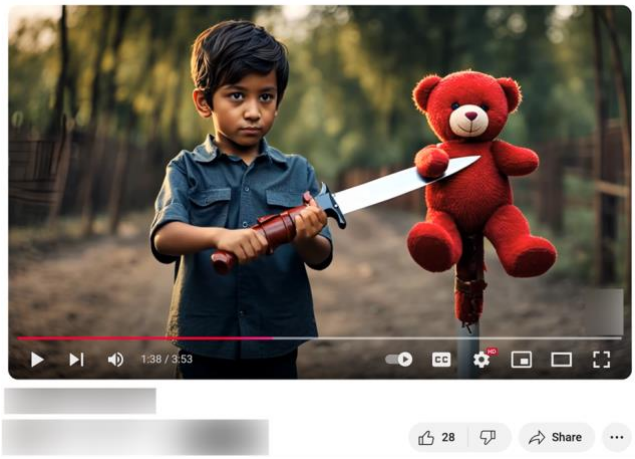


Figure 3: AI-generated video claiming that large amounts of Muslim immigrants travel to Germany to commit murder

The lyrics of the AI-generated music video in Figure 3 read:

‘Eins, zwei Messer, komm vorbei. Drei, vier, er steht vor Deutschlands Tür. Fünf, sechs, das Blut verkosten in der Nacht. Sieben, acht, gute Nacht, Deutschland ist erwacht.’

(Translation: ‘One, two, knives, come over. Three, four, he's standing at Germany's door. Five, six, taste the blood in the night. Seven, eight, goodnight, Germany has woken up.’)

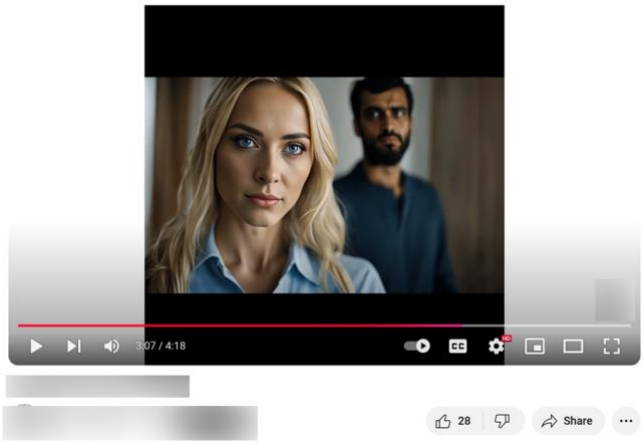


Figure 4: AI-generated video warning women about entering into relationships with Muslim men.

The lyrics of another far-right music video (Figure 4) warn German women about entering relationships with Muslim men, drawing on long-standing racist tropes which portray foreigners (particularly Muslims) as inherently dangerous to women:

'Verliebt in einen Talahon[6], niemals, das bringt dich nur nah an den Tod. Deine Freiheit, wäg dein Leben in Gefahr, ein deutsches Mädchen gefangen im falschen Moment. Verliebt in einen Talahon, lass es sein, bevor du daran zerbrichst, er nimmt dir alles, gibt dir nichts zurück, diese Liebe ist nur Lüge, nur ein Trick. Unterdrückung einer Frau, das ist sein Glück.'

(Translation: 'In love with a Talahon, never, it will only bring you close to death. Your freedom, your life in danger, a German girl caught at the wrong moment. In love with a Talahon, let it go before it breaks you, he takes everything from you, gives you nothing in return, this love is just a lie, just a trick. Oppression of a woman, that is his happiness.')

These lyrics are accompanied by an AI-generated video showing a blonde, blue-eyed German woman being emotionally and physically abused by a Muslim man, warning that relationships with Muslims will end in loss of freedom, heartbreak and death.

These videos received low engagement on both TikTok and YouTube (typically between 10 and 500 likes and shares). However, 6 others out of the 103 TikTok videos in the dataset reached more than 10k likes and were shared more than 500 times. All of these were videos calling users to support AfD to 'save Germany'. On YouTube, 5 out of 9 videos reached more than 1,000 views; 2 of the videos were liked more than 100 times.

Individuals

ISD found examples of far-right AIGC re-posted by individuals without clear official affiliation to far-right organisations or outlets. The content was shared in public and private Facebook groups of supporters of the AfD and parts of the German far right, as well as on the Facebook pages of anti-immigration online communities.

The two most common types of AIGC among individuals were images calling for the "remigration"[7] of asylum seekers and immigrants, and images depicting African immigrants as lazy and taking advantage of German social welfare. Figures 5 and 6 show two examples of this type of content, which is often reuploaded by other users. While the original post featuring the image on figure 5 amassed 88 shares on Facebook, another account with 81,000 followers which uploaded the image recorded 279 shares.

[6] 'Talahon' is a derogatory term for young men from the Middle East used on TikTok and other social media platforms

[7] The forced deportation of migrant communities, with the intent of creating an ethnically or culturally homogeneous society, essentially a non-violent form of ethnic cleansing

Figure 5: “Heimreise statt Einreise!” (‘Travel home instead of immigration!’): AI-generated image originally shared by outlet Deutschland Kurier, which typically supports the AfD. The image is frequently shared by individuals across platforms. “Heimreise statt Einreise!” is a slogan that was frequently used by the National Democratic Party (NPD) during the 2010s, showing again the connection to the far right.

Figure 6: ‘Keiner der Ampel-Politiker konnte sich die Haushaltslücke logisch erklären!’ (‘None of the traffic light government politicians could explain the budget gap logically!’): AI-generated images depicting people of colour as lazy and living off the German welfare state are the second type of most commonly shared far-right AIGC by individuals.

ISD also found that individual accounts made use of AIGC alongside hashtags #vernetzungstweet (networking tweet), #vernetzungsschiff (networking boat), and #vernetzungszug (networking train) on X and Instagram, a distinct tactic that is frequently coupled with far-right AIGC and which could potentially be employed by coordinated networks of inauthentic accounts. In essence, this tactic mimics the #FollowforFollow or #FollowerTrain trend. These hashtags are designed expand their follower base, usually shortly after account creation. ISD observed that “Vernetzungstweets” specifically are primarily used

by far-right accounts, which request their followers — often referred to as “patriots”— to like, comment, and repost the content to make the hashtags trend and increase the visibility of their messaging. ISD observed that “Vernetzungstweets” specifically are primarily used by far-right accounts, which request their followers — often referred to as “patriots”— to like, comment, and repost the content to make the hashtags trend and increase the visibility of their messaging.

Comprising approximately 6 percent of the collected data (n=200), the AI imagery used in “Vernetzungstweets” mainly reproduces narratives fostering a sense of community based on traditional values and the need to join the fight to save Germany from the political establishment. Some of these posts received up to 6,600 likes, 536 comments and 2,500 reposts, showing their potential for widespread dissemination.

Figure 7: ‘Let’s start a #Vernetzungstweet! Who is in?’: Post featuring #Vernetzungstweet and the AI-generated image of a blue train featuring the AfD logo and the German flag, edited to have the aesthetic of a painting.

AI-generated ‘influencers’

During the data collection, ISD found three profiles of AI-generated far-right ‘influencers’. Among them, there are two accounts which are pretending to be ‘real people’ and one account that is a clear fictional character:

1. ‘Larissa Wagner’, an AI-generated ‘influencer’, claims to be a 22-year-old Christian woman from Senftenberg in the state of Brandenburg. The account shares portraits of a young woman accompanied with political statements expressing support for the

far right including the AfD, criticising the German 'traffic light' coalition government, and attacking gender mainstreaming. Larissa Wagner is active on Instagram and X. As mentioned, the far-right magazine Compact also announced that Larissa Wagner is joining as an intern and will have her own column.

2. 'sophias_world' is an account with an AI avatar presenting as a young woman. She is active on X, where she expresses support for the AfD, the far-right and the Kremlin, sharing pictures of herself that have been created in an ethnonationalist style.

3. 'Lara, die blonde Rebellin' ("Lara, the blonde rebel") is an AI Instagram persona based on a fictional 16-year-old girl from a far-right coming-of-age novel. The character makes references to and promotes the novel on which it is based, shares images and videos with far-right messages, and provides commentary on events including the attack on the Christmas market in Magdeburg on 20 December 2024.

These three AI-generated 'influencers' have strong visual and behavioural commonalities: they all present young, attractive, strong, healthy females that fit the far-right stereotype of the 'ideal' German woman. They share far-right messages in a subtle way, often copying tactics commonly used by non-AI-generated female far-right 'influencers', including building parasocial relationships through sharing personal information and creating a false sense of intimacy and raising concerns such as physical safety with their audience.

Larissa Wagner in particular links to the accounts of right-wing and Neue Rechte (New Right) information outlets such as Compact Magazin, Junge Freiheit, Heimat Kurier and Info-DIREKT on her profile. Most recently, she appeared in deepfake videos on Compact's YouTube channel conducting reporting and giving interviews for the magazine. Sophia's Welt shares posts by AfD politicians such as party leader Alice Weidel, Maximilian Krah and Stephan Protschka and reposts from far-right community pages.

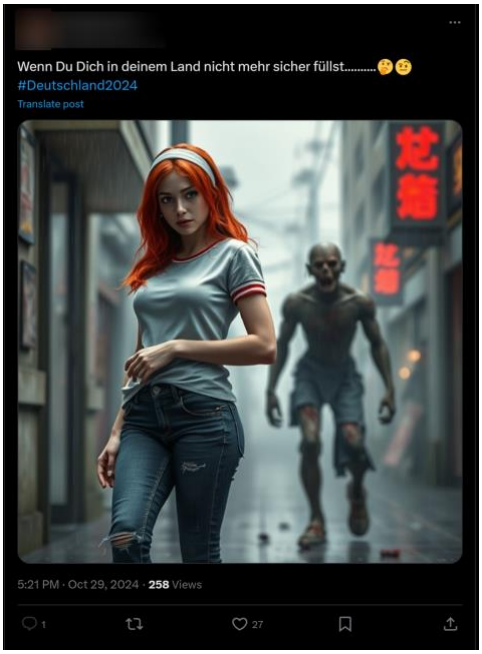


Figure 8: AI-generated far-right 'influencer' Sophia: 'Wenn Du Dich in deinem Land nicht mehr sicher fühlst... #Deutschland2024' ('When you don't feel safe in your country anymore..... #Germany2024')

Generally, the accounts receive very little authentic engagement. Robotic voices, mismatches between speech and mouth movements, glossy appearance, little variety in poses and backgrounds, provide indications that the 'influencers' are AI-generated. Posts rarely received more than 10 comments. In the case of Larissa Wagner, her collaboration with Compact has not resulted in higher engagement as compared to the other two AI- 'influencers'. On all three profiles, often other users will comment that the 'influencer' has been AI-generated and some even make fun of their content. However, ISD has also observed users defending the accounts, stating that it does not matter that the person was created using generative AI and that 'the message is what counts'.

Figure 9: AI-generated 'influencer' Larissa Wagner

Themes and Narratives of AI-Generated Content

ISD qualitatively coded posts and comments according to their prevailing narratives, revealing 14 distinct narratives propagated through the usage of generative AI among this sample. These narratives were grouped based on where they attacked, criticised or demonised particular groups, parties or individuals, or glorified particular values ('attacking narratives').

Type of narrative	Narrative	Explanation
1. Attacking narratives		
Attacking refugees and migrants	RE_MIGR	Calls for migrants' mass deportation (euphemistically dubbed "remigration")
	CRIME_MIGR	Blaming migrants for crime in Germany, especially sexual violence and knife attacks
	EXPLOIT_MIGR	Accusations that migrants exploit Germany's welfare system and public institutions
Attacking other political parties and actors	ANTI-GOV	Attacks on the current government that mock their appearance, apparel and surroundings in exaggerated fashion
	ANTI-CDU	Attacks on the CDU, mostly for their immigration policy during the Merkel administration
	ANTI-EU	Depicting the EU as a ruined institution that is detrimental to Germany and its sovereignty
Attacking the LGBTQ+ community, criticising gender mainstreaming	ANTI_LGBTQ_GENDER	Dehumanising members and allies of the LGBTQ+ movement, as well as undermining gender mainstreaming
Attacking climate activists and anti-climate change action	ANTI_CLIMATE	Dehumanising climate activists and opposing climate change action
2. Glorifying narratives		
Glorifying Germany as a nation	SAVE_DE	Glorifying Germany as an idealised, strong nation that is currently weak and needs saving
Glorifying blond and blue-eyed Germans	PHYSIQUE_DE	Venerating blond and blue-eyed Germans, presenting an idealised image of young, strong German men and women with blonde hair and blue eyes
Glorifying German traditions	TRAD_DE	Glorifying traditional family values and Germanic mythology
Glorifying the fight for freedom	FIG_FREEDOM	Narratives glorifying the fight for freedom and freedom of expression in an anti-censorship way
3. Other narratives		
Support AfD	SUP_AFD	Posts portraying the AfD as Germany's saviour, posts showing support for the AfD and calling for people to vote for the party

Pro-Kremlin content	PRO_KREM	Promotion of the importance of German-Russian relations and sharing pro-Kremlin positions such as criticising military support for Ukraine
Other	OTHER	Other types of narratives such as Germany's economic situation, international relations, and farmers' protests

Table 1: Far-right themes and narratives present in the sample of AIGC collected by ISD.

Figure 10 below shows the number of posts containing each narrative found in the sample. The five most common narratives were the glorification of blond and blue-eyed Germans (PHYSIQUE_DE), calls for remigration (RE_MIGR), associations between crime and migration (CRIME_MIGR), claims that migrants are exploiting the German social welfare system (EXPLOIT_MIGR), and personal attacks on members of the current traffic light coalition government (ANTI-GOV).

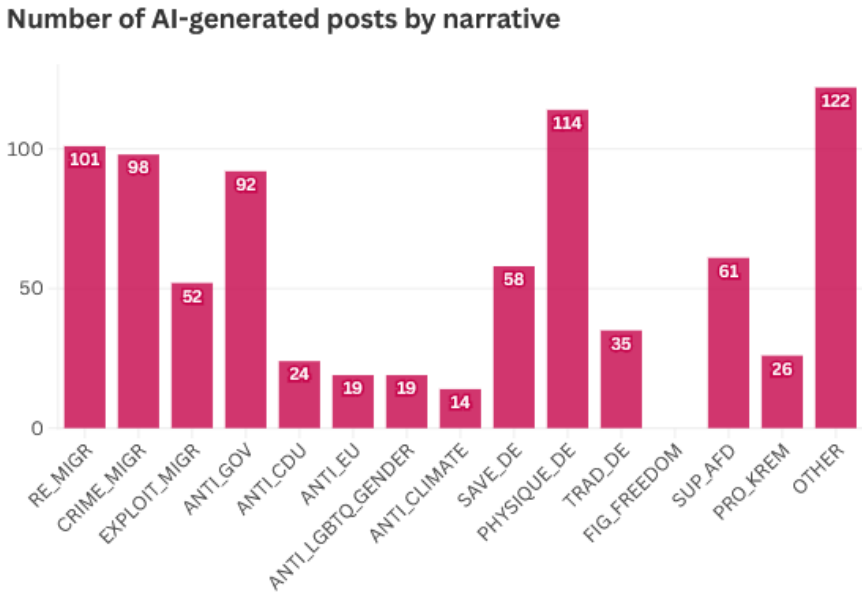


Figure 10: Number of AI-generated posts by narrative.

A breakdown across platforms revealed that the glorification of blond and blue-eyed Germans (PHYSIQUE_DE) and support for the AfD (SUP_AFD) were particularly common on TikTok. By contrast, calls for remigration (RE_MIGR), posts associating crime and migration (CRIME_MIGR) and personal attacks on members of the current traffic light coalition government (ANTI-GOV) were particularly common on Facebook (Figure 11).

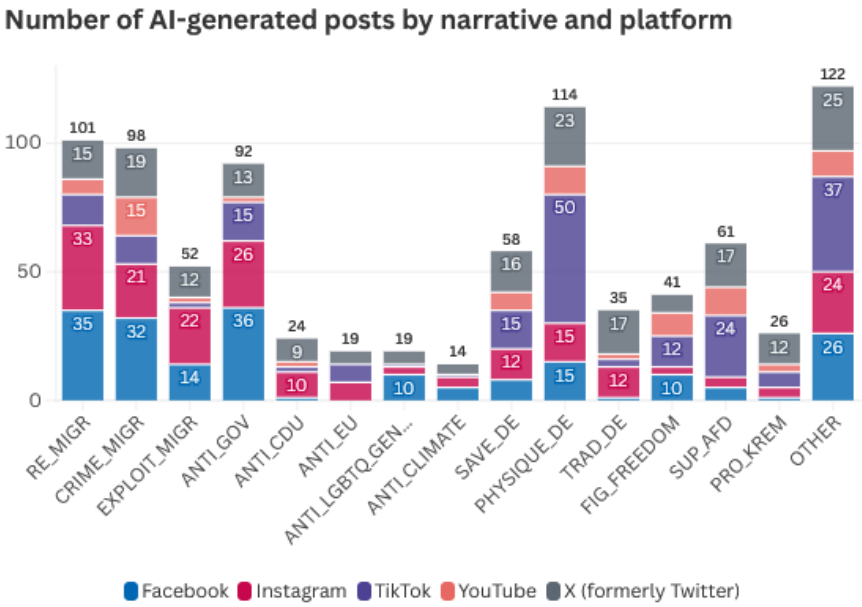


Figure 11: Number of AI-generated posts by narrative and platform.

This divergence between platforms is somewhat expected given their format: as a short-form video platform, TikTok provides an opportunity for far-right actors to share narratives in a visual format that show support for the AfD. On the other hand, ISD has observed that Facebook being an image- and text-based platform allows for the sharing of AIGC that is accompanied by text and therefore lends itself to more discussion.

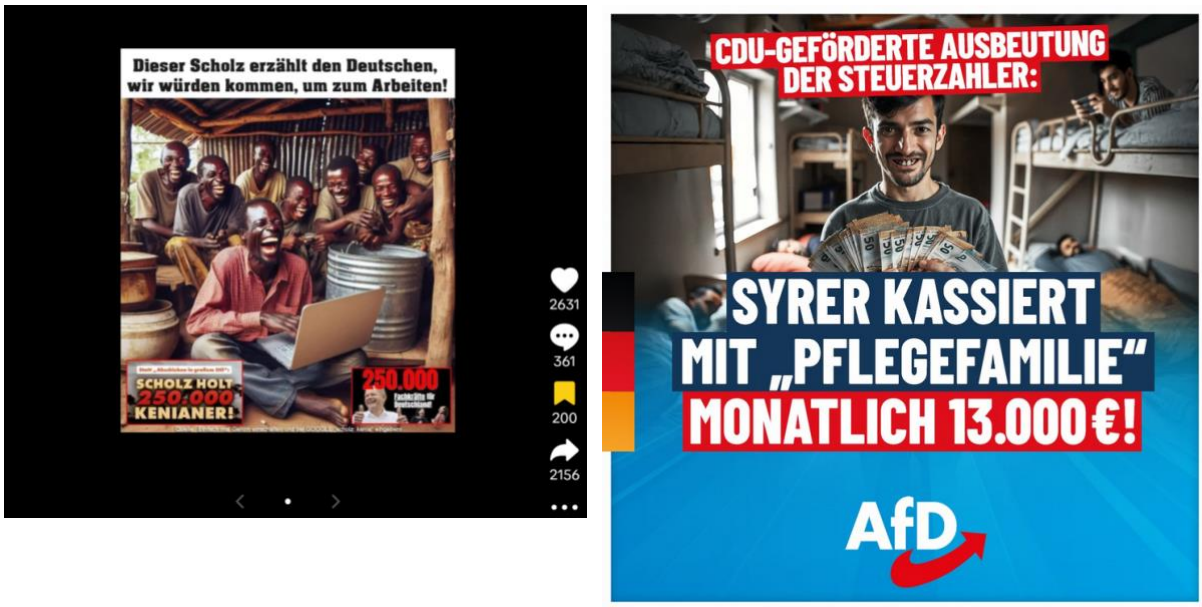
Attacking narratives

ISD identified the use of attacking narratives by far-right actors online, leveraging AIGC for their depiction in both images and short videos. Aside from original and reshared AfD posts, both outlets and individual actors from the far-right online space were observed to equally publish their own AIGC featuring these narratives. The targets of far-right 'attacking narratives' span from refugees and migrants to other political parties, actors and institutions, as well as to the LGBTQ+ and climate-focused communities.

Anti-migrant narratives

Refugees and migrants were found to be amongst the most frequently targeted groups across platforms when compared to other narratives in ISD's sample. AIGC from the actors studied often called for their mass deportation or "remigration" ('RE_MIGR'; figure 12). Migrants were often depicted as perpetrators, particularly of knife attacks and sexual violence, alongside demands for their expulsion from the country ('CRIME_MIGR'; figure 13). They are also presented as actors exploiting Germany's 'fragile' welfare system and public institutions ('EXPLOIT_MIGR'; figure 14). For instance, far-right AIGC content in the sample often depicted people of colour smiling contentedly in an unemployment office receiving large sums of cash or enjoying a carefree lifestyle without the need to work (see also: figure 15). The posts claimed that this has led to the economic downfall of the country, including the marginalisation of retirees. In the latter case, AIGC is also used to picture elderly white Germans collecting bottles on the street to earn Germany's bottle deposit fee, or working public service jobs at a very old age.

Figures 12 & 13: Figure 12 (left) shows a person of colour on a plane and reads 'What rhymes with Talahon?[8] Remigration!', thereby calling for their deportation. Figure 13 (right) is a post by the AfD on X featuring a serious-looking person of colour. It reads: 'Berlin Police President Slowik: Knife violence is young, masculine and non-German!'



Figures 14 & 15: Figure 14 (left) reads: 'This Scholz tells Germans we would come to work!' while showing an AI-generated image posted on TikTok depicting people of colour laughing at a laptop screen.

The AI-generated image on the right (figure 15) from an official AfD account shows a smiling 'Syrian' holding a stack of cash and reads: 'CDU-sponsored exploitation of taxpayers: Syrian cashed in €13,000 monthly with 'foster family'!'

Across all platforms, these three anti-migrant narratives ('RE_MIGR'; 'CRIME_MIGR; 'EXPLOIT_MIGR') comprised 28 percent of the overall sample. When examining each platform separately, anti-migrant narratives appear in 41 percent of Facebook posts, followed by 38 percent of Instagram posts. On YouTube, 27 percent of posts collected contain such

[8] 'Talahon' is a derogatory term for young men from the Middle East used on TikTok and other social media platforms

narratives. X followed with 23 percent of posts, while TikTok has the lowest proportion, with 13 percent of posts targeting migrants.

Narratives targeting the political establishment

AIGC which mocked German politicians constituted 15 percent of the overall sample. The most frequent targets across all platforms were members of the traffic light coalition Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Green Party (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen), and the Free Democratic Party (FDP) (10 percent) followed by the Christian Democratic Party (CDU) with 3 percent and the EU with 2 percent. As previously outlined, such mockery includes a change or exaggeration of physical features, as well as dramatic changes in apparel and the politicians' surroundings. Prominent examples of politicians being targeted by AIGC in this data sample include Olaf Scholz and Nancy Faeser (SPD), Robert Habeck, Annalena Baerbock and Ricarda Lang (Greens), Christian Lindner (FDP), and Friedrich Merz (CDU).

In the case of female politicians, the use of AI is particularly discriminatory, as it heavily capitalises on the visual magnification of weight or age-related features (figures 17; 18). Far from being a new trend, this aligns with previous research across multiple geographies which shows the disproportionate effects of AIGC on women, public attitudes towards them and the subsequent impact of this content on their political participation.

Despite their otherwise conservative stance toward migration, the CDU is portrayed by far-right actors as the party responsible for a perceived overflow of migrants and the country's 'precarious situation' since the Merkel administration.

Figure 16: 'Hypocrisy and double standards: Climate traffic light [coalition] flies to India with three jets!': AI-generated image depicting Chancellor Olaf Scholz (SPD) and Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs Annalena Baerbock (Greens) flying over the Taj Mahal with AI planes.

Figures 17 & 18: AI-generated 'paintings' of Ricarda Lang (Greens) and Nancy Faeser (SPD) mocking their appearance. Figure 17; left ('First relax! Green party leadership is resigning!'). Figure 18; right ('Left-wing Extremism makes ugly').

Narratives targeting the LGBTQ+ and climate movements

Lastly, this sample of AIGC content also included anti-LGBTQ+ and anti-climate sentiment. For the former, AIGC was observed being used to dehumanise and mock allies of the LGBTQ+ movement, as well as to protest gender mainstreaming [9] (figure 20). Within this data sample, AIGC was also found to target climate activism, for example equating activists such as Greta Thunberg and members of the 'last generation' movement to terrorists (figure 19) and depicting climate action by the government as a wasteful measure.

Figure 19 (left), an AfD post on X, shows a bearded man with an explosive vest in an airport, seemingly depicting a climate activist from the 'Letzte Generation'. It reads: 'Climate stickers at airports: Security deficiencies are also an invitation to Islamists!'

Figure 20 (right), a post by an eagle with a German flag hunting a rat with a LGBTQ+ flag.

[9] Hajek, K (2020, February 27). The AfD and right-wing (anti-)gender mobilisation in Germany. LSE Blogs. https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/gender/2020/02/27/the-afd-and-right-wing-anti-gender-mobilisation-in-germany/.

Glorification narratives

Far-right actors analysed in our sample were observed using generative AI to create narratives that present Germany as an idealised, strong nation that is currently weak and needs saving. Often the AIGC emphasises the importance of the 'fight for freedom and freedom of expression', while simultaneously attacking democracy in practice as seen in Germany and German state institutions.

Many of the images and videos created contain a large, strong and powerful eagle that represents Germany and is watching over the nation. In some of the images and videos the eagle itself is presented as needing saving (figure 21).

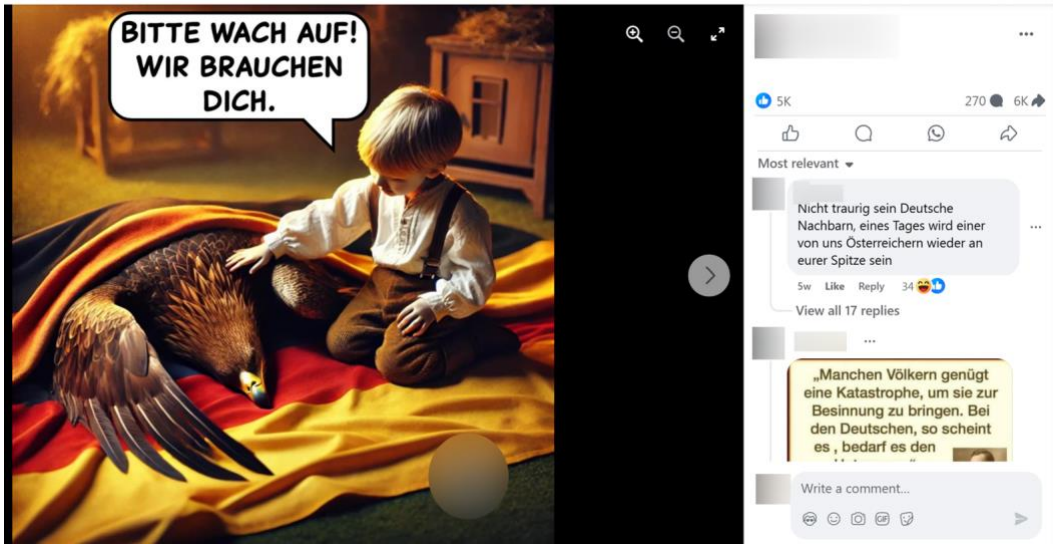


Figure 21: 'Bitte wach auf! Wir brauchen dich.' ('Please wake up! We need you.'): AI-generated artwork showing Germany as a strong and powerful eagle that is currently weak and needs saving. It is petted by blonde boy in a traditional outfit sitting on a German flag

The presence of strong, blonde, blue-eyed, white native German citizens is another common element of far-right AI-generated images and videos. Germans are depicted as a physically powerful and pure race that need to be saved from foreign influences, a known far-right narrative. These narratives show men as tough, muscular and powerful, while women are supposed to uphold 'German traditions', taking care of the family and are often sexualised. Narratives accompanying images of women often emphasise the threat that immigrants pose to these women and imply that political change is necessary to ensure their protection.

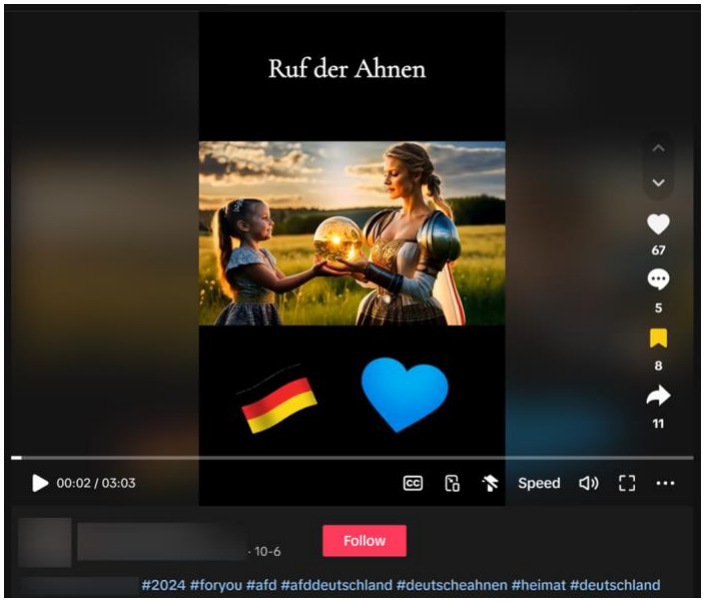


Figure 22: 'Ruf der Ahnen' ('Call of the ancestors'): Far-right music video glorifying Germanic traditions

One account in the sample used generative AI to create videos of Germanic mythology, usually presenting Germans as a strong people descended from the Teutons[10] (figure 22). References to Germanic traditions, powerful leaders, idealised violence and the survival of the fittest is a well-known strategy used by the German far-right to differentiate the German people from others in order to claim ethnic superiority.

Assessing engagement: attacking versus glorifying narratives

As shown in Figure 23, attacking narratives received the most engagement on Facebook and Instagram. Posts portraying migrants as criminals or opposing climate action both averaged over 5,100 likes on Instagram. Similarly, posts featuring anti-CDU rhetoric and calling for "remigration" averaged 4,700 likes. Across all platforms, "remigration" rhetoric was consistently well-shared: on average, posts reached around 5,200 likes on TikTok and 3,700 likes on Instagram.

On YouTube, narratives about migrants exploiting Germany's social system and anti-CDU content had visibly higher like averages than other platforms. However, such spikes were driven by two particularly popular videos by accounts from the New Right information ecosystem that considerably skewed the data, as these narratives otherwise typically attracted far fewer likes on the platform.

[10] Narratives claiming that Germans are descendants of the teutons are instrumentalised by far-right extremists to illustrate and validate far-right concepts such as nationalism, authoritarianism, ethnopluralism, and superiority over other ethnic groups.

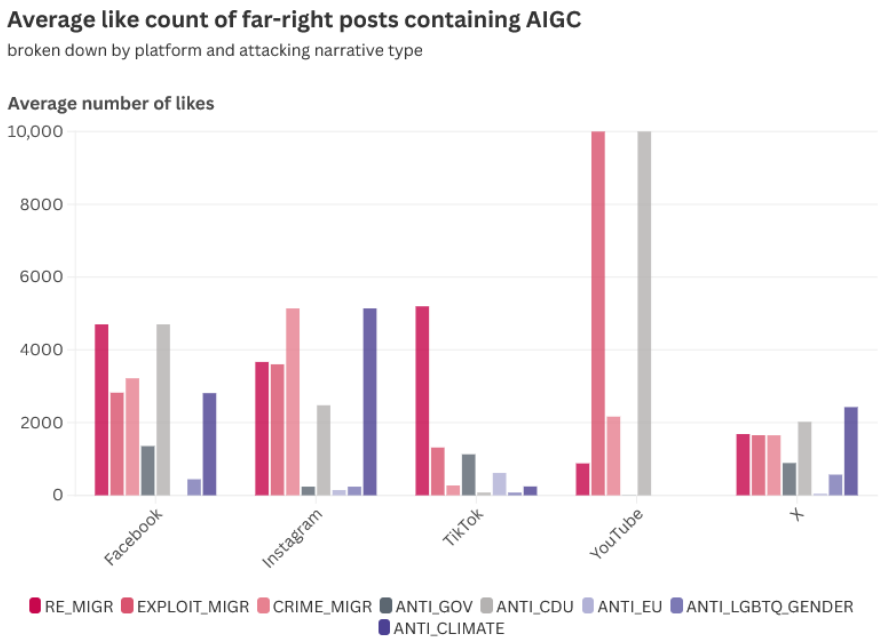


Figure 23: Average like count of far-right posts containing AIGC broken down by platform and attacking narrative type.

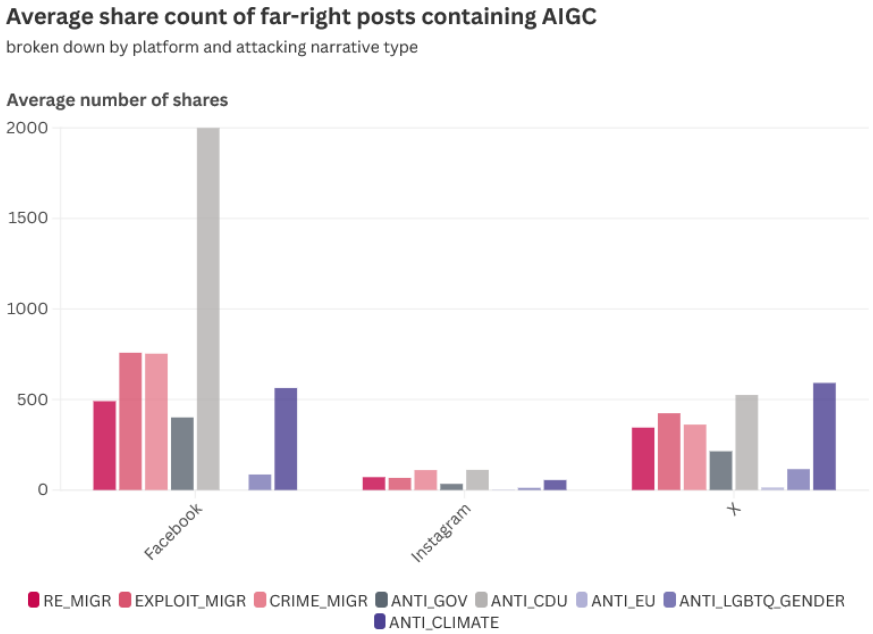


Figure 24: Average share count of far-right posts containing AIGC broken down by platform and attacking narrative type.

Figure 24 highlights Facebook as the platform with the highest average share count for attacking narratives. Except for those narratives opposing the EU and the LGBTQ+ movement, all narratives were shared between 401 and 1,200 times on average. The spike of content targeting the CDU on Facebook should be considered an outlier, as it comprises only one post that was comparatively well-shared. The next most prominent platform, X, displayed a similar trend, though with 'ANTI_EU' and 'ANTI_LGBTQ+' narratives being considerably less popular than other categories.

As figure 25 illustrates, glorifying narratives achieved the most engagement (in terms of number of likes) on TikTok, with posts calling to save Germany proving the most popular, with an average of around 9,500 likes. The other glorifying narratives on TikTok reached around 2,000 likes on average.

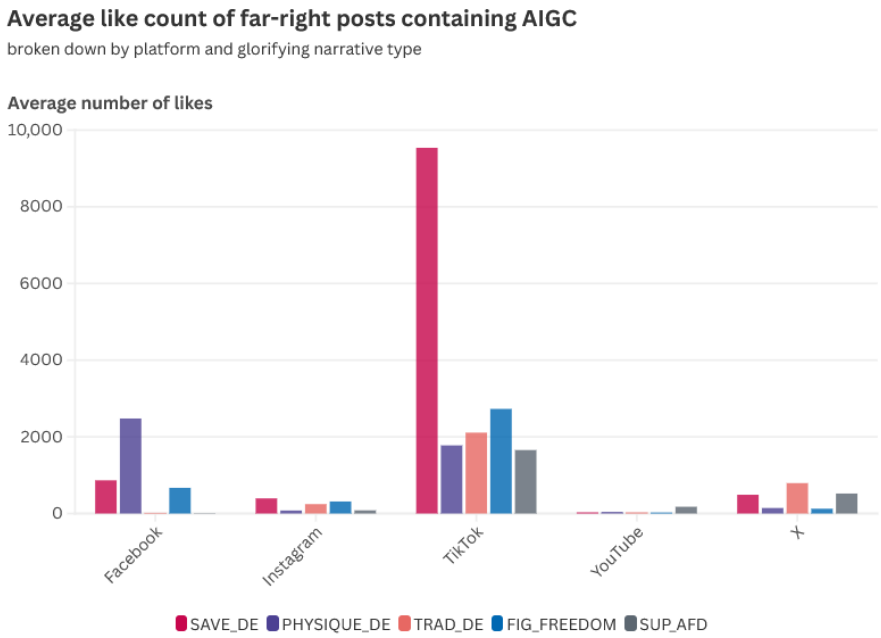


Figure 25: Average number of likes of AI-generated posts using glorifying narratives on each platform

Engagement with the other glorifying narratives was significantly lower and typically below 1,000 likes, however an exception to this were narratives glorifying blond and blue-eyed Germans on Facebook, which reached an average of nearly 2,500 likes.

Platform Response and Policy Implications

Creation and labelling of AIGC through the EU AI Act

When creating and disseminating AI-generated political content, far-right actors appear to be exploiting lack of effective enforcement by platforms of current legislation. This section will focus on EU-level policy as it is applicable to Germany and ahead of national legislation.

As the first comprehensive legal framework on AI, the EU's AI Act (2024) establishes rules to address AI-related risks and sets requirements and obligations for developers and deployers[11] based on the level of risk associated with specific AI uses. Its objective is to support the "development of innovative and responsible AI in the EU" and to guarantee the safety and fundamental rights of people and businesses. It aims to do this by ensuring that AI systems respect fundamental rights, safety, and ethical principles, addressing risks of impactful AI models. It takes a risk-based approach, categorising AI into four levels—unacceptable risk (banned applications like social scoring); high risk (strict regulations for AI in areas like

[11] The EU's AI Act defines 'deployer' as follows: "A 'deployer' means any natural or legal person, public authority, agency or other body using an AI system under its authority except where the AI system is used in the course of a personal non-professional activity."

healthcare and law enforcement); limited risk (transparency obligations for chatbots and deepfakes); and minimal risk (no restrictions on most AI systems, like video games or spam filters).

However, the AI Act does not mention political parties or individual politicians as creators of AI generated content, nor as distributors. It places the responsibility of adhering to the AI Act with the providers and deployers of AI systems, not with users. AI systems used for political campaigning, including those influencing elections, are not explicitly classified as high-risk. However, if an AI system is used in ways that could significantly impact fundamental rights, electoral processes, or voter manipulation, it might still fall under transparency obligations or future regulatory scrutiny. The usage of other commercially available AI applications such as ChatGPT, Gemini, DallE3 or Midjourney to produce AI-generated political content, including by actors across the political spectrum, is not explicitly covered.

The AI Act further requires actors who "generate or manipulate image, audio or video content that appreciably resembles existing persons, objects, places, entities or events and would falsely appear to a person to be authentic or truthful (deep fakes)… [to] clearly and distinguishably disclose that the content has been artificially created or manipulated by labelling the AI output accordingly and disclosing its artificial origin". However, exceptions exist for "creative, satirical, artistic, fictional or analogous work or programme" as well as when "a natural or legal person holds editorial responsibility for the publication of the content". This wording has been criticised by lawyers as it allows for a subjective interpretation of what is a deepfake and what is artwork.

Platform regulation

Legal frameworks such as the Digital Services Act (DSA), the AI Act, and the Terrorist Online Content regulation (TCO) regulate, to a greater or lesser extent, the dissemination of AIGC on social media platforms. However, the weight of enforcement and oversight over harmful or unlabelled AI content largely rests on platforms themselves. For example, article 35(1) of the DSA on risk mitigation specifically requires Very Large Online Platforms and Search Engines (VLOPSEs) to enforce the "terms and conditions and their enforcement", as well as to mitigate the identified systemic risks outlined in article 34 (e.g., negative effects on civic discourse and electoral processes). However, the DSA does not define thresholds of what may make a risk "systemic". While the competencies of the TCO allow the appropriate national authorities to request platforms to remove AIGC with terrorist elements, such scope does not apply to any other type of harmful content that is not of terrorist nature.

Conversely, the DSA does not explicitly classify 'harmful content' as a regulatory category but requires VLOPSEs to assess and mitigate systemic risks, including the dissemination of illegal content on their platforms, and the potential harms of algorithmically amplified disinformation, hate speech, or AIGC that may impact fundamental rights or target protected groups (Articles 34 and 35). Specifically, Article 35(1)(k) of the DSA understands AIGC as *"items of information, whether [they] constitute a generated or manipulated image, audio, or video that appreciably resemble[s] existing persons, objects, places or other entities or events and falsely appear[s] to a person to be authentic or truthful*." The same article notes that a mitigation measure taken by platforms could include (but does not require) "ensuring" that such items of information are *"[…] distinguishable through prominent markings when*

presented on their online interfaces, and […] provid[e] an easy-to-use functionality which enables recipients of the service to indicate such information". Further, the DSA does impose transparency obligations for VLOPSEs that are relevant to AIGC, including Articles 14 and 17 (transparency in content moderation), 34 and 35 (risk assessments and mitigation measures)..

The European Commission and national Digital Services Coordinators (DSCs) provide regulatory oversight over the DSA and the various linked mechanisms, such as Codes of Conduct and Guidelines, with varying degrees of voluntary and binding measures. For AIGC specifically,, most relevant to this being the Code of Practice on Disinformation (2022). At the time of writing, all platforms researched by this piece, excluding X, are signatories of the Code.

Lastly, the Guidelines for Providers of VLOPs and VLOSEs on Mitigating Systemic Risks in Elections (April 2024) are an essential instrument when studying AIGC on social media. Article 39(a) of the Guidelines calls for VLOPs and VLOSEs "whose services can be used for the creation of deceptive, biased, false or misleading generative AI content" to ensure AIGC is detectable "taking into account existing standards". It specifically underscores the importance of doing so when AIGC involves "candidates, politicians or political parties".

Platform response to AIGC

To test platform compliance with the DSA and to assess the response from VLOPSEs to far-right AIGC on their platforms, ISD reported 192 of the posts collected on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok under each platforms' respective community guidelines. Table 2 outlines platforms' definition of banned AIGC:

Platform	Definition of banned AI-generated content
Facebook	From July 2024 onwards: AI-generated or manipulated content that violates other Meta policies or community standards is banned.
Instagram	From July 2024 onwards: AI-generated or manipulated content that violates other Meta policies or community standards is banned.
YouTube	Content that has been technically manipulated or doctored in a way that misleads users (beyond decontextualised clips), e.g., to falsely suggest the death of a government official or fabricate events where there is a serious risk of egregious harm. Synthetic media, regardless of whether it's labelled, that violates YouTube's Community Guidelines. For example, a synthetically created video that shows realistic violence if its goal is to shock or disgust viewers.
TikTok	Synthetic media… … showing realistic scenes that are not disclosed or labelled. … containing the likeness (visual or audio) of a real person, including: (1) a young person, (2) an adult private figure, and (3) an adult public figure when used for political or commercial endorsements, or if it violates any other policy. …that has been edited, spliced, or combined (such as video and audio) in a way that may mislead a person about real-world events. … violating other policies (hate speech, sexual exploitation, harassment,…
X	Media that is: … significantly and deceptively altered, manipulated, or fabricated, or … shared in a deceptive manner or with false context, and … likely to result in widespread confusion on public issues, impact public safety, or cause serious harm.

Table 2: Social media platforms' definitions of banned AI-generated content

As of 16 December 2024, none of the reported content had been removed or restricted where it broke established platform policies (e.g., violent content), nor labelled when it had the potential to be misleading. Only the posts reported on TikTok received a reply saying that the post did not violate the community guidelines. This is consistent with ISD's findings of platform responses when reporting other types of AIGC.

However, during the research process, ISD found that 15 of the posts collected from TikTok were removed, as well as one of the posts collected from Facebook. The reason for the removal is unknown and is not necessarily connected to the content being AI-generated. None of the posts collected from Instagram, YouTube or X were removed.

ISD's review of the AI Act and the DSA as legal frameworks reveals that there is a lack of effective compliance by the platforms that malicious actors such as far-right extremists can exploit. ISD found that only 3 percent of AI-generated far-right Facebook posts, 2 percent of Instagram posts and less than 1 percent of posts on X were labelled. The percentage of posts labelled as AI-generated on TikTok was slightly higher with 14 percent, while none of the YouTube videos were labelled as AI-generated.

AI technology is becoming more advanced; a 2024 study revealed that most people are unable to distinguish AIGC from real content. As such, it is vital to ensure that existing and future legal frameworks enforce labelling of otherwise potentially misleading AIGC, thereby also prompting platforms to continuously optimize the labelling process for creators accordingly. Platforms should be required to uphold their Terms of Service in a manner that aligns with the protection and respect of fundamental rights, as outlined in the EU Charter, ensuring that enforcement effectively addresses discriminatory and hateful content. Currently, there are large amounts of far-right extremist AIGC circulating on the platforms challenging the compliance of their policies on both hateful and misleading content, especially during an electoral campaign. They are widely shared and re-posted with no consequences for the original creator or people who share and re-upload them.

Conclusion

This report has illustrated how, for far-right actors in Germany, generative AI is becoming a core tool to create compelling narratives, establish a feeling of identity and belonging among their followers, and enabling them to reach new audiences. The AfD has been identified as playing a central role in the creation and dissemination of far-right AIGC. However, a range of other far-right actors - including New Right outlets, community pages, and far-right content creators such as music channels and art pages - have also adopted this strategy.

Having analysed 883 posts featuring 15 different types of narratives, ISD has established that generative AI is a strategy used by far-right actors in Germany to share and build upon narratives and themes apparent in non-AIGC prepared by the same actors. AI-generated images and videos are used to expressively visualise far-right narratives, often fear-mongering and triggering users' emotionally by exaggerating threats posed by migrants, the current traffic coalition government, opposition parties, and LGBTQ+ and gender activists.

Together with narratives glorifying Germany, blond and blue-eyed Germans and Germanic traditions, far-right music and online community building, the usage of generative AI helps far-right actors to promote longstanding narratives and build communities online.

Generative AI presents an unprecedented opportunity for the AfD and other far-right actors to reach large audiences with far-right material that is produced in a more cost-effective manner and in a considerably shorter amount of time. The popularity of this communications strategy is evidenced by the increasingly high volume of AfD posts featuring AIGC, either created by the party or through media agencies which further simplify the process of content generation. AI has not only removed hurdles in content generation for the AfD, but also, most impactfully, other far-right communities and individuals, which have a plethora of programmes at their disposal. The fact that AI models such as DALL-E, Midjourney, or Stable Diffusion have been documented to reproduce and reinforce discriminatory preconceptions may further simplify content production for far-right actors.

Our research has found that generative AI is integrated with existing platform tactics, such as the #Vernetzungstweet on X or the AfD's circumvention of its TikTok ban using alternative accounts and relying on individual users to reshare their content from other platforms. In this context, AI serves as a powerful complement to these established strategies, rather than a "silver bullet" in the far-right's playbook.

Attacking narratives primarily vilify migrants and people of colour, aggressively target and mock members of the traffic light government and CDU, and dehumanise both climate and LGBTQ+ supporters. The overarching goal appears similar to the objectives of other narratives: to create and foster a feeling of identity among the far-right community. This is based on the rejection of groups they are attacking, coupled with the glorification of 'traditional' values as the answer to such "threat". Generative AI likely constitutes an extremely significant tool for achieving this purpose, as it provides limitless creative opportunities to sharpen the visual impact of such narratives.

A concerning takeaway identified from users engaging with all types of far-right posts analysed is that content does not need to look totally realistic to convey a convincing message. Posts featuring attacking narratives received a particularly high number of likes, comments and shares. In many cases, they triggered hate speech in the comments section against the group that the AI-generated post was targeting. In the case of AI 'influencers', ISD observed that they received very little authentic engagement and that social media users were mocking them for being AI-generated. However, there were also some users in the comment sections that stated that it did not matter to them whether something was AI-generated but that, on the contrary, it is 'the message counts'.

This report shows that generative AI is already used to exacerbate existing polarisation, misrepresent situations and circumstances and to gain followers for AfD and the far-right. Far-right actors are benefiting from a lack of compliance by platforms with existing regulation such as the EU AI Act and the DSA. In general, social media platforms do not remove AI-generated far-right posts, even if they have been shown to be harmful or misleading according to their own policies. In 2024, the super election year, the debate on the use of generative AI and its impact on elections and the integrity of democratic processes reached a

new level. Generative AI was used by actors in an attempt to impact elections; this suggests that the German election campaign and upcoming parliamentary elections (February 2025) are not immune against such a development.

Recommendations

1. **For industry:**

- **Ensure consistent and transparent enforcement of policies on AIGC, hate speech, and electoral disinformation**
  - Social media platforms should systematically and predictably enforce their already existing content moderation policies on AIGC, hate speech, and electoral disinformation, aligning with DSA requirements and the European Commission's Guidelines for VLOPSEs on the mitigation of systemic risks for electoral processes ("the EC's Guidelines on electoral risks").
  - As per the EC's Guidelines on electoral risks, clear labelling of AIGC is essential to inform users and uphold information integrity, especially during elections (Paragraph 39).
  - Following the EC's Guidelines on electoral risks, platforms should establish dedicated election teams with expertise in content moderation, fact-checking, cybersecurity, and disinformation, ensuring local and language expertise.
  - Platforms must comply with national and EU laws relating to information and electoral integrity, including electoral silence periods, political ad transparency, and restrictions on automated content amplification that could distort public discourse.

- **Strengthen coordination with regulators, academia, and civil society**
  - Platforms should actively engage with EU- and German regulators such as the Federal Network Agency, academia, and civil society to inform policy adjustments and enforcement, particularly on AI-generated electoral disinformation and hate speech.
  - They should establish communication channels before, during, and after elections to detect emerging threats and enable real-time responses, expanding coordination with election monitors, fact-checkers, and researchers.

- **Conduct and share internal risk assessments and mitigation measures**
  - Under the DSA, VLOPs and designated services must assess systemic risks that could negatively impact electoral processes and civic discourse. Platforms should enhance the scope of these assessments, ensuring they rigorously analyse emerging risks, including the role of AIGC in amplifying electoral disinformation. Findings on mitigation measures to EU and German regulators, independent auditors, and, where feasible,

researchers—ensuring transparency through machine-readable data.

2. **For government and regulators:**

- **Establish strong communication channels between regulators and researchers**
    - Regulators, including Germany's Federal Network Agency, should collaborate with researchers to assess electoral risks and the effectiveness of interventions beyond election periods.

    - Ongoing dialogue with academia and civil society can enhance risk analysis, methodology sharing, and mitigation strategies. Platforms and regulators should support initiatives like European Network on Elections (ECNE) and European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO) to foster collaboration on fact-checking and countering electoral disinformation.

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