

Position Paper of the Art History Students' Congress (KSK) Against Right-Wing Populism and Extremism

Dear representatives, faculty, and staff of art historical and visual studies departments and research institutions in German-speaking countries,

In light of current societal and political developments, we, the student representatives of art history and visual studies in the German-speaking region, wish to make a clear statement. Since the election of the 21st German Bundestag, which took place during the 106th KSK¹ in Heidelberg, we consider it essential to take a firm stand against right-wing populism² and right-wing extremism.³ With this statement, we are sending a resolute message in support of tolerance, diversity, and a democratic society where hatred and discrimination have no place. As representatives of art historical and visual studies institutions, we urge you to join us in upholding these values.

We observe with great concern the increasing spread of right-wing to far-right tendencies within the EU and worldwide. Current developments reveal an urgent need for action: In recent years, right-wing populist and far-right forces have gained strength in the German-speaking region, and their ideologies are receiving growing support.⁴ In Germany, the far-right party Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) has become the second-strongest force at the federal level and, since the federal election on February 23, 2025, has at times achieved the highest poll ratings among national parties.⁵ In Austria and Switzerland, right-wing populist parties such as the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ) and the Schweizerische Volkspartei (SVP) also threaten the stability of our democratic value systems.⁶ Meanwhile, established parties have increasingly aligned their political positions, decisions, and actions with right-wing populist stances in recent years, willingly adopting content and narratives from the right-wing populist spectrum.⁷ In doing so, they ignore scientifically supported findings that show that adopting right-wing populist content generally does not strengthen the parties that decide to embrace it. Instead, it further consolidates right-wing populist and far-right movements themselves.⁸

This effect is particularly evident in the adoption of dehumanizing rhetoric regarding the tightening of asylum policies. Specific examples in Germany include the joint vote by the CDU, CSU, FDP, BSW, and AfD on the unconstitutional "Zustrombegrenzungs-gesetz" (Migration Limitation

Act)⁹ and xenophobic migration laws, which marked the formal end of the so-called "Brandmauer" (firewall) in the German Bundestag.¹⁰ With this vote, the aforementioned parties supported inhumane policies in the areas of asylum and migration, which contributed to the AfD's increased popularity and secured it 20.8% of the vote in the last federal election.¹¹ Furthermore, following their electoral victory with 28.5 percent of the vote, in response to mass demonstrations by hundreds of thousands against right-wing populism and extremism after the breakdown of political norms in late January, the CDU/CSU parliamentary group submitted a "Kleine Anfrage" (minor inquiry) to the federal government. Titled "Political Neutrality of State-Funded Organizations,"¹² this document calls into question state funding for NGOs such as "Omas gegen Rechts" (Grandmothers Against the Right). Many view this as an attempt to restrict democratic civil society engagement and suppress protest.¹³

Since then, the CDU/CSU group has continued to uphold the restrictive asylum and migration policies it promoted during the election campaign.¹⁴ It has failed to implement necessary reforms that could reduce social inequality and counter right-wing populist tendencies.¹⁵ For example, as announced in its election program for the last federal election, the group has focused on measures that pressure welfare recipients and asylum seekers, threatening them with cuts or reductions to social benefits such as "Bürgergeld" (citizen's allowance).¹⁶ This approach is also reflected in the current coalition agreement of the new government.¹⁷ However, members and representatives of the SPD and the BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN (Alliance 90/The Greens) also supported laws and measures in the previous legislative period that curtailed the rights of refugees and immigrants.¹⁸ Through this populist policy and insufficient political will to combat social inequality, they too have contributed to fueling hatred against people with migrant backgrounds. This behavior has worsened the situation for refugees in Germany and has shifted political discourse further to the right. As a result, parties on the right-wing to far-right spectrum have gained more support for their misanthropic positions and achieved better electoral results.

In the context of these events, we must note that there is still no unified support among the members of the Bundestag outside the AfD for the initiation of proceedings to ban the party, even though the German domestic intelligence services (BfV) have already provisionally classified the AfD as a "confirmed right-wing extremist effort" in early May 2025 and despite the fact that the AfD's regional associations in Thuringia, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Brandenburg have already been confirmed as far-right extremist.¹⁹ This situation poses a serious challenge for advocates of an open and democratic society and simultaneously raises concerns within the art-historical discourse.

In times when democratic principles are under pressure, art historical and academic institutions bear a special historical responsibility. In the past, such institutions played a significant role in the ideological justification and dissemination of National Socialist art policies.²⁰ Nazi art policy aimed for complete control over the art and cultural sectors.²¹ Historically, interventions in free art and scholarship were central political tools for fascist appropriation of society. Control over cultural and academic institutions served to solidify ideological narratives and

silence critical voices that expressed themselves through free art and academic work. Similar attempts to suppress progressive and critical research are now re-emerging in connection with right-wing populist narratives and strategies.²²

However, it remains a task of art history and visual studies to examine critically, fight actively against, and overcome structurally the classist, racist, colonialist, antisemitic²³, anti-Islamic, anti-queer, ableist, sexist, and misogynistic continuities in the arts and art historical scholarship. It is crucial to confront their persistence and to actively challenge problematic content through critical research. As the KSK, we position ourselves within the tradition of critical-progressive art history and visual studies, which since the 1960s has exposed and critically examined the intersections between National Socialism and the discipline of art history. This development was also decisively advanced by Martin Warnke in connection with his leadership of the section “Das Kunstwerk zwischen Wissenschaft und Weltanschauung” (Art History between Science and Worldview) at the Art Historians' Conference (then “Kunsthistorikertag”, today “Deutscher Kongress für Kunstgeschichte”) in 1970 and in his subsequent publication.²⁴

Art historical institutions are places of cultural engagement and critical reflection. They play an essential role in preserving and defending pluralistic values. They fulfill a societal educational mandate by contributing to the promotion of diversity and critical thinking. Precisely because they stand for freedom of expression and academic independence, they become targets of authoritarian and right-wing populist forces, which is a development with historical precedent. The AfD's attacks on gender and postcolonial studies also affect art history and visual studies, as the fields in question are not isolated academic disciplines but concrete interdisciplinary research perspectives targeted by right-wing populist currents.²⁵ The demands of right-wing populist parties to abolish or restrict gender studies not only affect this field but threaten the research practices, funding, and existence of other interdisciplinary and progressive fields in the social sciences, humanities, and cultural studies. Right-wing populist actors reject the existence of research in the fields they attack because it challenges their ideological principles, critically examines past or existing power structures, and questions established ideological narratives.

Since many of the affected institutes depend on state support, third-party funding, and sufficient demand for their programs of study, attacks by right-wing populist and extremist endeavors specifically target the structural foundations of the criticized institutions. Such actions endanger academic independence and restrict the diversity of academic perspectives. They undermine the freedom of research and teaching and thereby target an important means of critically engaging with societal developments. The current situation at US universities definitively demonstrates how quickly right-wing populist education policies can restrict academic freedom and destabilize the entire education system.²⁶ These developments serve as a warning for the German-speaking world, where, for example, the AfD is already pursuing concrete ideological plans²⁷ for more restrictive education policies, and the Union parties are pushing back against gender-inclusive language, although the state is obligated to promote respect and tolerance rather than suppress inclusive forms of language.²⁸

Under these conditions, the future of our discipline is far from secure. As emerging art historians, we rely on the solidarity of mid-level academics, faculty and administrative staff in art history and visual studies institutions to ensure that our current and future research remains free and socially critical. There is an urgent need for us to unite across academic hierarchies and mount a collective response to these dangerous political developments.

To prevent right-wing populist and extremist tendencies from taking root in teaching and art historical practice, we call on art history and visual studies institutions to immediately develop, plan and implement clear and effective strategies. Now, these institutions must individually and in solidarity with other affected organizations, create innovative approaches to promote and sustain an open, reflective, and inclusive academic culture. To this end, we propose the following key principles, recommendations and demands:

- **As students, we demand resistance to right-wing populist pressure and a renewed commitment to diversity and the engagement with sociopolitical issues in academia. We call for feminist, anti-racist, decolonial, and queer perspectives not to be abandoned but strengthened.** The goal is not to uphold the status quo but to continuously and critically examine our discipline and university structures. In particular, the dominant narratives of "autonomous" or even "apolitical art," as well as the denial of the existence of right-wing art and cultural policy, must be critically scrutinized. The current threat to research posed by right-wing parties demonstrates that such narratives offer no sustainable protection against right-wing appropriation. We must not ignore their propagation. Instead, we must confront them with determined critical research.
- In cases where employees make right-wing extremist statements, institutions cannot turn a blind eye. When academic staff use their institutional platform to spread inhumane ideologies, the institution shares responsibility for ensuring that such views are not given a stage.
- Combating right-wing tendencies in academia also means making studies more accessible and supportive for students affected by sexism, racism, classism, ableism, queerphobia, antisemitism, islamophobia, or other forms of group-focused hostility. This requires targeted measures to prevent discriminatory behavior. Self-reflection and moral courage are required to stand in solidarity with those affected and to speak out against discriminatory and transgressive behavior. This is especially important when such behavior comes not from students, but from instructors.
- Furthermore, it is crucial to train faculty and students to critically assess and respond knowledgeably to right-wing statements in academic settings. A reflective and fact-based culture of discussion strengthens academic engagement with extremist positions. Students and art historians should also actively participate in political debates, particularly when right-wing populist protagonists attack commemorative culture. Using publicly impactful research and precise historical analysis, they can help counter revisionist narratives and defend the societal relevance of art historical research.

- Art history institutions with the capacity to organize educational events, discussion forums, and exhibitions should develop appropriate concepts to support diversity and tolerance in the spirit of democratic ideals. Equally important is the critical examination of (institutional) National Socialist history and the promotion of educational and remembrance work.
- Advocating for international collaboration and supporting collaborative research projects and forms of protest are essential for building a network against right-wing populist tendencies and promoting academic approaches to addressing them.
- Students can actively contribute to efforts to combat right-wing populism. Their involvement and support in democratic alliances should be recognized and encouraged. Through engagement in student representative bodies, student parliaments, faculty councils, and initiatives like TVStud (student workers' union movement), students engage, often unpaid, in university political processes to foster an open and diverse academic environment. The participation of students and staff in democratic processes, both within and beyond the university, is of great importance in creating a vibrant and resilient academic culture in the arts. Examples include joint participation in protests, involvement in democratic organizations, the support of petitions, and engagement in political discourse and decision-making.
- Public and internal statements from institutional members that clearly oppose right-wing populist ideologies have become necessary in these times and contribute to the strengthening of democratic values.²⁹ While we are aware of the precarious conditions in academia, they must not serve as an excuse for failing to take a stand against right-wing extremism and populism. The current challenges can only be overcome through collective and strategic action.

It is the responsibility of all emerging and established art historians to critically oppose undemocratic political developments and to advocate for the preservation of democratic values. We extend our gratitude to everyone who is already dedicating themselves to this important task or who will do so in the future. Together, we are committed to ensuring that art history in the German-speaking world and beyond promotes an open, just, and solidarity-based societal orientation, and we firmly stand against discrimination, intolerance, and right-wing extremism.

"Never again" is now.

It is time to act.

The Art History Students' Congress (KSK)

On behalf of the students of art history and visual studies in the German-speaking region

Commentary and Sources

¹ As the general assembly of students of art history and visual studies, we represent the interests of students, including on matters of higher education policy, and advocate for a fair, non-discriminatory, and open educational framework. It is our aim to create a fair and inclusive educational environment without discrimination. Furthermore, we want to develop substantive and methodical courses of action that counteract right-wing populist developments and preserve the quality of art studies teaching and practice. Since 1969, the KSK (congress of students of art history and aesthetic studies) has met every semester at different locations in German-speaking countries. The KSK will continue to observe current developments in the art historical fields and reserves the right to consider additional courses of action if necessary to ensure the progressive positioning and development of our field of study.

See Der Kunsthistorische Studierendenkongress: *Was ist der KSK?* <https://www.derksk.org/derksk>. Accessed 17 June 2025.

² See Mobile Beratung gegen Rechtsextremismus Berlin (mbr) (2020). *Was ist "Rechtspopulismus"? Eine praxis-orientierte Begriffsklärung*. <https://www.mbr-berlin.de/en/publikationen/was-ist-rechtspopulismus-2020-2/>. Accessed 17 June 2025.

³ See Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2023). *Rechtsextremismus*. <https://www.bpb.de/themen/rechts-extremismus/dossier-rechtsextremismus/500806/rechtsextremismus>. Accessed 28 June 2025.

⁴ On May 2, the German domestic intelligence services (BfV) classified the entire AfD party as a "confirmed right-wing extremist effort" under the Federal Act on the Protection of the Constitution (§ 4 Section 1 BVerfSchG), (A). The BfV is a vital defense mechanism of Germany's democracy. In the legal dispute over the AfD's classification, the BfV complied with the AfD's request to follow a so-called "standstill commitment". This means that the agency is temporarily putting its official classification of the AfD as a right-wing extremist party on hold (B). In its judicial decision of May 20, 2025, the Federal Administrative Court (BVerwG) dismissed the AfD's legal complaint against the refusal to admit a further appeal regarding the court rulings of the Higher Administrative Court (OVG) of Münster. The OVG Münster had ruled that the BfV was justified in classifying and publicly designating both the former suborganization "Der Flügel" and the youth organization "Junge Alternative" as confirmed right-wing extremist efforts. For now, the party as a whole remains a 'case under suspicion' (C, D). According to the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution, the AfD's regional associations in Thuringia, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Brandenburg are currently classified as confirmed or proven right-wing extremist efforts (E).

A) See Michael Götschenberg and Holger Schmidt (2025). *AfD laut Verfassungsschutz "gesichert rechtsextremistisch"*. tagesschau.de, 2 May 2025. <https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/innenpolitik/verfassungsschutz-afd-102.html>. Accessed 30 Sep. 2025;

Robert Lüdecke (2025). *AfD als „gesichert rechtsextremistisch“ eingestuft: Welche Folgen hat das?* 6 May 2025, <https://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/afd-als-gesichert-rechtsextremistisch-eingestuft-welche-folgen-hat-das-135873/>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2025.

B) See Kolja Schwartz (2025). *„Verfassungsschutz setzt AfD-Einstufung als rechtsextremistisch vorerst aus.“* tagesschau.de. 8 May 2025, www.tagesschau.de/inland/innenpolitik/afd-verfassungsschutz-rechtsextrem-100.html. Accessed 10 Nov. 2025.

C) See Federal Administrative Court (2025). *Beschluss vom 20.05.2025 - 6 B 21.24*. 20 May 2025, <https://www.bverwg.de/200525B6B21.24.0>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2025.

D) See Federal Administrative Court (2025). *Pressemitteilung Nr. 54/2025*. 22 July 2025, <https://www.bverwg.de/pm/2025/54>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2025.

E) See Thuringia: Thüringer Ministerium für Inneres und Kommunales (2022). *Verfassungsschutzbericht Freistaat Thüringen 2022*, https://verfassungsschutz.thueringen.de/fileadmin/Verfassungsschutz/Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit/Verfassungsschutzbericht2022_Ansicht.pdf. Accessed 10 Nov. 2025 | Saxony: Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz Sachsen (2023). *Sächsischer AfD-Landesverband als gesichert rechtsextremistische Bestrebung eingestuft*. 8 Dec. 2023, <https://medienservice.sachsen.de/medien/news/1071656>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2025 | Saxony-Anhalt: Landesportal Sachsen-Anhalt. *Rechtsextremistische Parteien*. <https://mi.sachsen-anhalt.de/verfassungsschutz/themenfelder/rechtsextremismus/rechtsextremistische-parteien>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2025 | Brandenburg: Ministerium des Innern und für Kommunales des Landes Brandenburg: *AfD Brandenburg ist gesichert rechtsextremistisch (Einstufungsvermerk [sic] LV AfD)*, 15 Aug. 2025,

<https://mik.brandenburg.de/mik/de/service/presse/pressemitteilungen/detail-pm-und-meldungen/~14-08-2025-einstufungsvermerk-lv-afd>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2025.

⁵ See ZDF-Politbarometer (2025). *Projektion. Union und AfD erstmals gleichauf*. 19 Sep. 2025, <https://www.zdfheute.de/politik/deutschland/politbarometer-sonntagsfrage-union-afd-gleichauf-100.html>. Accessed 21 Sep. 2025;

FOCUS Online (2025). *AFD in Neuer Forsa-Umfrage Erneut Stärkste Kraft*. 4 Nov. 2025, www.focus.de/politik/deutschland/afd-in-neuer-forsa-umfrage-erneut-staerkste-kraft_0f5009a6-8305-46b8-b899-dbc6d52aa656.html. Accessed 5 Nov. 2025.

⁶ See Britta Schellenberg and Anna Schellenberg (2024) *Die Radikale Rechte im europäischen Vergleich: Kernelemente und Unterschiede*. 14 Oct. 2024, <https://www.bpb.de/themen/parteien/rechtspopulismus/240093/die-radikale-rechte-im-europaeischen-vergleich/>. Accessed 28 June 2025.

⁷ See analysis of Party Platforms:

Sasan Abdi-herrle and Selina Rudolph (2025). *Parteiprogramme: Sogar die Grünen sind nach rechts gerückt*. DIE ZEIT, 22 Feb. 2025. <https://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2025-02/rechtsruck-parteien-politik-gesellschaft-forschung>. Accessed 2 Sep. 2025;

Sarah-Lee Heinrich and Henning Obens (2024). «Brandbeschleuniger für den Rechtsruck»: Sarah-Lee Heinrich über die Politik der Ampel und den gesellschaftlichen Kampf gegen Rechts. 2 Feb. 2024, <https://www.rosalux.de/news/id/51594/brandbeschleuniger-fuer-den-rechtsruck>. Accessed 23 Sep. 2025;

Tobias Schulze (2025). *Grüne Asyl- und Sicherheitspolitik: In fünf Stufen zum harten Hund*. taz, 4 Feb. 2025. <https://taz.de/Gruene-Asyl-und-Sicherheitspolitik/!6064914/>. Accessed 28 June 2025.

Compare also the ongoing debate on German asylum laws, the CEAS (Common European Asylum System) and reactions from relevant NGOs [Footnote 20].

⁸ „We do not find any evidence that accommodative strategies reduce radical right support. If anything, our results suggest that they lead to more voters defecting to the radical right.“ Werner Krause, Denis Cohen and Tarik Abou-Chadi (2023). *Does accommodation work?: Mainstream party strategies and the success of radical right parties*. PSRM 11 (1): 172–179. 10.1017/psrm.2022.8, here p. 172.

See Inka Zimmermann (2024). *Umgang mit der AfD: Kann die Übernahme rechter Politiken Wahlerfolge verschaffen?* 26 Apr. 2024, <https://www.mdr.de/wissen/psychologie-sozialwissenschaften/politische-strategie-gegen-die-afd-themen-uebernehmen-102.html>. Accessed 28 June 2025;

Marc Debus (2023). *Schwächt eine programmatische Annäherung der Unionsparteien an die AfD den Wahlerfolg der Rechtspopulisten?: Eher nicht*. 6 Oct. 2023, <https://www.dvpw.de/blog/schwaecht-eine-programmatische-annaeherung-der-unionsparteien-an-die-afd-den-wahlerfolg-der-rechtspopulisten-eher-nicht-ein-beitrag-von-marc-debus>. Accessed 22 Aug. 2025.

⁹ See Deutscher Bundestag (2025). *Namentliche Abstimmung: „Zustrombegrenzungs-gesetz“ der Fraktion der CDU/CSU*. (Drucksachen 20/12804 und 20/13648 a). 31 Jan. 2025, <https://www.bundestag.de/parlament/plenar/abstimmung/abstimmung?id=946>. Accessed 28 June 2025.

¹⁰ See Internetredaktion Deutscher Bundestag (2025). *Unionsgesetz zur Zustrombegrenzung mit knapper Mehrheit abgelehnt*. 31 Jan. 2025, <https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2025/kw05-de-zustrombegrenzungs-gesetz-1042038>. Accessed 22 Aug. 2025.

¹¹ See Die Bundeswahlleiterin. *Bundestagswahl 2025: Ergebnisse*. <https://www.bundeswahlleiterin.de/bundestagswahlen/2025/ergebnisse/bund-99.html>. Accessed 30 Sep. 2025;

Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg (2025). *Wer wählt wen? Statistiken zu Wahlverhalten und Wahlbeteiligung: Wählerwanderungen (AfD)*. 24 Feb. 2025, <https://www.bundestagswahl-bw.de/bundestagswahl2025/wer-waehlt-wen-25>. Accessed 30 Sep. 2025.

¹² See Friedrich Merz, Alexander Dobrindt and Fraktion CDU/CSU (2025). *Kleine Anfrage der Fraktion der CDU/CSU: Politische Neutralität staatlich geförderter Organisationen*. 24 Feb. 2025, <https://dserver.bundestag.de/btd/20/150/2015035.pdf>. Accessed 22 Aug. 2025.

¹³ Philipp Eckstein (2025). *Nach Demos gegen rechts: Union empört mit Anfrage zu Nichtregierungsorganisationen*. tagesschau.de, 26 Feb. 2025. <https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/innenpolitik/union-anfrage-organisationen-102.html>. Accessed 22 Aug. 2025;

2343 Wissenschaftler*innen (2025). *Offener Brief anlässlich der Kleinen Anfrage der CDU/CSU-Fraktion zur politischen Neutralität staatlich geförderter Organisationen*. 4 Apr. 2025, <https://verfassungsblog.de/offener-brief-kleine-anfrage-union/>. Accessed 22 Aug. 2025.

Compare also current activities of a similar nature:

Markus Reuter (2025). *Zivilgesellschaft: Familienministerin will Demokratieprojekte mit Verfassungsschutz durchleuchten*. 5 Sep. 2025, <https://netzpolitik.org/2025/zivilgesellschaft-familienministerin-will-demokratieprojekte-mit-verfassungsschutz-durchleuchten/#netzpolitik-pw>. Accessed 1 Oct. 2025.

¹⁴ See Frederik Eikmanns (2025). *Migrationspläne von Union und SPD: Restriktiver geht es immer*. taz, 26 Mar. 2025. <https://taz.de/Migrationsplaene-von-Union-und-SPD/!6078579/>. Accessed 2 Sep. 2025.

¹⁵ See Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (2025). *An die neue Bundesregierung: Appell für eine verantwortungsvolle Migrationspolitik*. 6 May 2025, <https://www.dgb.de/presse/pressemitteilungen/pressemitteilung/an-die-neue-bundesregierung-appell-fuer-eine-verantwortungsvolle-migrationspolitik/>. Accessed 2 Sep. 2025.

¹⁶ See CDU-Bundesgeschäftsstelle (2025). *Politikwechsel für Deutschland: Wahlprogramm von CDU und CSU*. 2025, https://www.cdu.de/app/uploads/2025/01/km_btw_2025_wahlprogramm_langfassung_ansicht.pdf. Accessed 2 Sep. 2025, pp. 3–4.

¹⁷ See Dpa (2025). *Bürgergeld wird verschärft: Union und SPD wollen in der Sozialpolitik Fordern größer schreiben. Beziehe-rinnen und Bezieher von Bürgergeld müssen sich auf härtere Regeln einstellen*. Süddeutsche Zeitung, 9 Apr. 2025. <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/koalitionsvertrag-buergergeld-wird-verschaerft-dpa.urn-newsml-dpa-com-20090101-250409-930-428350>. Accessed 2 Sep. 2025;

For further details on the coalition agreement, see here:

Deutschlands Zukunft gestalten: Koalitionsvertrag zwischen CDU, CSU und SPD: 18. Legislaturperiode. <https://www.bundestag.de/resource/blob/194886/696f36f795961df200fb27fb6803d83e/koalitionsvertrag-data.pdf>. Accessed 2 Sep. 2025;

Pro Asyl (2025). *Rückschrittskoalition gegen Menschenrechte und Humanität*, 9 Apr. 2025, <https://www.proasyl.de/pressemitteilung/rueckschrittskoalition-gegen-menschenrechte-und-humanitaet/>, Accessed 2 Sep. 2025;

Lena Marbacher (2025). *Arbeiten, sonst gibt's nix? Warum die Neue Grundsicherung von Merz vor Gericht landen wird*. 10 Apr. 2025, <https://www.freitag.de/autoren/lena-marbacher/koalitionsvertrag-warum-die-neue-grundsicherung-von-merz-vor-gericht-landet>. Accessed 2 Sep. 2025.

¹⁸ See Lukas Stern (2023). *Kontroverse Debatte über das Gemeinsame Europäische Asylsystem*. 15 June 2025, <https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2023/kw24-de-asylsysteme-951866>. Accessed 23 Sep. 2025;

Vera Hanewinkel (2023). *Migrationspolitik – Juni 2023: Reaktionen auf den Asylkompromiss der EU-Mitgliedstaaten*. 17 July 2023, <https://www.bpb.de/themen/migration-integration/migrationspolitik/523136/migrationspolitik-juni-2023/#node-content-title-1>. Accessed 23 Sep. 2025;

Pro Asyl (2022). *Frontalangriff auf das europäische Asylrecht*. 9 Sep. 2022, <https://www.proasyl.de/pressemitteilung/frontalangriff-auf-das-europaeische-asylrecht/>. Accessed 23 Sep. 2025;

Götz Hausding (2024). *Deutscher Bundestag - Bundestag stimmt Gesetz zur Verbesserung von Rückführungen* zu. 18 Jan. 2024, <https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2024/kw03-de-rueckfuehrung-986284>. Accessed 28 June 2025;

Rebecca Heinemann (2024). *FAQ zur europäischen Asylreform GEAS: Antworten auf die wichtigsten Fragen*. 23 Dec. 2024, <https://www.proasyl.de/news/faq-zur-europaeischen-asylreform-geas-antworten-auf-die-wichtigsten-fragen/>. Accessed 23 Sep. 2025.

¹⁹ Regarding the classification of the AfD as confirmed right-wing extremist and the classification of its regional associations, see note 4.

See ZDFheute (2025). *Debatte über Verbotsverfahren: Haßelmann: CDU muss sich zu AfD positionieren*. 11 May 2025, <https://www.zdfheute.de/politik/deutschland/afd-verbot-hasselmann-cdu-linnemann-100.html>. Accessed 5 Sep. 2025.

²⁰ Compare for example: Julia Krings (2007). *Tagungsbericht: Geschichte der Kunstgeschichte im Nationalsozialismus, 1930 - 1950*. <https://www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/fdkn-120101>. Accessed 1 Oct. 2025.

²¹ Eva Atlán (2014). *1938 - Kunst, Künstler, Politik*. <https://www.juedischesmuseum.de/besuch/de-tail/1938kunstkuenstlerpolitik/>. Accessed 7 Sep. 2025.

²² We recommend the open letter from the Freie Blog für Provenienzforschende for a closer look into the repressive position the AfD has towards provenance research: Erstunterzeichner:innen Offener Brief (2025). *Schutz und Stärkung der Provenienzforschung gegen neurechte Kulturpolitik*. 6 Jan. 2025, <https://retour.hypotheses.org/4117>. Accessed 7 Sep. 2025.

See Stuart Braun (2019). *Die AfD und die Kunst*. Deutsche Welle, 3 June 2019. <https://www.dw.com/de/die-afd-und-die-kunst/a-49006659>. Accessed 7 Sep. 2025;

Peter Laudenbach (2021). *AfD, Neonazis, Neue Rechte: Strategien gegen die Kunst*. Süddeutsche Zeitung, 13 Dec. 2021. <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/projekte/artikel/kultur/afd-neonazis-neue-rechte-strategien-gegen-die-kunst-e837476/>. Accessed 1 Oct. 2025;

Hagen Mikulas (2024). *Debatte um Kulturschule: Wie die AfD das Bauhaus attackiert*. ZDFheute, 4 Dec. 2024. <https://www.zdfheute.de/politik/deutschland/afd-kritik-bauhaus-dessau-kultur-100.html>. Accessed 7 Sep. 2025.

²³ We're observing an increasing political instrumentalization of the 'Working Definition of Antisemitism' adopted by the Plenary of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) (A), particularly in its extension by the German federal government (B), to suppress critical statements about the Israeli government and its military actions (C). These developments are also particularly evident in the far-right populist spectrum, where antisemitism is increasingly portrayed as a specifically Muslim or migration-related phenomenon, while far-right forms of antisemitism are systematically obscured or downplayed (D). Protecting Jewish life and consistently combating rising antisemitism (E) are non-negotiable. This principle remains fundamental, especially in times when political opinions and actions are increasingly shifting towards right-wing populism. At the same time, we consider it necessary to highlight the discourse surrounding the IHRA definition, as well as alternatives such as the 'Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism' (JDA) (F), developed by scholars, which seeks to distinguish between legitimate criticism of the State of Israel and forms of Israel-related antisemitism (F, G). Currently, there is no consensus on a definition of antisemitism. For a more detailed examination of this discourse, which exceeds the scope of this position paper, we refer to (H, I).

A) <https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism>. Accessed 23 Oct. 2025.

B) See Beauftragter der Bundesregierung für jüdisches Leben und den Kampf gegen Antisemitismus (2024). *IHRA-Definition*. <https://www.antisemitismusbeauftragter.de/Webs/BAS/DE/bekaempfung-antisemitismus/ihra-definition/ihra-definition-node.html>. Accessed 5 Nov. 2025.

C) See Compare: Human Rights Watch et al. *Human Rights and other Civil Society Groups Urge United Nations to Respect Human Rights in the Fight Against Antisemitism. Joint Letter to UN Secretary-General António Guterres and Under Secretary-General Miguel Ángel Moratinos*. 20 Apr. 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/04/04/human-rights-and-other-civil-society-groups-urge-united-nations-respect-human>. Accessed 23 Oct. 2025.

D) See Fabian Virchow (2024). *Antisemitismus in der extremen und populistischen Rechten*. <https://www.bpb.de/themen/antisemitismus/dossier-antisemitismus/was-heisst-antisemitismus/550348/antisemitismus-in-der-extremen-und-populistischen-rechten/>. Accessed 5 Nov. 2025.

E) See Bundeskriminalamt (2025). *Politisch motivierte Kriminalität: Höchster Anstieg seit Beginn der Erfassung. Bundesweite Fallzahlen für 2024 veröffentlicht*. <https://www.bka.de/DE/UnsereAufgaben/Deliktsbereiche/PMK/PMKZahlen2024/PMKZahlen2024.html>. Accessed 5 Nov. 2025.

F) <https://jerusalemdeclaration.org/>. Accessed 5 Nov. 2025.

G) See Itamar Mann, Lihi Yona (2024). *Wer darf jüdische Identität in Deutschland definieren?* 7 Nov. 2024, <https://verfassungsblog.de/antisemitismus-resolution-bundestag-ihra/>. Accessed 5 Nov. 2025.

H) See Deutschlandfunk Kultur. *Was genau ist Antisemitismus?* 6 Mar. 2024, <https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/antisemitismus-definition-102.html>. Accessed 23 Oct. 2025; also: Amnesty International: *Global: UN Must Respect Human Rights While Combatting Antisemitism*. 20 Apr. 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/04/global-un-must-respect-human-rights-while-combatting-antisemitism>. Accessed 23 Oct. 2025.

I) See Klaus Holz (2024): *Definitionen von Antisemitismus*. 25 Oct. 2024, <https://www.bpb.de/themen/antisemitismus/dossier-antisemitismus/was-heisst-antisemitismus/555654>. Accessed 23 Oct. 2025.

²⁴ See Martin Warnke (ed.) (1970). *Das Kunstwerk zwischen Wissenschaft und Weltanschauung*. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann.

²⁵ See Marc Jongen, Gätz Fömming and et al. (2020). *Antrag: Wissenschaft von Ideologie befreien – Förderung der Gender-Forschung beenden*. Drucksache 19/25312. 16 Dec. 2020, <https://dserver.bundestag.de/btd/19/253/1925312.pdf>. Accessed 1 Oct. 2025.

Consider also: Gesellschaft für Medienwissenschaften (2025). *Statement der AG Gender/Queer Studies zu den*

aktuellen Angriffen im Wahlkampf. 27 Feb. 2025, <https://gfmedienwissenschaft.de/news/statement-der-ag-genderqueer-studies-zu-den-aktuellen-angriffen-im-wahlkampf>. Accessed 1 Oct. 2025; Robert Heinze (2021). *Der neue Kolonialrevisionismus der AfD*. 28 Sep. 2025, <https://www.rosalux.de/news/id/45065>. Accessed 1 Oct. 2025.

²⁶ See Marlene Weiß (2025). *Das bezweckt Trump mit seinem Feldzug gegen Harvard - er will die Fakten abschaffen*. Süddeutsche Zeitung, 28 May 2025. <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/meinung/usa-trump-harvard-wissenschaft-kommentar-li.3252791>. Accessed 1 Oct. 2025.

²⁷ See Peter Laudenbach (2025). *AfD: Was verrät das Wahlprogramm über die Pläne für Kunst und Kultur?: Aufgeladen mit völkischer Ideologie*. Süddeutsche Zeitung, 13 Jan. 2025. <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/kultur/afd-kulturbegriff-abgrenzung-kunst-li.3181709>. Accessed 1 Oct. 2025.

²⁸ See Unabhängige Bundesbeauftragte für Antidiskriminierung (2024). *Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes warnt vor „Genderverboten“*. https://www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de/SharedDocs/aktuelles/DE/2024/20240513_gutachten_genderverbote.h. Accessed 7 Sep. 2025.

Consider also the Manifest for Gender Inclusive Language by the KSK:

Der Kunsthistorische Studierendenkongress (2021). *Manifest für gendergerechte Sprache*. <https://www.der-ksk.org/manifestf%C3%BCrgendergerechtesprache>. Accessed 1 Oct. 2025;

Ulrike Lembke (2023). *Verfassungswidrige Sprachverbote*. <https://verfassungsblog.de/verfassungswidrige-sprachverbote/>. Accessed 1 Oct. 2025.

²⁹ We also urge institutions to consider using independent platforms for their social media communication. Many established platforms have shown themselves to be susceptible to or even encouraging of rightwing ideology. Rather than relying solely on large corporate platforms, institutions should research and utilize independent media channels whenever possible. It is also critical that all users stay informed about the risks of misuse of their data and the potential of manipulation through posted content.