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**The International Identitarian Movement** **By Simon Murdoch & Joe Mulhall**

# FROM BANNERS TO BULLETS: THE INTERNATIONAL IDENTITARIAN MOVEMENT

HOPE not hate

2019

By Simon Murdoch and Joe Mulhall



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# FROM BANNER TO BULLETS: THE INTERNATIONAL IDENTITARIAN MOVEMENT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report shows how identitarian groups are active in at least 23 countries around the world, making this one of the most dangerous far-right networks currently active. Through a combination of short profiles, longer articles and maps this report goes country-by-country, giving an unprecedented overview of the whole identitarian movement, including the prominent youth network Generation Identity (GI), in Europe, North America and around the world.
- Generation Identity is the largest and most active identitarian street movement, active at the time of writing in at least 9 countries across Europe alone and with at least 63 regional branches of varying sizes across the continent.
- Identitarianism is becoming increasingly influential amongst the North American far right. One group, the American Identity Movement, is now active across the USA.
- The report also includes an exclusive infiltration of GI in the UK, which saw HOPE not hate acquire thousands of internal messages and campaign and planning documents. The infiltrator tells his story and reveals extensive extremist links, and exposes GI activists who are in the British Navy.
- In Europe, identitarianism is a much broader movement than just GI. We explore other activist groups, think-tanks, websites, newspapers, bars, boxing clubs, clothing labels, publishers, ideologues and much else that support identitarianism.
- Identitarianism is a dangerous ideology which gives its followers an ultimatum: Get active or be “replaced” by non-white and, especially, Muslim immigrants. Identitarianism was an influence on the Christchurch, Poway and El Paso massacres in 2019. This report explains exactly why this ideology is so dangerous.
- Identitarianism has its own lexicon, often designed to make their extreme ideology more palatable. This report includes a useful glossary that explains the key terms they use and what they really mean.

# INTRODUCTION: THE THREAT OF IDENTITARIANISM

In the autumn of 2012, a video was published online. A succession of young faces, captured in monochrome close-ups, took turns to speak slowly over a dramatic backing track of rising strings. They bemoaned the “total failure of coexistence and forced mixing of the races,” lamented society’s rejection of “tradition”, rejected the “Global Village” and the “Family of Man”, claimed their heritage from their “land, their “blood”, their “identity”, and promised to “march on the streets”, paint slogans on the walls, cry out through loudspeakers and to fly their “Lambda flags high”. As the strings reached a crescendo and the drums built, a bearded figure looked straight into the camera and said in French, “Don’t think this is simply a manifesto. It is a declaration of war.” With that, Generation Identitaire (Generation Identity) was launched.

Seven years later, on 15 March 2019, a man armed with two semi-automatic rifles, two shotguns and a lever-action firearm, entered the Al Noor Mosque and the Linwood Islamic Centre in Christchurch, New Zealand during Friday prayers. The declaration of war that was made online had been acted on, and the result was 51 dead Muslims.

At the time of writing, this offensive has tragically continued, with the motivations of mass shooters targeting minorities in the US - against Jews in Poway, California in April 2019, and against Hispanic people in El Paso, Texas in July 2019 - matching those of the Christchurch killer. In both cases their manifestos cited him as an inspiration, whilst the Poway killer added that the “only viable option for [the] survival” of white people and the “European race” is violence, and the El Paso killer said they were “defending [their] country from cultural and ethnic replacement”.

The road between these events in Europe earlier in the decade and the wider world today was by no means a straight one. In the intervening years, what started as a French far-right youth movement spread across the continent, building a formal network of branches that today is just one part, albeit the largest, of an international and varied identitarian scene.

The movement has now spread beyond Europe and found adherents around the world, be that obscure and tiny groups in Russia, South America and Australia, or its growing influence in North America amongst the alt-right. Identitarianism has gone global.

In the UK, the movement’s activists are truly the runts of the litter. Yet, with the dangerous links identitarianism has to violence and extremism, it remains vital to monitor them. This report includes an exclusive exposé of the UK branch of Generation Identity (GI) based on an infiltration by HOPE not hate. The investigation reveals extremist ties, including to the proscribed neo-Nazi terrorist group, National Action. It also reveals that UK GI activists are active in the British Navy. HOPE not hate also captured discussions revealing extensive infighting between the UK and European branches of GI.

While anti-racist activists and scholars of fascism and the far right had been keeping a watchful eye on the movement since its inception, it was not until the summer of 2017 that identitarianism came to wider international attention. This was due to the so-called ‘Defend Europe’ mission organised by what was now the various partnered branches of GI across the continent. In May that year HOPE not hate broke the story that three members of GI, accompanied by the Canadian far-right journalist Lauren Southern, were detained by the Italian coast guard after they used a small boat and tried to block the ‘Aquarius’, a vessel operated by the NGO SOS Mediterranee, from leaving the port of Catania, Sicily.

However, this was just the start, and on 26 June GI announced they had secured the funding necessary to charter a ship in the Mediterranean to hinder the efforts of NGO rescue missions. Despite failing to achieve any of their stated aims, undermined in part by the actions of HOPE not hate and other anti-fascists across Europe, the mission attracted widespread international press coverage that significantly increased the profile of GI and raised their reputation in the eyes of the international far right. The year that followed Defend Europe saw the expansion of the network, including the creation of a branch in the United Kingdom.

## CHRISTCHURCH MURDERS

It was in 2019 that GI garnered the most attention in the wake of the tragic Christchurch terrorist attack. The killer’s manifesto was openly rooted in identitarian ideology. Its very title – “The Great Replacement” – is the central, alarmist idea perpetuated by identitarians. Coined by French writer Renaud Camus in 2011, it rebranded an old far-right fear of white Europeans being “replaced” by immigrants. Another of the manifesto’s core demands – “ethnic autonomy”

– likewise corresponds to the identitarian desire for “ethnopluralism” (the idea that ethnic groups should live separately to “preserve” them). These ideas are explored and explained at length in this report. However, in the months that have followed the attack information has emerged that showed that the killer was not just inspired by identitarian ideas, but had actually been in touch with GI’s de facto leader Martin Sellner and donated significant sums to GI’s branches in Austria and France.<sup>1</sup>

Understandably the revelation of links to terrorism have prompted many to reconsider what threat GI truly pose. In March 2019, Sebastian Kurz’s government in Austria considered dissolving the country’s identitarian movement (Kurz’s People’s Party were at the time in coalition with the Freedom Party, who were revealed in April to have at least 48 links to the identitarian movement).<sup>2</sup> In April a French GI spokesperson was summoned to a parliamentary inquiry investigating the movement.<sup>3</sup> In July, the German domestic intelligence agency increased its observations of the groups after it has concluded that it has “exceeded the suspicion stage” and is now classified as an “extreme right movement”, a belief borne out by a raid on a German football hooligan network in April that found identitarian propaganda alongside weapons and nazi material.<sup>5</sup>

This comes in the wake too of social media companies beginning to clamp down harder on

identitarianism’s promotion on their platforms, primarily, through banning GI’s presence on their sites. Whilst there has been some success in this regard, with many GI branches appearing to have lost their presence on Facebook or Instagram, they have often simply blurred out their logos, or carried on under different names which merely nod more subtly to their GI links whilst still espousing identitarianism (details of which are outlined in the country profiles in this report). Beyond this GI have, like many on the far right, found continued refuge on platforms that are more willing to leave them be, such as VKontakte, Telegram and Gab.

### SIZE: ONLINE AND OFFLINE

Putting the question of the nature of their threat aside for a moment, pinning down GI’s size and scope is a difficult enough task. In May 2019 the Institute for Strategic Dialogue’s (ISD) conducted a census of identitarian channels online, focusing on GI, and identified 70,000 followers of official accounts on Twitter, 11,000 members of Facebook groups, 30,000 members of Telegram groups and 140,000 subscribers on YouTube.<sup>6</sup> While a useful insight into the movement’s online reach, these numbers are exponentially larger than the networks actual activist base. Take for example GI in Germany: While the Twitter account has over 23,000 followers, official German figures state

French identitarians barricading the bridges into Calais to stop migrants entering in March 2016. Credit: YouTube.





there are just 600 activists.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, while the Twitter account of GI Austria has nearly 17,000 followers, the Austrian Office for the Protection of the Constitution and Counterterrorism estimated in December 2018 that they had just 550 members<sup>8</sup>, whilst GI themselves placed the number even lower, admitting that while there are 20,000 people on their mailing list they have just 300 active members across the country.<sup>9</sup> In the UK the difference is even more stark with the Generation Identity England Twitter account, for example, having over 6500 followers while the whole UK branch has less than 50 truly active members.

However, one can never judge the threat of a far-right movement by its scale alone. It only takes one radicalised person to plant a bomb or attack a mosque, and when it comes to exploring the threat posed by GI, one has to go beyond the number of activists it musters for demonstrations and stunts and explore the reach and influence of its ideas. Indeed, their modus operandi is influencing public debate through media-savvy campaigns and actions, an approach to activism they term 'metapolitics'. Identitarian metapolitics focuses on shifting the accepted topics, terms, and positions of public discussion so as to create a social and political environment more open and potentially accepting of its ideology. It comes from a belief that this is required before electoral and policy support for their views is possible. GI will often not focus on campaigning in support of parties, opting instead to try and inject coded terms like "remigration" into public life. A July 2019 report from the ISD found 540,000 tweets using the term 'remigration' between April 2012 and April 2019, 150,000 of which came in 2018 alone.<sup>10</sup> This goes to show how successful they have been at amplifying their actions and ideas online.

However, while GI are by some margin the best known identitarian organisation, the movement is much broader than this single network. Identitarianism is a far-right ideology, built on longstanding far-right ideas that well predate GI, and as this report shows, there is a whole host of other groups, think-tanks, websites, newspapers, bars, boxing clubs, clothing labels, publishers, ideologues and much else that adhere to identitarianism independently of GI.

While the online aspect of identitarian activism is important, to truly understand the movement one has to explore where it exists and how it operates not just on Twitter, Telegram and YouTube but also offline, both in Europe and beyond. Through a combination of short profiles, longer articles, maps and an undercover expose, this report goes country-by-country, giving an unprecedented overview of the whole identitarian movement, including GI. What emerges is a worrying picture of a far-right ideology on the rise, that is crossing borders and influencing existing far-right movements as well as radicalising new activists around the world.



British identitarians outside the Conservative party conference in Birmingham in October 2018.

1 Jason Wilson, 'Christchurch shooter's links to Austrian far right 'more extensive than thought'', The Guardian, 16 May 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/16/christchurch-shooters-links-to-austrian-far-right-more-extensive-than-thought>

2 Philip Oltermann, 'Austria mulls dissolving far-right movement over Christchurch links', 27 March 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/27/austria-considers-dissolving-far-right-identitarian-movement-christchurch>

3 Dominique Albertini, 'La dissolution de Génération identitaire s'annonce compliquée', Liberation, 11 April 2019. [https://www.liberation.fr/france/2019/04/11/la-dissolution-de-generation-identitaire-s-annonce-compliquee\\_1720288](https://www.liberation.fr/france/2019/04/11/la-dissolution-de-generation-identitaire-s-annonce-compliquee_1720288)





4 Shane Croucher, 'Identitarian Movement, Linked To Christchurch Mosque Shooter, Classified As Extremist Right-Wing Group By German Intelligence Agency', Newsweek, 11 July 2019. <https://www.newsweek.com/identitarianmovement-extremist-far-right-germany-1448710>

5 René Garzke, 'Die härtesten Schläger', Der Tagesspiegel, 11 April 2019. <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/berlin/nach-razziain-cottbus-die-haertesten-schlaeger/24211014.html>

6 Davey, J. & Ebner, J., 'The Great Replacement': The Violent Consequences of Mainstreamed Extremism, (London: Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2019), 5.

7 2018 Report on the Protection of the Constitution Facts and Trends (Berlin: Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community), 10.

8 'Verfassungsschutz forschte 364 Mitglieder der Identitären aus', Der Standard, 12 April 2019. <https://www.derstandard.de/story/2000101266781/verfassungsschutzforschte-364-mitglieder-der-identitaeren-ausaus>

9 'Identitäre bestreiten Zahl angeblicher Mitglieder', Nachrichten, 12 April 2019. <https://www.nachrichten.at/politik/innenpolitik/bvt-forschte-364-mitglieder-der-identitaeren-aus;art385,3119711>

10 Davey, J. & Ebner, J., 'The Great Replacement': The Violent Consequences of Mainstreamed Extremism, (London: Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2019), 5.

# WHAT IS IDENTITARIANISM?

## A SHORT HISTORY OF IDENTITARIAN IDEAS

In many ways the identitarian movement is a thoroughly modern one, utilising new technology and social media to spread their ideas and influence political debates. Identitarian activism as we think of it today found its earliest incarnation in 2003 with the creation of the Bloc Identitaire (BI) organisation in France. BI (which turned into a party and then an association, ‘Les Identitaires’) helped nurture the country’s identitarian movement and, especially, the now independent youth organisation, Generation Identitaire (GI), launched in 2012. GI has since spread from France and has official branches across Europe. Identitarian groups have also sprung up around the world, completely independently of GI, though based on a similar core ideology.

Many of the ideas that make up the bedrock of this international grouping have in fact been around for over half a century and can be traced back to a European far-right movement known as the European New Right (ENR). The ENR is, broadly speaking, a current of thought derived from the ideas of the French far-right philosopher Alain de Benoist and his GRECE organisation (*Groupement de recherche et d'études pour la civilisation européenne*) [Research and Study Group for European Civilization] founded in France in 1968.

De Benoist set out to create a right-wing movement that would be both modern and intellectual, operating via articulate publications and discussion groups.<sup>1</sup> The ENR claims it is an alternative to social democracy and conservative liberalism, a “laboratory of ideas”, a “school of thought”, a “community of spirit” and a “space of resistance against the system”, that has transcended the existing political left–right schema.<sup>2</sup> Such claims can be dismissed as scholars have shown clearly the movement’s direct ideological parallels with classical fascism and the historical continuity from then, through post-war fascism, until the emergence of the ENR in 1968.

In reality, the ENR sits comfortably within the far right, and its ideas are best understood as a quest for the recovery of a mythical “European Identity.” It fundamentally rejects the ideals of the 18th century Enlightenment and of Christianity and fights back against “materialist” ideologies from liberalism to socialism. In their place, the ENR advocates a pan-European nationalism and a wider world of ethnically homogeneous communities.



French far-right philosopher Alain de Benoist. Photo: Vimeo

GRECE came to be known as the French New Right (*Nouvelle Droite*) and, in 1999, de Benoist and Charles Champetier published a synthesis of their first 30 years of thought as a *Manifesto for a European Renaissance*. In it the duo talk of the “Crisis of Modernity” and examine “the main enemy”, liberalism. In essence, de Benoist and Champetier argue that globalisation, liberalism and hypermodernism have led to the “eradication of collective identities and traditional cultures”<sup>3</sup> and bemoan the “unprecedented menace of homogenisation”<sup>4</sup> wrought by immigration, which – in blanket fashion – is held to be an “undeniably negative phenomenon.”<sup>5</sup>

In place of liberal multiculturalism, they call for ‘ethnopluralism’: the idea that different ethnic groups are equal but ought to live in separation from one another. This is coupled



with the ‘right to difference’: “The right of every people, ethnos, culture, nation, group, or community to live according to its own norms and traditions, irrespective of ideology or globalist homogenization.”<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, this right carries the assumption of “cultural differentialism”: the idea that there are “lasting differences among and between cultures.”<sup>7</sup>

It is these ideas that make up many of the core tenets of identitarian ideology. However, despite being in essence the offspring of the ENR, identitarianism is by no means identical. One major area of divergence is around the importance placed on race. While also being a racist movement, the ENR and de Benoist himself has excoriated the excesses of “Identitarian tribalism” and bemoaned how Identitarians assign “ethnic factors the role that Karl Marx assigned to economic factors.”<sup>8</sup> His failure to place race front-and-centre is perhaps one of the reasons that many in the identitarian movement have found greater affinity with the work of his one-time GRECE ally, Guillaume Faye, who was, in the later years of his life, much more open to overt racism. The divergence from de Benoist is best seen in Faye’s adaptation of the *Nouvelle Droite* motto of “cause of peoples” to “cause of *our* people” and his criticism of de Benoist and his ENR colleagues for “howling with the wolves against racism.”<sup>9</sup>

## IDEAS ON THE RISE

For many years the people and groups espousing these ideas “perceived themselves as the rear guard of a dying world”<sup>10</sup>; what Julius Evola described as “men among the ruins.”<sup>11</sup> Yet, over the last decade confidence seems to have grown within the movement and as Philippe Vardon, a founder of the identitarian movement in France, wrote: “Far from being the last expression of a world in its death throes, they [identitarians] are the first pangs of a new birth.”<sup>12</sup>

The 2013 book, *Die identitäre Generation: Eine Kriegserklärung an die 68er* [Generation Identity: A Declaration of War Against the ‘68ers] by the Austrian Markus Willinger is understood as the manifesto of the Identitäre Bewegung Österreich, the Austrian branch of the identitarian movement. In it Willinger declares:

“A new political current is sweeping through Europe. It has one goal, one symbol, and one thought: Identity. [...] This book is no simple manifesto. It is a declaration of war. A declaration of war against everything that makes Europe sick and drives it to ruin, against the false ideology of the ‘68ers. This is us declaring war on you.”<sup>13</sup>

While it would be easy to dismiss Willinger’s manifesto as nothing more than an angry young man stamping his feet, *Generation Identity* is a lively and accessible articulation of the often dense

and arcane ideas espoused by the likes of de Benoist. It is a reaction against the ‘68ers and the left’s perceived cultural hegemony. Willinger rails against political elites who “disgust us”; condemns the increasing acceptance of LGBT+ people in society – what he calls “the union of nothingness” – and instead calls for a return to traditional gender roles as “Women want to be conquered.”<sup>14</sup> He also rejects multiculturalism outright, stating “we don’t want Mehmed and Mustafa to become Europeans” and, like de Benoist, argues instead for ethnopluralism.<sup>15</sup>

Worryingly, the spread of identitarianism has gone far beyond Willinger’s tirade, and the once marginalised debates of the wider network of identitarian sympathisers discussed by ignored “think tanks” in the back rooms of pubs or in conference centres booked under fake names. It has become the bedrock of an international movement making headlines around the world.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF METAPOLITICS

One of the things that marks the international Identitarian movement out from much of the wider far right is the way it does politics. Generation Identity (GI) have garnered headlines, interviews and social media hits via eye-catching stunts and slick videos rather than standing in elections. This is because the movement believes in a so-called ‘metapolitical’ approach to politics.

While some on the far right point to the Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci’s writing on cultural hegemony as the wellspring for this concept, the current enthusiasm amongst the international identitarian movement for metapolitics is primarily the result of the influence of the European New Right (GRECE) within their movement. De Benoist and Champetier, in *Manifesto of the French New Right in the Year 2000*, explain that metapolitics:

“[...] is not politics by other means. It is neither a strategy to impose intellectual hegemony, nor an attempt to discredit other possible attitudes or agendas. It rests solely on the premise that ideas play a fundamental role in collective consciousness and, more generally, in human history. [...] History is a result of human will and action, but always within the framework of convictions, beliefs and representations which provide meaning and direction. The goal of the French New Right is to contribute to the renewal of these sociohistorical representations.”<sup>16</sup>

As explained by Tamir Bar-On in his essential *Where Have All the Fascists Gone?*, de Benoist and GRECE adopted Gramsci’s Marxism “for their own partisan ends” and argued that “the most important route to political power was not elections or violent street combat, but in

thoroughly changing the dominant *zeitgeist* and people's acceptable ideas and worldviews.<sup>17</sup> This concept has become absolutely central to the political project of identitarianism.

Many activists however have learnt about metapolitics not from de Benoist but rather from his one time colleague Guillaume Faye and his 2001 book *Why We Fight* (which is required reading for GI activists). He wrote: 'Metapolitics is an effort of propaganda – not necessarily that of a specific party – that diffuses an ideological body of ideas representing a global political project [...] Metapolitics is the occupation of culture, politics is the occupation of a territory.'<sup>18</sup>

In short, metapolitics is the approach of spreading ideas and values through shifting a society's culture in advance of shifting its politics. Identitarian metapolitics focuses on shifting the accepted topics, terms, and positions of public discussion so as to create a social and political environment

more open and potentially accepting, of its ideology. It comes from a belief that this is required before electoral and policy support for their views is possible. GI's efforts to have the media report on their fear-mongering about "The Great Replacement" of white Europeans exemplifies this, as their intention is to then use the narrative to promote a policy response of "Remigrating" non-white immigrants.

Their metapolitical outlook results in an explicitly countercultural approach to activism, which GI developed from copying traditionally left-wing strategies. Core recommended texts for GI members include Srđa Popović's *Blueprint for Revolution*, a guide to nonviolent action which draws from the authors involvement with progressive movements (similarly, the US alt-right community has explicitly adopted the strategies of central left-wing community organising text *Rules for Radicals* by Saul Alinsky).



1 Roger Eatwell, *Fascism: A History* (London: Pimlico, 2003), 313  
 2 Andrea Mammine, Emmanuel Godin, Brian Jenkins, (Eds.), *Varieties of Right-Wing Extremism in Europe* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 55  
 3 Alain de Benoist and Charles Champetier, *Manifesto for a European Renaissance* (United Kingdom: Arktos Media Ltd, 2012), 15.  
 4 Ibid, 32.  
 5 Ibid, 34.  
 6 Guillaume Faye, *Why We Fight: Manifesto of the European Resistance* (Budapest: Arktos Media, 2011), 334  
 7 George Ritzer, *Globalization: A Basic Text* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 207. This also assumes cultures are clearly demarcated entities linked to specific geographic locations. As Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson describe, this is an "[...] assumed isomorphism of space, place, and culture [...]". Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, 'Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference', *Cultural Anthropology*, 7:1 (1992), 7.  
 8 De Benoist quoted in: José Pedro Zúquete, *The Identitarians: The Movement Against Globalism and Islam in*

*Europe* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2018), 11 and 14.  
 9 Guillaume Faye quoted in: Zúquete, *The Identitarians* 14.  
 10 Vardon, P. Foreword to: Markus Willinger, *Generation Identity: A Declaration of War Against the '68ers* (United Kingdom: Arktos Media Ltd, 2013), 9.  
 11 Evola, J. quoted in Daniel Friberg, *The Real Right Returns: A Handbook for the True Opposition* (United Kingdom, Arktos Media Ltd, 2015), 15.  
 12 Vardon, P. Foreword to: Willinger, *Generation Identity*, 9.  
 13 Willinger, *Generation Identity*, 14-15.  
 14 Ibid, 24-27.  
 15 Ibid, 71.  
 16 Alain de Benoist and Charles Champetier, 'Manifesto of the French New Right in Year 2000', Available at: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/5388/a0f125887a784acd36b2d2166705d42ae678.pdf>  
 17 Tamir Bar-On, *Where Have All the Fascists Gone?*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 35.  
 18 Guillaume Faye, *Why We Fight: Manifesto of the European Resistance* (Budapest: Arktos Media, 2011), 272.

# MASKING EXTREMISM: A GLOSSARY OF IDENTITARIAN CODED LANGUAGE

At the core of identitarianism is the racist idea of ethnic-separatism which they call 'ethnopluralism'. Similarly, they also call for 'remigration', a coded term for the idea of repatriation of non-white people.

Part of the movement's success has been their ability to take extreme ideas and present them in a way that sounds moderate. They affect public attitudes by promoting a lexicon which, for those unfamiliar with the contemporary far right, may

have less obvious links to extreme, prejudicial and dangerous political ideas and policies.

It is essential, therefore, to understand both the actual meaning and, even more importantly, material implications of these terms. (The following definitions are taken from Martin Sellner, Austrian Generation Identity co-leader and *de facto* spokesperson for the identitarian movement more broadly).

Terminology	Their Definition	Decoded Translation
<b>Ethnopluralism</b>	<p>Identitarians advocate 'ethnopluralism': the idea that different ethnocultural groups are equal but ought to live in separation from one another out of respect for their "right to difference"; their right to self-determination and to ensure that they do not lose their internal homogeneity.</p> <p>For them, this constitutes a rejection of the European status quo attitude of multiculturalism, seeing true "diversity" and "anti-racism" to instead consist in a situation wherein, according to Sellner, "all peoples have a right to preserve and promote their group identity in their homelands".</p>	<p>Ethnopluralism is advocated as a response to a belief that ethnic Europeans are being replaced by non-European people, broadly understood as non-white and Muslim. It is based on a belief that different ethnic groups living together is not desirable or workable. The introduction of such a policy involves the forced separation of ethnic groups via repatriation in the case of 'illegal' immigrants or by reducing living standards for legal immigrants from these groups.</p>
<b>Ethnocultural identity</b>	<p>According to some identitarians, one's identity has an ethnic and a cultural side, as well as three levels: the regional, national and civilisation (the latter being European civilisation). The ethnic and cultural side are reflected at all three levels. Identitarians want to preserve both sides of ethnocultural identity and argue the mistake of traditional right wing movements was to reduce ethnocultural identity to just one side (racial nationalists) or the other (cultural nationalists).</p> <p>In Sellner's view, this doesn't recognise that it is because of the combination of both that assimilation and integration is possible but that this is possible "only in certain amounts" because "whilst culture is something you can assimilate into [...] the ethnic side is something you inherit that you cannot change" and that because "culture and people are linked together", to believe that changes to ethnic populations "will not change our culture, [...] will not change our identity" is "sheer madness".</p>	<p>Despite their claims to rejecting traditional racial nationalism, the concept of "ethnocultural" identity rigidly ties culture to ethnicity and so, as Dr. Raphael Schlembach of the University of Brighton highlights "biologises" and 'essentialises' cultures to such an extent that they are turned into the functional equivalents of race".</p> <p>Indeed, this follows a trend, as Professor Petra Vejvodová of Masaryk University highlights whereby the far right has already replaced discussion of race with "culture" and now this too "is being replaced by the word 'identity'".</p> <p>Despite the non-racist and non-prejudiced pretensions of identitarians, therefore, by employing the concept of ethnocultural identity they implicitly define European identity by majority features of European ethnic (white) and cultural (non-Muslim) heritage.</p>



Terminology	Their Definition	Decoded Translation
<p><b>The Great Replacement</b></p>	<p>According to Sellner ‘The Great Replacement’ refers to “the process by which the indigenous European population is replaced by non-European migrants”. For them a “demographic crisis across Europe” is occurring wherein “our peoples are becoming a minority in their own countries” due to “declining birth rates, mass immigration and the sharp increase in Islamic parallel societies”.</p> <p>These factors, they argue, “will lead to the almost complete destruction of European societies within a matter of decades if no countermeasures are taken”. Moreover, as identitarians believe that culture is integral to ethnocultural identity, they also believe that the “ethnic, demographic facts” are indicative of the underlying cultural problems, including “nihilism, anti-natalism, rising abortions, self-hatred, [and] white guilt”.</p>	<p>At the core of this idea is the belief that non-white and Muslim migrants pose an intrinsic threat to white, non-Muslim Europeans. It is also based on projections that real demographers have repeatedly argued are no reliable basis for long-term predictions.</p> <p>An increase or decline in the birth rate of one group or another does not necessitate its continued increase or decline in the long term, nor does an influx of non-European migrants into Europe necessitate that this will continue at that rate or grow further still in future.</p> <p>Moreover, the implications of this unfounded projection highlight their racist and anti-Muslim stance, by assuming that, their fellow non-white, Muslim citizens intrinsically pose a threat to their ethnic and cultural heritage.</p>
<p><b>Remigration</b></p>	<p>In response to ‘The Great Replacement’, identitarians propose a set of policies under the banner of ‘Remigration’. Sellner calls for “the humane repatriation of anyone who has entered our countries illegally” and, regarding legal immigration, they argue we ought “to work towards reversing migration flows” into Europe to the state where demographics were prior to the introduction of multiculturalism.</p> <p>This includes “cutting down the welfare state for migrants” and introducing policies of “de-Islamisation”.</p> <p>According to Generation Identity this would mean “banning the burqa, banning minarets [and] banning preaching in different languages” with a view to creating a situation where people would “go back” to countries where they “really could live their faith”.</p>	<p>At its core, remigration would involve the forced removal and repatriation of non-white, Muslim immigrants that they believe shouldn’t be resident here, an act that would be neither “humane”, achievable “without any violence” nor avoid changes to “any basic laws”.</p> <p>Remigration policies would prioritise the expelling or lowering of living conditions for non-white and Muslim migrants. The harms and violent nature of this latter policy – a practice elsewhere referred to as “self-deportation” – via migrant welfare reduction and “de-Islamisation” is self-explanatory, but would also of course contravene international law.</p>
<p><b>Reconquista</b></p>	<p>Identitarians often describe their metapolitical campaign using the term Reconquista (Spanish for “reconquest”) which refers to a period of the Iberian Peninsula’s medieval history in which Christian Iberian kingdoms opposed an Islamic caliphate (the Umayyad caliphate) that held the Peninsula (during which time it was referred to as “al-Andalus”) following a conquest by Muslim forces beginning in 711 AD.</p> <p>Identitarians argue that Europe as a whole presently faces a comparable situation and that, though “[Europe] may not be facing an immediate military confrontation, the threat is one of self-destruction through a multicultural zeitgeist”. The result of this divergence means their “fight is therefore a war of words, ideas and politics”, and so their aim is “to reconquer the social discourse, which [has] been dominated by a left-wing hegemony”.</p>	<p>In its simplest sense, the identitarian idea of Reconquista is based on their belief that Europe has been ‘invaded’ by Muslims. It is based on the false narrative that Islam has no positive relationship with European identity, and moreover, that Islam poses an intrinsic threat to Europe.</p> <p>Professor García-Sanjuán of Huelva University, Spain has explained how this interpretation of the Reconquista implies “an exclusionary vision of al-Andalus as alien to Spanish identity” despite the fact that al-Andalus encompassed over eight centuries of Iberian history and contributed to features of Spanish and Portuguese culture that persists to this day.</p> <p>As García-Sanjuán notes, the weaponisation of this exclusionary interpretation has existed ever since the end of the Reconquista, “reached its peak during the Franco dictatorship” and continues to be used by the Spanish far right today. That GI rely on this cherry-picked notion of Iberian identity to argue that Islam is antithetical to European identity, both in the past, in the present and the future, should therefore come as no surprise.</p>



# THE IDENTITARIAN IDEAS THAT TOOK LIVES IN CHRISTCHURCH, POWAY AND EL PASO

When a white supremacist burst into a mosque during Friday prayers in Christchurch, New Zealand, a worshipper greeted him with, “Hello brother”. The terrorist then proceeded to gun him and 50 other men, women and children down at the mosque and at a further mosque. Most of the victims were immigrants or refugees from countries such as Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Turkey, Somalia, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

The murderer livestreamed the killing on Facebook and released a manifesto that spread across the internet like wildfire. Away from the internet culture references and trolling found in it were numerous implicit and explicit references to key elements of ‘identitarian’ ideology. This murderous act confirmed what many had been arguing for a while, that despite identitarians claims to be non-violent, their ideology is dangerous.

The Christchurch killer’s manifesto fundamentally drew on identitarian ideology. Its very title – “The Great Replacement” – is the central idea perpetuated by identitarians, and one of its core demands – “ethnic autonomy” likewise corresponds to the identitarian desire for ‘ethnopluralism’ (the idea that ethnic groups should live separately to “preserve” them).

The motivations of two subsequent mass shooters targeting minorities in the US – against Jews in Poway, California in April 2019, and against Hispanic people in El Paso, Texas in July 2019 – matched those of the Christchurch killer. In both cases their manifestos cited him as an inspiration, whilst the Poway killer said the “only viable option for [the] survival” of white people and the “European race” is violence, and the El Paso killer said they were “defending [their] country from cultural and ethnic replacement”. In all three manifestos there is no explicit mention of the identitarian movement by name, but the influence of identitarian ideas, including The Great Replacement and ethnopluralism, is unquestionable.

Moreover, beyond ideas, the connections are concrete in the case of Christchurch. In the months that followed the attack information emerged that showed that the killer had actually been in touch with Martin Sellner, de facto leader of the identitarian youth movement Generation Identity (GI), back in January 2018, that the two had exchanged friendly emails, and that the would-be killer had donated significant sums to GI’s branches in Austria and France.<sup>1</sup>

## The Great Replacement

TOWARDS A NEW SOCIETY



WE MARCH EVER FORWARDS

The title of the Christchurch murderer’s manifesto is a key identitarian term.

## A WEB OF INFLUENCE

The three killers’ familiarity with far-right internet culture is clear, but it is clear from the attacks too that this online environment has become very accepting of an identitarian outlook and this is gleaned most from Christchurch. For example, the attacker’s gun’s inscriptions referenced multiple historical battles that have been used by identitarians for decades as symbols of “resisting” the “Great Replacement” of white Europeans. Though some of these were popular online already amongst the far right due to the international anti-Muslim ‘Counter-Jihad’ movement, groups like GI have been adept at spreading them further across social media. Similarly, amongst the inscriptions on the Christchurch killer’s gun was one that read



A raid by police of a hooligan network in Cottbus, Germany in April 2019 found Generation Identity propaganda alongside weapons and nazi material. Credit: Der Tagesspiegel.

“Here’s your Migration Compact!”, a reference to a UN migration pact that GI campaigned against extensively in 2018. Within the manifesto an entire section also calls for violence against NGOs who have “ferr[ie]d the invaders to European shores aboard their own vessels”. Similarly, more than any other activist group (online and off), GI has campaigned against NGOs working in the Mediterranean.

## IDENTITARIANISM HAS AN INHERENT CONNECTION TO VIOLENCE

Many identitarians claim they are non-violent and that their ideas, if enacted, would be peaceful. GI say that, in response to “The Great Replacement” of white Europeans by non-white and, in particular Muslim immigrants, they call for a set of policies under the banner of ‘Remigration’. These policies, properly understood, advocate forced removal and repatriation of immigrants. It also advocates

the lowering of living conditions for immigrants by reducing welfare options, a policy known as ‘self-deportation’, in the hope that they will leave of their own accord. The inevitable harm caused by such policies are obvious.

This is a racial separatist worldview and the violence it requires is clear, though coverage of those espousing identitarianism has sometimes fallen for its activists’ deliberate framing of its ideas as having no logical, inevitable connection to violence. This is often because such ideas are cloaked in language deliberately used to hide their extremity from journalists. It is also because identitarians stress that they do not engage in violence themselves; their self-documented actions involve social media campaigns, handing out leaflets, talking to the public and dropping banners, for example.

However, this too is a facade, with GI’s own members having been outed for violence. In 2018 an Al Jazeera investigation exposed French

GI members engaging in racist violence and advocating terrorist attacks against mosques.<sup>2</sup>

**Eventual turns to violence should not be a surprise in this context. Identitarian ideologues tell their supporters that time is running out for them and give their followers an ultimatum: Get active or be “replaced” by migrants.** Despite often preaching non-violence, there is nothing stopping identitarianism’s followers believing violence is the only feasible response to this alarmist rhetoric.

As the Christchurch killer’s manifesto revealed, he followed this path. He stated that between April and May 2017 (whilst travelling through

Europe) he went from believing his political goals could be achieved democratically to believing a “violent, revolutionary solution is the only possible solution”. He believed due to the “threat of ethnic replacement and our own horribly low birth rates, we do not have 150 years or even 50 years to achieve positions of power”, and encouraged people to “not suffer under the delusion of an effortless, riskless democratic victory. Prepare for war, prepare for violence and prepare for risk, loss, struggle, death.”

1 Jason Wilson, ‘Christchurch shooter’s links to Austrian far right ‘more extensive than thought’’, The Guardian, 16 May 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/16/christchurch-shooters-links-to-austrian-far-right-moreextensive-than-thought>

2 See: ‘Generation Hate’, Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/investigations/generationhate/>



The 2017 'Defend Europe' campaign saw identitarians from across Europe charter a ship and disrupt humanitarian NGO vessels in the Mediterranean. Credit: Twitter





# IDENTITARIANISM IN EUROPE







## MARTIN SELLNER

Sellner, who is based in Vienna, has become the *de facto* spokesperson for GI internationally, and a key communicator of identitarian ideas to the English-speaking world after he began to make English-language videos in July 2016.

He gained international notoriety after it was revealed that Brenton Tarrant, who massacred 51 people in two anti-Muslim attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand in March 2019, had sent €1500 to the Austrian activist in early 2018 and the two had subsequently exchanged emails welcoming one another to their countries.

## AUSTRIA

### OVERVIEW OF IDENTITARIANISM IN AUSTRIA

Austria has amongst the most developed identitarian scenes in Europe, and at the centre is the country's Generation Identity (GI) branch, headed up by the movement's *de facto* spokesperson Martin Sellner. Unlike France and Germany, the wider identitarian infrastructure in Austria is still primarily connected to GI. A number of identitarian projects in Austria are the creations of GI activists. These include:

- The clothing brand Phalanx Europa
- Studio.ID, a media production organisation



- AK Nautilus, a media organisation which puts out “research” supporting the identitarian movement, creates *Die Tagesstimme*, a news site promoting an identitarian narrative, and is developing the ‘Patronaut’ site, a travel recommendation platform for identitarians
- Gedenken 1683, an organisation which puts on an annual march in Vienna to commemorate the Battle of Kahlenberg in 1683 against the Ottoman Empire
- ‘Patriot Peer’, a social networking app for identitarians, had been under development by the Austrian branch of GI since 2016 though it has not come to fruition and Ruhrpott, Germany based GI activist, Kai Naggert, has taken over the project.

The above are all connected to GI, but outside of this within Austria can be found the Linz-registered magazine, Info-DIREKT, which is sympathetic to the identitarian movement, and a number of far-right Austrian *Burschenschaften* (student fraternities), which are likewise supportive.



Generation Identity activists in Salzburg speaking with members of the public, April 2019. Credit: Twitter.





## OVERVIEW OF GENERATION IDENTITY IN AUSTRIA

The roots of Austria's identitarian movement can be traced back to a group called Wiens Identitäre Richtung (WIR), formed in Vienna in March 2012 by students. By December of that year it had given rise to Identitäre Bewegung Österreichs (IBÖ), founded by Martin Sellner, Alexander Markovics (both members of WIR) and Patrick Lenart. The organisation is now officially registered in Vienna as the 'Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Cultural Identity', with Sellner and IBÖ activist Philipp Huemer as its board members.

A 2019 investigation by the Austrian Office for the Protection of the Constitution and Counterterrorism reported there to be roughly 550 GI members in Austria, whilst the group itself stated it had just 300 active members, with a further 500 regular monthly donors and a mailing list of 20,000 people.

Connections between GI and the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) have been documented for some time but have come under increased scrutiny of late. In 2018, Austrian intelligence services had reported a list of GI Austria members, including a number of active members of the FPÖ. In April 2019, human rights NGO, SOS Mitmensch, found at least 48 links and points of contact between the FPÖ and the identitarian movement, affecting four then FPÖ-led ministries.

## LIST OF ACTIVE GI BRANCHES\*

At the time of writing, GI is understood to remain active in at least the following locations (listed by state/region and the most active towns and cities within these):

- **Salzburg** (Branch Head, Dominik Steizinger): Continuing online as 'Kontrakultur Salzburg'
- **Styria** (Branch Head – Luca Kerbl): Active in Graz (home of the Hackherzentrum GI centre), Fürstenfeld, Weiz (home of the new Gleisdorf GI center), Voitsberg, Leibnitz, Feldbach, Deutschlandsberg, Kapfenberg, and Leoben. Continuing online as 'Reconquista Steiermark'.
- **Carinthia**: Active in Villach
- **Burgenland**: Active in Eisenstadt
- **Upper Austria** (Branch Head, Roland Moritz): Active in Linz (home of the Khevenhüller GI centre), Rohrbach, Wels, Ried, and Steyr.
- **Lower Austria** (Branch Head, Thomas Sellner): Active in Tulln, Wiener Neustadt, and Mödling.
- **Tirol**: Active in Innsbruck.
- **Vienna** (Branch Head Philipp Huemer): Home of an unofficial GI centre at the Barden zu Wien student fraternity building.

\*The following has been aided by the prior research of the Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance.

## BALKAN BLOC

Though it failed to get off the ground, Generation Identity did attempt to launch a Balkan GI bloc in 2017. They registered a website in September 2017 and the bloc appeared to only be an online initiative. The bloc intended to launch its social media and website in full by the end of 2017 and was accepting applications from Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Albania, Bosnia, Slovenia and Montenegro. However, this failed to materialise and at the start of 2018, a statement appeared on the GI Balkan site saying it had been hacked and at the time of writing the site is no longer online at all. While there are still identitarian activists in the Balkans there is no indication at present that GI intends to proceed with the planned expansion of activity in the region.



visited the GI ‘summer university’ training camp in France, and Langenhove has stated that S&V is “a metapolitical movement” and referenced The Great Replacement in statements to journalists. S&V and GI to interact, with an S&V activist appearing to carry out an action alongside GI activists in Montpellier, France in May 2019.

## BELGIUM

### OVERVIEW OF IDENTITARIANISM IN BELGIUM

Generatie Identiteit (GI), a Flemish/Belgian branch of GI, was launched in September

2017 following a talk given to prospective activists in Ghent by Jean David Cattin, a key French identitarian activist and a co-leader of Les Identitaires (formerly Bloc Identitaire, which GI developed out of). Bo De Geynt, an initial co-leader for the group, had been a member of the Flemish conservative student association, Katholiek Vlaams Hoogstudentenverbond, alongside Langenhove. GI in Belgium failed to take off, however, and at the time of writing does not engage in actions and only maintains a limited web presence.

Beyond GI, it is important to note a further, active identitarian group in Belgium: Schild & Vrienden (S&V), a Flemish far-right youth movement launched in March 2017 and founded and led by Dries Van Langenhove. In May 2019 Langenhove won as a Vlaams Belang-supported independent candidate in Belgium’s federal elections.

Though S&V is not an officially recognised chapter of GI, it maintains links and endorses identitarianism. As Ico Maly of Tilburg University notes, S&V members including Langenhove have



## THE CZECH REPUBLIC

### OVERVIEW OF IDENTITARIANISM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Identitarian activity in Czechia is limited to its branch of Generation Identity, ‘Generace Identity’ (GI), headed by Adam Berčík and founded in 2013 by former activists of groups including the neo-fascist Czech Autonomous Nationalists. Whilst smaller than French, German and Austrian branches of GI, the Czech branch has remained active, running an online shop for identitarian materials, carrying out actions and maintaining a separate “study group” blog for identitarian theory, Astræa.cz, since October 2014, as well as participating in actions and gatherings with branches of GI elsewhere in Europe.



### LIST OF ACTIVE GI BRANCHES

GI are understood to be active mainly in Prague and Brno. At their September 2018 camp held in South Bohemia, Czech GI claimed “It was attended by about thirty identity activists and supporters of our movement from Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia.



## DENMARK

### OVERVIEW OF IDENTITARIANISM IN DENMARK

The identitarian movement in Denmark consists essentially of the Danish branch of Generation Identity, Generation Identitær (GI), which have been active online since June 2017 and on the streets since September 2017 after they began their first actions. Prominent members include Lithuanian-born leader Aurelija Anilyte, Christoffer Gerlach Skibild, Kaj H Oldenburg & Anders Bruun Nørring (the latter of whom attended Britain First marches in the UK in 2017). Anilyte also assisted in the launch of the UK and Ireland branch in October 2017 and members of the Danish branch have also met with GI activists in Germany and France.



GI Denmark initially referred to themselves as 'Identitær' before taking on the full name in April 2018 to mark becoming an official part of the GI movement. They claimed that they had become closer to the other branches, including through participation in the 'Defend Europe' Alps campaign in 2018 that saw activists across Europe try to halt migrant passages in the Alps. In June 2019 GI Denmark also took part in a gathering of the wider far right, Mosbjerg Folkefest, which featured Martin Sellner from GI Austria, British anti-Muslim activist Gavin Boby and Norwegian anti-immigrant activist Jan Høeg. British anti-Muslim activist Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (AKA Tommy Robinson) was listed as a speaker (though did not attend).

### LIST OF ACTIVE GI BRANCHES

Generation Identitær have branches in Copenhagen and Aarhus.



Danish identitarians dropping a banner in Copenhagen to promote 'remigration' (repatriation) in May 2019.

## FRANCE

### OVERVIEW OF IDENTITARIANISM IN FRANCE



France is undoubtedly the most important hub of identitarian politics. Not only were identitarian ideas developed in France, growing out of the *Nouvelle Droite* (New Right) that began in 1968, but the first identitarian activist movements developed in the country and set the model which other countries then adopted.

As the birthplace of identitarianism it is no surprise that France plays host to a number of different organisations.

What was to become Generation Identity emerged first with the street movement Jeunesses Identitaires (JI) in 2002. Following this came the Bloc Identitaire (BI) organisation in 2003 which provided the emerging identitarian network with support. JI was replaced by Une Autre Jeunesse and then Génération Identitaire (GI) in 2012, whilst BI became a party in 2009 before renaming itself as Les Identitaires and becoming an association in 2016. Whilst Les Identitaires and GI are independent, they publicly support one another.

This core identitarian network has also established ties to sympathetic publications and organisations. Some of these are more directly tied to the identitarian movement, such as the web magazines NovoPress founded by Les Identitaires founder Fabrice Roberts and the web magazine Fdesouche founded by Damien Rieu (AKA Damien Lefèvre), a former GI spokesperson and close associate of Marion Marechal Le Pen, niece of the Rassemblement National (RN) leader Marine Le Pen (herself close to GI). Less directly, *Nouvelle Droite* figures Phillipe Conrad, Jean Yves Le Gallou and Bernard Lugan co-founded the Iliade Institute think-tank in 2014, and whose 2019 conference featured GI spokesman Romain Espino.

In addition to GI is the group Bastion Social, a youth group that established two bars (now closed) L'Arcadia, in Strasbourg and Le Pavillon Noir, in Lyon, after forming in 2017 as a splinter from the fascist organisation Groupe Unité Défense (GUD) (which dates back to 1968). The political scientist José Pedro Zúquete has noted how the group is influenced by a combination of identitarian ideas alongside Italy's more explicitly fascist CasaPound party and its social centers.

Elsewhere, the Catholic youth organisation Academia Christiana, formed in 2013 by GI figure Julien Langella, maintains links with the identitarian movement. Furthermore, the

identitarian movement in France has interacted with the wider existing French anti-Muslim scene, most notably in 2015 when the French iteration of the anti-Muslim Pegida movement was launched by Renaud Camus (who coined the term 'The Great Replacement' and who runs the 'National Council of European Resistance'), popular Counter-Jihad site Riposte Laïque and Bloc Identitaire.

### OVERVIEW OF GENERATION IDENTITY IN FRANCE

GI have been active consistently in France since launching in 2012, with analyst of the French far right, Jean-Yves Camus, telling *Ouest France* in April 2018 that it likely has a few hundred activists, based particularly in Nice, Lyon and Paris.

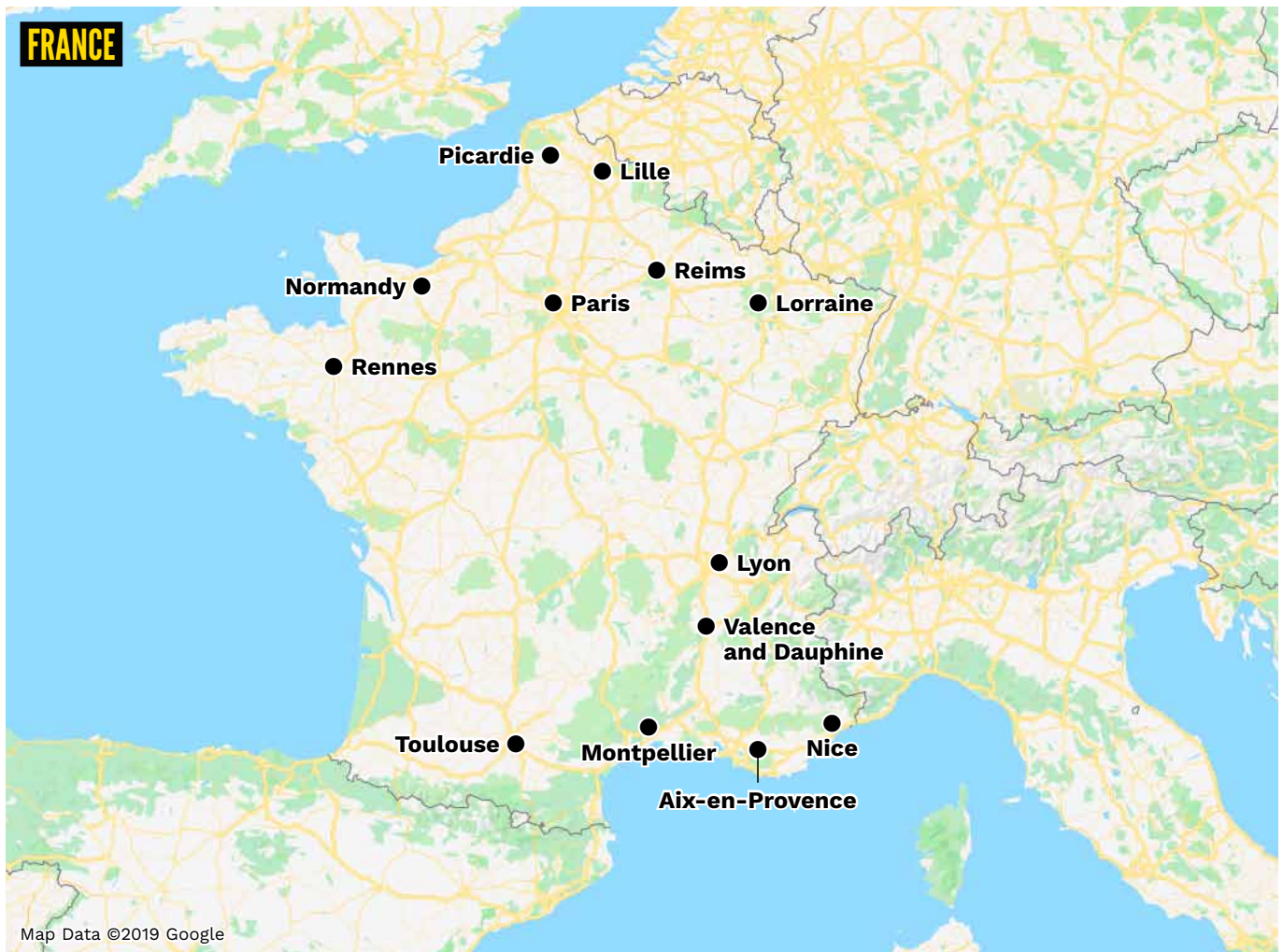
France remains the key meeting place for identitarians from across Europe, due to the GI summer 'university' activist training camp, which has been held in France annually since 2003. Though the French GI organise fewer offshoot projects alongside their street activism, say in contrast to the German and Austrian branches, it does publish *Magazine Identitaires* and maintains an online shop, Boutique Identitaire.

Alongside the connection to Marion Marechal Le Pen mentioned above, connections between GI and the electoral French far right are extensive, with a 2018 *Al Jazeera* investigation in particular revealing the extent of their connections to the Rassemblement National (RN) party. Revelations included that GI activists Pierre Larti and Remi Meurin worked for RN at the regional council for Hauts-de-France; the then leader of GI Lille, Aurelien Verhassel, claimed to have written speeches for RN leaders and it was proved he had close ties with party leader Marine Le Pen's aide, Sebastien Chenu. Secret recordings caught numerous senior RN figures attending the Citadelle bar and expressing support for GI, including Nicolas Bay MEP and Christine LeChavalier MEP. LeChevalier said that many other RN members would like to attend, and stated that "Marine [Le Pen] isn't personally against this".

In 2019 a series of links emerged between GI and the mass shooter who killed 51 Muslims in Christchurch, New Zealand in March of that year. These included the revelation that the killer had donated more than €1000 to the French branch.







## LIST OF ACTIVE GI BRANCHES

At the time of writing, GI is understood to remain active in at least the following locations:

- **Paris** (Branch Head – Marc Vedier, Spokesman – Édouard Morel); home the identitarian bars Le Barricade (now closed) and Le Nef. Continuing online as ‘Paris est Patrie’.
- **Rennes** (Branch contact – Antonin Herivaux)
- **Lyon** (Branch Contact – Adam Aubert); home to the L’Agoge gym, La Traboule bar,
- **Lorraine** (Branch Head – Adrien Lasalle). Continuing online as ‘Gonitude’.
- **Lille** (Branch Head – Aurelien Verhassel); home to La Citadelle bar
- **Reims** (Branch Head – Léandre Pinot)
- **Picardie** (Branch contact – Thibault Morlet)
- **Normandy** (Home to the Y’ggdrasil bar)
- **Toulouse** (Branch Heads – Alais Vidal, Adrien Dominguez)
- **Nice** (home to the Lou Bastion bar)
- **Montpellier** (Branch contact – Johan Teissier)

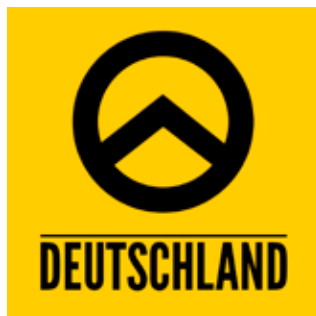
- **Valence and Dauphine** (Branch Head – Mathias Mercier)
- **Aix-en-Provence** (Branch Head – Jérémie Laurent)

## GERMANY

### OVERVIEW OF IDENTITARIANISM IN GERMANY

As in France, German identitarian activists benefit from a pre-existing network of far-right activists sympathetic to identitarian ideas, growing out of the country's equivalent to the *Nouvelle Droite*, the *Neue Rechte* which grew in the 1970s. An integral figure is Götz Kubitschek, who since the 2000s has been the key figure behind a number of institutions that have helped disseminate the identitarian message and supported *Identitäre Bewegung Deutschland*/Generation Identity Germany, including the print and online journal *Sezession*, the publishing house *Antaios* and the think-tank *Institut für Staatspolitik*.

Other key identitarian-sympathising organisations in Germany include the *Compact* magazine founded in 2010, the *Arcadi* magazine founded in 2016 and *Ein Prozent für unser Land*, otherwise known as *Ein Prozent*, founded in 2015 (again in part via Kubitschek). *Ein Prozent*, run by Philip Stein and Helge Hilse, finances and supports “patriotic”



Götz Kubitschek, a key figure in the German identitarian network. Credit: Wikipedia.

initiatives aiming to reverse the “refugee invasion” of Germany and Europe, and has supported the Austrian branch of GI as well as that of Germany, providing the former with €10,000 in donations in January 2015, for example. *Ein Prozent* claim to have over 40,000 newsletter subscribers, to have provided €250,000 to “patriotic projects” in 2017, to have printed 800,000 resources and to reach 400,000 people every week online, and to have supported the identitarian “Mühle” center that opened in 2018. It is important to note too, that one of the most organised online identitarian-sympathising networks developed out of Germany, namely *Reconquista Germanica*, which emerged in 2017 to support the AfD in the general election.

### OVERVIEW OF GENERATION IDENTITY IN GERMANY

The German branch of GI has been active since 2012, led first by Nils Altmieks who remains co-leader alongside Daniel Fiß, and is registered as a civil association in Paderborn. In August 2016 GI Germany came under the observation of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV) and in July 2019 they were reclassified as an extremist group. At the time of writing, the BfV believe there to be 600 GI Germany activists. The German branch of GI organise the most number of offshoot projects alongside carrying out direct actions, with a number of social centres and other GI-tied campaigns that run under different names. These include the female GI activist-led #120dB campaign, clothing brand *Cuneus-Culture*, the alternative media platform *Okzident Media*, the beer range ‘Pils Identitar’, the social center investment organisation *Schanze Eins* (which intends to build centers in Rostock and Linz, Austria), the pan-European foundation for supporting GI, *Generation Identity Europe* (registered in Szczecin, Poland but headed by GI Germany activists), the “aid” NGO *Alternative Help Association*, YouTube channels such as *Laut Gedacht*, *European Kitchen* and *Ruhrpott Roulette* and the *Kontrakultur* social centre in Halle.

GI Germany maintains considerable links to the *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) party. In 2018 *Ein Prozent* associate Simon Kaupert claimed there are “dozens” of GI supporters working for the AfD and Franziska Schreiber, a former leading member of the AfD’s youth wing, estimated that “at least half the members of the AfD’s own youth wing are followers of Generation Identity”. A 2019 AfD manifesto even called for “remigration”, a core tenet of identitarian ideology (a coded term for a policy of repatriating and lowering the standards of living for non-white migrants and Muslims). In May 2019 the party held a conference in the Bundestag to launch its ‘Congress of Free Media’ which aimed to bring together sympathetic “alternative media outlets” with the party’s parliamentary group. Amongst these were GI-sympathetic German vloggers such as Oliver Flesch and, most importantly, Götz Kubitschek.





## LIST OF ACTIVE GI BRANCHES\*

- **Bayern** – München, Augsburg, Region Franken, Region Schwaben, Schondorf, Mering, Fürstfeldbruck. Continuing online as ‘Lederhosen Revolte’.
- **Baden-Württemberg** – Stuttgart, Tübingen, Rottweil, Ulm, Heilbronn, Bodensee, Konstanz, Heidelberg, Region Rhein-Neckar, Mannheim
- **Berlin**
- **Brandenburg** – Cottbus, Brandenburg/Havel
- **Bremen**
- **Hamburg**
- **Hessen** – (Branch Head – Heinrich Mahling) Marburg, Wiesbaden, Frankfurt a.M., Kassel, Darmstadt, Gießen, Fulda, Schwalm-Eder-Kreis, Lahn-Dill-Kreis. Branch continuing online as ‘Heimwärts Hesse’.
- **Mecklenburg-Vorpommern** – Rostock, Greifswald
- **Niedersachsen** – (Branch Head - David Ratajczak) Osnabrück, Hannover, Braunschweig, Delmenhorst. Continuing online as ‘Heimatliebe Niedersachsen’ and ‘Heimatliebe-Harz’.
- **Nordrhein-Westfalen** – Köln, Düsseldorf, Region Westfalen, Bochum, Bonn, Region Bergisches Land
- **Rheinland-Pfalz** – Trier, Konz, Mainz, Region Pfalz
- **Saarland** – Saarbrücken
- **Sachsen** – Bautzen, Leipzig (Branch Head – Alex Malenki), Dresden. Continuing online as ‘Reconquista Saxonia’.
- **Sachsen-Anhalt** – Halle, Magdeburg, Schnellroda
- **Schleswig-Holstein** – Kiel, Eutin, Ostrau
- **Thüringen** – Erfurt, Gera, Rudolstadt, Neustadt/Orla, Gotha

\*The following has been aided by the prior research of the Amadeu Antonio Foundation

## HUNGARY

### OVERVIEW OF IDENTITARIANISM IN HUNGARY

For a number of years Hungary had two active identitarian movements.

One was a branch of the Generation Identity (GI) network, Identitas Generacio, while the other was called Identitesz. In March 2017 Identitas Generacio attempted to distance themselves from Identitesz writing on their website: “In Hungary, the SINGLE identity organization is Identity Generation (recognized as the only recognized international identity circle)”. However, they added that “In both the ideology and rhetoric of the two organizations, they do not differ in their ambitions”. There was also contact between the two leaders, Ábel Bódi (Identitas Generacio leader) and Balázs László (former Identitesz leader), as both were former members of the far-right movement Pax Hungarica. However, in the summer of 2017, Identitesz joined forces with a group called the Army of Outlaws to launch Strength and Resolve, which became inactive around the beginning of 2018. More recently this was dissolved into Our Homeland, the new party of Laszlo Toroczka. As such the only explicitly identitarian group properly active in Hungary is the Generation Identity branch.



### OVERVIEW OF GENERATION IDENTITY IN HUNGARY

Identitas Generacio was founded on 21 October 2014 in Budapest though they began demonstrations as early as August 2014. Beyond Austria’s Martin Sellner, their leader Ábel Bódi has become one of the more recognisable leaders in the network and made headlines in 2018 when he was banned from entering the UK to attend a conference. In June they held a demonstration in Budapest in support of Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (AKA Tommy Robinson), holding a blood-drenched banner reading ‘1984 is a novel, not an instruction’.

In November 2018 Identitas Generacio announced that they were going to launch local branches in three cities outside Budapest: Szeged, Veszprém and Debrecen. In December 2018 they carried out a small banner drop from a bridge in Szeged which appears to be the only public activity of these new branches so far, though they all have Facebook pages, using new logos to avoid the Facebook ban of GI and continuing as ‘Végvár Hun’ elsewhere.

In 2019 the branch held a summer university which was addressed by Martin Sellner from Austria. The first such summer university event for Central Europe, meant to compliment the summer university camp held in France for GI activists, was held in Hungary on 25-27 May 2018 and featured Hungarian, Slovenian, French and German activists. GI Hungary are also continuing their ‘Taverna Pannonia’ talks which they began in October 2018, the last of which they held at the Hi5 pub in Budapest.

### LIST OF ACTIVE GI BRANCHES

(The following has been aided by the prior research of the Political Capital Institute.) Budapest, Szeged, Veszprém and Debrecen



Generation Identity activists from across Europe in Hungary for the ‘Central European Summer University’, May 2018. Credit: Twitter





Generation Identity activists from across Europe constructing a fence to block immigrants crossing the Alps, April 2018. Credit: Twitter.



Generation Identity activists from across Europe taking part in their annual 'Gedenken 1683' march in Vienna to commemorate the Battle of Kahlenberg in 1683 against the Ottoman Empire. Credit: Facebook.



## ITALY

### OVERVIEW OF IDENTITARIANISM IN ITALY

The identitarian movement in Italy is largely confined to the country's GI branch, Generazione Identitaria. A less prominent though still active group formed in 2015 is Azione Identitaria, which has regional groups in Friuli Venezia Giulia, Calabria, Umbria and Emilia e Romagna. It is also worth noting the place of CasaPound (CP), the neo-fascist Italian movement founded in 2003, in relation to GI. In certain ways, including its focus on cultural change and community building, CP set the template for GI, with José Pedro Zúquete of the University of Lisbon arguing that CP "is where all other identitarian groups would like to be in ten years". There are reasons for the two not coming together, however. GI and identitarians eschew the explicit endorsement of the fascism of CP, not least due to their differing ideological roots, and also diverge on some views, such as regionalism which is a greater priority for identitarians. Nonetheless, Generazione Identitaria are set apart from other



identitarian groups by having an established, local model on which to draw on and this likely influence can be seen elsewhere. In 2017 the German GI-linked 'Alternative Help Association' was launched, claiming to provide "aid" to refugees fleeing their countries, so as to prevent them from coming to Europe. Similarly, CP set-up Solidarité Identités, a CP-supported NGO which supports self-determination efforts round the globe, in 2013.

### OVERVIEW OF GENERATION IDENTITY IN ITALY

Generazione Identitaria (GI) was founded on 21 November 2012 in the city of Turin, following in the footsteps of the French, Austrian and German branches. Despite carrying out actions and receiving support from the other key branches, it has failed to grow to match their size or activity. The clearest demonstration of this came in 2017, when the pan-European GI 'Defend Europe' campaign was carried out to disrupt NGOs working to save refugees in the Mediterranean by chartering a ship to "monitor" the NGO vessels. The campaign (on land) was predominantly carried out in Catania, Sicily, Italian GI leader Lorenzo Fiato was a core Defend Europe activist, and GI Italy used the campaign to set up new regional branches and recruit new activists. Despite this, as an indicator of their stagnancy, a number of the branches set up during Defend Europe remain, according to GI, "in



Italian Generation Identity activists in the European Parliament, February 2018. Credit: Twitter.





formation”, at the time of writing.

It is important to note the ties between Italian GI and the country’s Lega party, which extend back at least to a February 2015 conference in Rome held by the think-tank, Il Talebano. The event featured now Lega leader Matteo Salvini, now Lega government minister Lorenzo Fontana, unsuccessful 2019 European election Lega MEP candidate Vincenzo Sofo (who is also the fiancé of Marion Marechal Le Pen, and who spoke at the Iliade Institute conference in Paris in 2019 which featured key French GI activists), Italian GI leader, Lorenzo Fiato, and two core, influential figures in the European identitarian movement, the German Götz Kubitschek and Philippe Vardon from France (who is now also senior Rassemblement National figure). The close proximity between Lega and the Italian branch of GI continued with the party’s support for the ‘Defend Europe’, with Lega hosting events alongside GI in Italy during the campaign. In 2018 Gian Marco Concas, a founding member of GI Italy and a participant in Defend Europe, was welcomed into the European Parliament by Lega MEP, Mario Borghezio, to hold a conference on the campaign.

The prospects for GI in Italy are likely limited, however, due to the success of Lega in the electoral space and CP on the streets and in communities. The mainstreaming of the far right in Italy through

Lega has even included a distinctly identitarian narrative. In May 2016 Salvini had already told an interviewer that “An effort at ethnic replacement is underway [...] to erase Italians living here”. More recently, echoing the identitarian fear mongering narrative that Europe is under threat from ‘Islamification’, Salvini stated at a Budapest press conference in May 2019 alongside Viktor Orbán, that “For our children, to leave behind an Islamic caliphate with sharia law in our cities is not something I want to do and I’m going to do everything in my power to avert this sad ending for Europe”.

## LIST OF ACTIVE GI BRANCHES

GI Italy are continuing online nationally as ‘Diritto di Agire’.

- **Sardinia** – Continuing online as ‘Il Nuragico’ and ‘Nuragico Nuraghes’.
- **Rome**
- **Turin**
- **Veneto**
- **Trentino Alto Adige** (“In formation” since the Defend Europe campaign though remains small)
- **Sicily** (“In formation” since the Defend Europe campaign though remains small)

## POLAND

In January, March and July 2017 Polish identitarian sympathisers held meetings where they discussed how to develop the movement in Poland. Representatives from GI Hungary went to speak in July alongside representatives from Pro-Vlast (a Czech patriot youth organisation active since 2012). Identitarian activists also attended the Polish Independence Day march on 11 November 2017 which saw 60,000 nationalists gather in Warsaw. However, the movement failed to get off the ground and there is no Polish GI branch at the time of writing.

Nonetheless, the relationship between Poland and the wider GI network remains noteworthy. A pan-European foundation for supporting GI, Generation Identity Europe Foundation (GIE), was founded in 2018 with the aim to “support patriotic projects and organisations in Europe” and claims at the time of writing to be active in Poland, Austria, France and Germany. GIE is registered in Szczecin, Poland but is headed by GI Germany activists, Daniel Sebbin and David Thomas Ratajczak. Given crackdowns on various GI bank accounts in recent years, it is likely that GIE is a means to try and avoid branches’ funding being depleted, though at the time of writing only the Austrian GI have directed donations for a period to the GIE account.

## PORTUGAL

Escudo Identitário (EI), launched in March 2017, are a small but active group in Portugal who describe their ideology as “Escudismo” (from ‘escudo’, meaning ‘shield’). It is in alignment with the broader identitarian movement’s goals and, as EI describe, pursued through its same “metapolitical” means. In March 2019 they claimed to have activists in Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra, Faro, Braga and Guimarães.



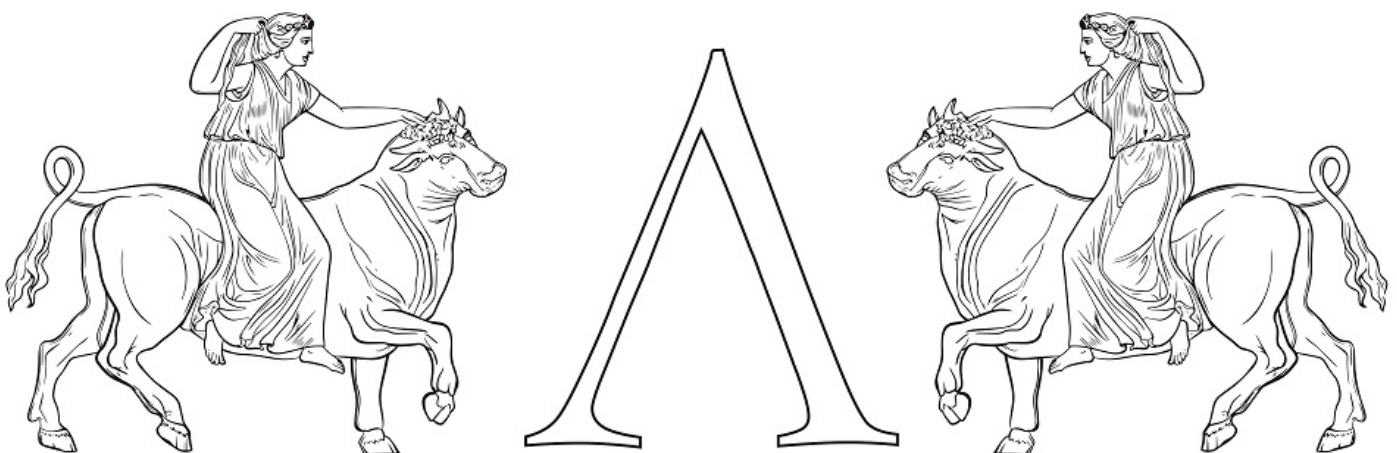
## RUSSIA

### OVERVIEW OF IDENTITARIANISM IN RUSSIA

Identitarian activity in Russia consists in its small, but active, branch of Generation Identity. It is unclear when precisely Идентаристы России, the Russian branch of GI, was founded but they appear to have been active since at least November 2017. Their leader is known as ‘Rhos Marsson’, or Ruslan Marsovich, who moved to St Petersburg from Novosibirsk in the same year, and though positive, interaction between the Russian GI and branches elsewhere appears to remain entirely online, with Marsson stating online in May 2019 that they stay in touch with European branches and that once visa issues had been sorted, they would participate in events with them.

### LIST OF ACTIVE GI BRANCHES

GI have branches in St. Petersburg and Moscow, though they have carried out actions elsewhere in Russia in Novosibirsk, Velikiy Novgorod, Tyumen, Chelyabinsk, Orenburg, Omsk, and Tolyatti.



GENERATION IDENTITY EUROPE





The Ljubljana branch of Generation Identity Slovenia in July 2019

## SERBIA

Active online since March 2017 and launched with an anti-migrant conference in May of the same year, the Serbian branch of Generation Identity (GI) held actions in October 2017 and a second conference on 1 November 2017 alongside the organisation, 'Eurasian Way'. On 9 January 2018 they carried out an action outside St. Sava church in Belgrade alongside the group Serbian Action and took part in an anti-NATO demonstration on 25 March 2018. However, at the time of writing the Serbian GI appears dormant.



"Solidarity with Ahmad, with national minority?" following the Slovenian authorities decision not to deport Syrian asylum-seeker, Ahmad Shamieh. In April 2018 a Slovenian activist travelled to the UK to attend the GI UK conference in Sevenoaks.

The branch has ties to the Slovenian Democratic Party (Slovenska Demokratska Stranka – SDS) whose leader, Janez Janša, has publicly expressed support for GI in Slovenia on multiple occasions. Bernard Brščič, a former aide to Janša, has also expressed support and wrote the foreword to their book, *Manifest za Domovino* (Manifesto for Homeland), published in 2018 by New Horizons (*Nova Obzorja – NO*), which is owned by the SDS. The majority shareholder of NO is Peter Schatz, a Hungarian who is close to Orban. The Slovenian National Party (Slovenska Nacionalna Stranka – SNS) have also expressed support for GI in Slovenia and Domovinska Liga, a new party formed by former SDS members and tied to Brščič, is possibly also close GI Slovenia.

In February 2019 GI Slovenia expressed support on their site for the police and offered to help them "discover the criminal organizations that have formed in Slovenia as non-governmental organizations and are working with illegal immigrants". A representative from the police said they "are in control of the situation" but "If one of the members is interested in police work, they are kindly invited to join [the force]". This was shared on the Demokracija news site, owned by the SDS. (Demokracija also interviewed activists during the 2018 pan-Europe GI 'Defend Alps' mission.) In June 2019 they displayed anti-LGBT banners that read 'Stop the LGBT Revolution'.

## SLOVENIA

### OVERVIEW OF IDENTITARIANISM IN SLOVENIA

Slovenia's identitarian activity is essentially confined to having a branch of Generation Identity. Generacija Identitete Slovenija is the Slovenian branch of Generation Identity and has been active since 2015. It has associated alongside other Eastern European Identitarians, and in 2017 attended a demonstration in Budapest alongside Serbian, Czech and Polish activists. Also in November 2017 they did a banner drop which read



### LIST OF ACTIVE GI BRANCHES

Ljubljana, Maribor, Velenje, Domžale



## SWEDEN

Whilst Sweden does not have a branch of Generation Identity or another active identitarian group, the country's far-right scene has played a pivotal role in catalysing the spread of identitarian ideas not only across Europe but further afield too. In 2008 an identitarian activist group, Identitet Väst (Identity West), was created by the Nordic League, a Swedish far-right network active between 2004-2010 which was influenced by both neo-Nazi and European New Right ideas. Despite some activity, including stickering in Gothenburg, Identity West did not last.

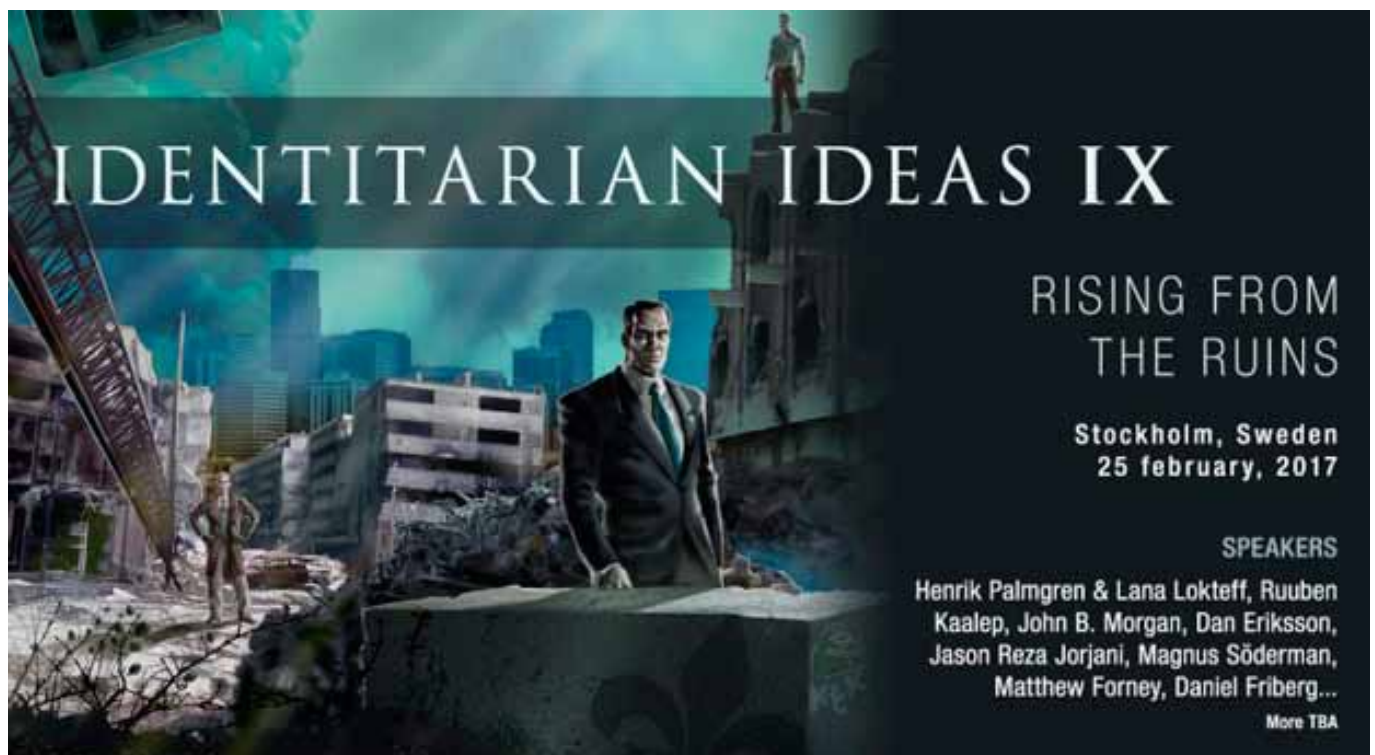
The longer legacy for identitarianism came out of a publishing house run by the Nordic League, Nordic Press, which in combination with the London-based publisher Integral Tradition Publishing, gave rise to Arktos Media in 2010. Arktos has been pivotal to the subsequent spread of European New Right ideas, including identitarianism, to the international far right and particularly to the North American far right. Arktos were the first to publish *We Are Generation Identity* in 2013, a compilation of writing by the French identitarian movement, as well as *Generation Identity: A Declaration of War Against the '68ers* by German identitarian activist Markus Willinger in the same year. Whilst they also published Willinger's *A Europe of Nations in 2014*, his 2013 book has become a core text for the youth movement and has been translated from German into English, Polish, Dutch, Croatian, Czech, Portuguese, French, Italian, Swedish and Greek.

The CEO and co-founder of Arktos Media is the Swede Daniel Friberg who also organises the Identitarian Ideas conferences, the last of which was Identitarian Ideas IX: Rising from the Ruins, which was held in Stockholm in 2017. Friberg also has supported the US identitarian group Identity Evropa (IE) (now rebranded as the 'American Identity Movement'), when in September 2017 Arktos partnered with the organisation to "promote Identitarian literature with [US] students." This partnership likely came about through William Clark, Former Registrar and North Atlantic Regional Coordinator for IE who became head of Arktos' US operation in February 2018.

Following the public disavowal by continental European branches of Generation Identity UK and Ireland in August 2019, following the latter's decision to invite YouTuber Colin Robertson (AKA Millennial Woes) to their London conference, private chats revealed by HOPE not hate indicated Friberg had reached out to the UK activists to express his support, stating:

Hi! I'm very happy to hear about your successful conference this weekend, and I think IBÖ's [Generation Identity Austria] public disavowal on twitter is both unfair and a display of poor optics. A chapter should not be met with public disavowal after organizing a successful conference. I have seen massive amounts of negative reactions to the statement both on twitter and elsewhere. I hope you're pulling through this alright!

*The above has been aided by the prior research of Expo.*



## SWITZERLAND

Given Switzerland's multiple-official languages there have existed multiple iterations of Generation Identity in Switzerland, the most prominent being *Génération Identitaire Genève* (Generation Identity Geneva) (GIG) and *Identitäre Bewegung Schweiz* (Identity Movement Switzerland) (IBS). GIG was formed in 2013 by members of two earlier Genevan Identitarian groups, *Jeunes Identitaires Genevois* (JIG) and *Mouvement Identitaires Genevois*. The co-founder of JIG and a prominent French identitarian activist, Jean-David Cattin, told the *Tribune de Genève* in July 2017 that his focus was just on France and no longer also on French-speaking Switzerland and that GIG consisted of only about 10 activists.

IB Schweiz was formed in August 2014 but remained largely inactive after that point, with some meetings in Zurich and Olten and a bank account for donations registered in St Gallen but with little street activity and, in recent years, merely an online presence sharing activity from other branches of GI. In February 2019 a regional Swiss-German branch for the Aargau-Mittelland region gained a dedicated, additional site though this has not led to further activity.



## SPAIN

Two small identitarian groups have emerged recently in Spain, *Movimiento Identitario España* launched May 2019 which has begun flyering, and *Juventud Identitaria* launched in January 2018 which has carried out more extensive posterling, demonstrations and held a conference in Oviedo in November 2018.



## THE NETHERLANDS

A small but active identitarian group in the Netherlands is *Identitair Verzet (IV)*, formed in 2012 as a splinter from the ethnic nationalist group *Voorpost* which seeks a state uniting all Dutch-speaking territories. Because of this origin, it still maintains an interest for uniting The Netherlands and Flanders alongside traditional identitarian themes such as anti-Muslim and immigrant politics. Though not officially affiliated, IV has taken part in demonstrations alongside members of Generation Identity in Germany and often uses GI iconography and rhetoric.



Escudo Identitario activists demonstrating in July 2019

Generation Identity launches in the UK, October 2017







# GENERATION IDENTITY UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND: THE RUNT OF THE LITTER

Since launching in October 2017 the UK and Ireland branch of the Generation Identity (GI) network has suffered one major setback after another. The first major blow came as soon as the organisation launched when then-leader Jordan Diamond distanced himself from the group following an undercover exposé by ITV, with the help of HOPE not hate, that caught co-leader of the Austrian branch and de facto leader of the movement Martin Sellner using a racist epithet while planning the official UK launch banner drop. The exposé scuppered the launch and embarrassed the UK branch in the eyes of the international network. However, they survived under the new leadership of

Tom Dupré, a former City banker who had studied psychology at Bristol University and under whose leadership the branch steadily began to grow. In March 2018, after Sellner was denied entry to the UK following a campaign by HOPE not hate, British anti-Muslim activist Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (AKA Tommy Robinson) delivered the speech Sellner was due to give at Speakers' Corner in London's Hyde Park, where members of GI UK and Ireland were in attendance. In the same month HOPE not hate also revealed that Jake Bewick, then a GI UK activist, had previously been a member of the now-proscribed neo-nazi terrorist organisation, National Action (NA).



Generation Identity UK and Ireland activists at a meeting in Manchester with members of their behind-the-scenes Generation Identity Support Group, May 2019.

**UK LEADERS**



**UK LEADER:  
Benjamin Jones**



**LONDON LEADER:  
Charlie Fox (Robertson)**



**NORTH WEST LEADER:  
Charlie Shaw**



**WEST MIDLANDS  
LEADER: Joe Newey**



**WALES LEADER: Scott  
Selvester Williams**



**SCOTLAND LEADER:  
William McNeil**



**SUPPORT GROUP  
LEADER: David Wright**

In anticipation of GI UK and Ireland’s first conference to be held in Sevenoaks, Kent in April 2018, HOPE not hate published *A New Threat? Generation Identity United Kingdom and Ireland* outlining the movement. The conference was beset by problems from the off: a venue move from London to Kent days before, the new venue’s location revealed by HOPE not hate on the day of the event, technical problems throughout, and planned speakers unable to make it to the conference, with Sellner and the Hungarian co-leader Abel Bòdi being barred entry into the UK. Alongside members of GI UK and Ireland speaking, Freya Hornold of GI Germany and the German GI-linked #120dB group spoke and Aurelija Anilyte of GI Denmark was also in attendance as was a member of GI Slovenia.

Summer 2018 saw an increase in street demonstrations, especially in London, organised by or in support of Lennon, with GI activists a visible presence on each occasion. In June, HOPE not hate revealed that Sam Melia, who had stood as a local election candidate for the anti-Muslim For Britain party in May, was a former member of NA and was now active in GI (including attending their March Hyde Park demonstration and April conference).

In August, Dupré quit after the nazi past of key UK GI organiser Tore Rasmussen was discovered by HOPE not hate and revealed in The Observer. The revelation came whilst GI UK were at the movement’s ‘Summer University’ training camp in France, leaving Dupré’s co-leader Benjamin Jones to run the branch without Dupré or Rasmussen.

In September HOPE not hate revealed that core GI UK activist, Sam Sibbons, was an active member of For Britain’s London branch. In November, British GI members including Sibbons flew to Poland to join a far-right organised demonstration in Warsaw, where fascists from around the world were in attendance. Members also visited the GI-linked ‘Kontrakultur’ centre in Halle, Germany.

In December, despite coordinated efforts amongst continental GI branches to campaign against the signing of the United Nations’ new Migration Pact, GI UK and Ireland were unable to attract much interest at all by comparison. An investigation by Al Jazeera, which aired in the same month, revealed the extreme violence and further extreme views of GI members and associates in the GI-linked Citadelle bar in Lille, France, including members of GI who attended the movement’s summer training camp alongside UK GI members.





Activists in Manchester engaged in an action dressed as characters from Willy Wonka

2019 started badly for GI in the UK and Ireland, with dwindling press interest, deplatforming by social media, and a majority of its actions being carried out by the same activists. Moreover, in January 2019 the group underwent a split following the creation of the breakaway 'British Revival' group.

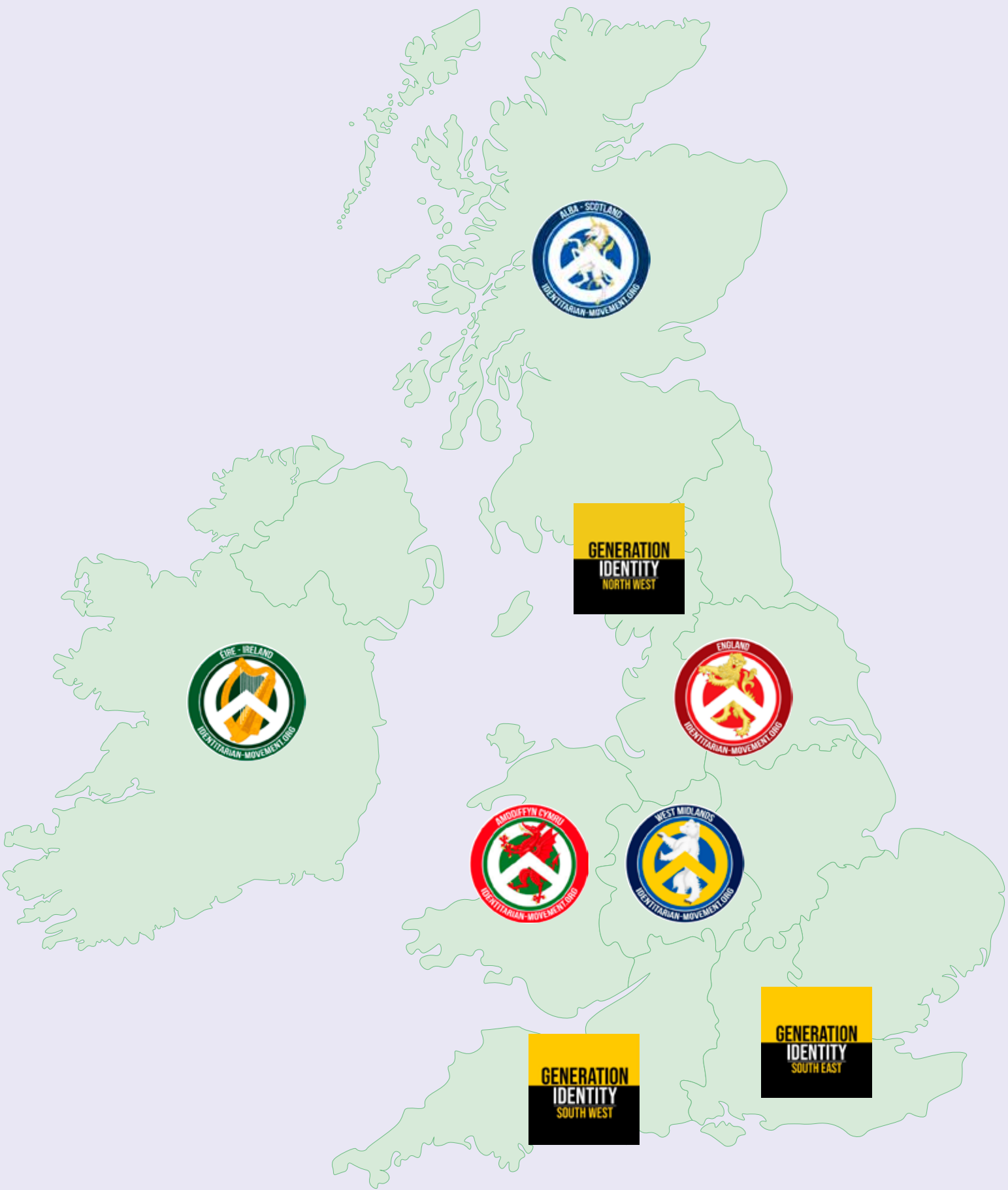
Since its creation less than two years ago the UK branch has proved something of an embarrassment for the international GI network. That said, despite its many mistakes and setbacks the group has struggled on and now, under the sole leadership of Jones, an activist from the Midlands, the group has stabilised and started to slowly grow again, recruiting new activists and continuing to hold actions.

They have also continued to interact with branches of GI abroad in France and Austria. In April HOPE not hate revealed further links between GI and various members of the anti-Muslim For Britain party, including branch chairs and local election candidates, and in May HOPE not hate revealed that UK GI activists had travelled to the US far-right American Renaissance conference, which hosted

members of the extreme US far right, and where they met US identitarian group, American Identity Movement.

In July 2019 disaster struck for UK GI as their choice to publicly host the Scottish antisemitic alt-right vlogger Colin Robertson (AKA Millennial Woes) at their London conference was met with disavowals across Europe by other branches. Despite the hypocrisy - with Austrian identitarians being on good terms with Robertson, for example - at the time of writing, internal messages seen by HOPE not hate indicate that there has been a definitive split and the UK branch will be forced to relinquish the name and branding.

This spiral out of control only underlines the inadequacy of GI in the UK and Ireland, who are far less of a threat than established groups in the network elsewhere. Nonetheless, they are one of the few active far-right groups across the UK and Ireland to be attracting young people and, given the influence of identitarianism on a number of violent terrorist attackers in recent times, they remain a crucial movement for far-right radicalisation.



# THE INSIDE STORY OF GENERATION IDENTITY UK



Attendees at the 2019 Generation Identity UK conference. Far left, Thomas Rowsell (AKA Survive the Jive).





**During the five months Ben van der Merwe was inside GI UK he attended their yearly conference and passed HOPE not hate thousands of internal messages and planning documents. Here's what he found.**

**By Ben van der Merwe**

A hand landed gruffly by my neck. I snapped my head around to see a balding, 30-something man behind me, pint in one hand, my shoulder in the other. He cut quite a figure in his animal rights t-shirt; a committed vegan, he also happened to be a proud member of the National Front.

"I know he's your mate, right, but this little prick just asked me for coke." He jabbed his finger in the direction of Joel Ellis, a young Generation Identity (GI) activist who was now scampering towards the rest of our group. Clearly insulted by the request, the two National Front members pursued him as GI's leadership looked on in stunned silence.

It fell to Charlie Shaw, GI's North West lead, to defuse the situation. "Is this what Generation Identity are like?" shouted the vegan, struggling to get to Joel. "It's pathetic!"

After a few minutes, the two National Front members stormed off. Joel returned from some way down the pavement, his mouth still glued shut in terror.

"Fucking hell!" screamed Charlie. "Do you know who they are? They should be in prison!"

We were at a chic bar in South Kensington, celebrating the successful execution of the second-ever UK conference of Generation Identity, a pan-European far-right organisation. Last year's attempt at a conference went disastrously wrong after anti-fascists got wind of the venue location. This time, however, things had gone exactly as planned – until one of the speakers decided to invite his old friends along.

Charlie was furious that Thomas Rowsell, a YouTuber who had links to the now-banned neo-Nazi terrorist group National Action, had invited the two men. Not only were they National Front, but according to Charlie they were also former members of National Action.

"They're proscribed! Do you know what that means? That means anyone who makes contact with them could be proscribed. Do you get it?!" Charlie continued. However, this wasn't the first-

time GI events had been attended by National Action supporters. Back in 2018 HOPE not hate exposed Jacob Bewick, a GI activist, as being a former National Action member.

Rowsell, although just a few feet away, was drunk enough that he missed the whole discussion and was still oblivious to the unfolding drama.

This event was made all the more shocking by something I had uncovered earlier in the night. As I sank pints on the deckchairs outside the bar with Kenny (Kenneth McCourt), a Scottish member with a beard at least a decade older than his baby face, he boasted of his friendship with neo-Nazi musician 'Eternal Reich'. But Kenny was not just a committed far-right activist – he was also a serving member of the Royal Navy.

As the night wore on, Kenny gradually divulged more and more details of his role in the Navy. He had been recruited into GI by his friend Mike (Mike Lynton), who serves alongside him and is active in both UKIP and GI. In fact, I had been told that GI's Austrian co-leader Martin Sellner considers military personnel to make the best activists.

From my conversation with Kenny, it became apparent that he and Mike were apparently not alone in their views. Kenny boasted that some officers on his base were also racist. Political correctness, he claimed, had only reached the highest rungs of the Navy, and consequently they had sent down diversity officers to fix the issues with the lower ranks.

I was there as an informant for HOPE not Hate, part of a months-long infiltration of the extremist group. This was meant to be a long-term, fact-finding project. By this point, however, I was having doubts about remaining undercover. We couldn't allow a far-right activist with potential terrorist links to be serving in the Royal Navy. But what Kenny revealed next changed everything: he would soon be relocated and would be take up a position as a sonar engineer on board a Trident-armed nuclear submarine.

With two committed far-right activists serving in the Navy, and one due to spend months onboard a Vanguard submarine armed with nuclear weapons, I knew it was impossible to continue the infiltration as planned – we had to sound the alarm.

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GI are known for their slick visual presentation and public disavowal of violence and neo-Nazism, a strategic choice which has paid dividends through softball media coverage.

Through my familiarity with video-editing, I was given unprecedented access to the group's social media operation. Although they like to appear large and active offline like their European counterparts,

there were only a few real-life meet-ups during my five months as a member. Every meeting that did occur was leveraged for maximum social media exposure to give the appearance of a large organisation, and protests were planned entirely around the social media posts that would follow. Regional branches were inflated with outside activists to appear larger. The group's leadership even created fake Twitter accounts to write positive replies to their own tweets, and attempted to coordinate the mass-reporting of online critics. New members were recruited using "patriotic" Facebook pages that don't mention they are run by GI and the infiltration of UKIP chat-rooms.

GI's UK leader, Ben Jones, describes them as a "water-tight metapolitical project", meaning that their goal is not to win power in political institutions but to shape public debate. In particular, GI hopes to seed public discussion with ethno-nationalist ideas and thereby win support for their end goal – the ethnic cleansing of Europe.

One part of this normalisation strategy has been replacing traditional far-right discussion of race and genetics with the language of culture and identity. As one activist wrote in a private chat: "Saying it [genetic differences between races] publicly won't do us any favours... Now, pushing the cultural differences is a more subtle way of implying that there's very real differences between the people who were originally here and the people who are now coming here."

Most notoriously, GI have been instrumental in spreading the far-right conspiracy theory of 'The Great Replacement'. The Great Replacement is a rebranding of the century-old 'white genocide' conspiracy theory, which alleges that white people are being deliberately erased through immigration and racial mixing.

Under its new branding, the theory has seen a revival in popularity. Two massacres this year, in Christchurch and El Paso, cited the Great Replacement as their primary motivation, while Norwegian terrorist Anders Breivik was heavily influenced by similar ideas. Prior to his attacks, the Christchurch mosque killer donated €2,000 and €1,500 to GI's French and Austrian branches, respectively. Despite his earlier denials, Austrian co-leader Martin Sellner was found to have engaged in sustained email correspondence with the killer, even inviting him to Austria for drinks.

Under their veneer of respectability, which has seen them branded "hipster fascists" by the media, what I found was a group of men expressing vulgar racism and willing to ally privately with the most extreme elements of the far right.

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left to right: Colin Robertson (AKA Millennial Woes) and Thomas Rowsell (AKA Survive the Jive)

## GENERATION IDENTITY'S WOES

The conference took place in an upmarket hotel in South Kensington. Gathering awkwardly around the hotel bar, a few dozen men talked in hushed tones. GI leader Ben Jones had instructed us to avoid any mention of the conference in earshot of the hotel's staff as the room had been booked under 'Ben's birthday'.

Security was tight, with the location kept strictly under wraps. Despite this, conference organiser David Wright trusted me enough to task me with taking photos of the event. Immediately taking him up on the offer, I was astonished that, despite all their security precautions, they had tasked a HOPE not Hate infiltrator with taking photos of the event and its attendees.

The bar-side chatter stopped as Anne Marie Waters entered the hotel lobby, surrounded by senior members of For Britain, her far-right anti-Muslim party. Indisputably the headline speaker, Waters and her company passed through the crowd in silence to claim a space of their own in the corner. Waters' speech was billed as a major event – the first British politician to speak about the Great Replacement and a confirmation of her conversion from what one founding member described as "Islam-bashing" to identitarianism.

GI members were deeply critical of what they

## IN THE NAVY

The two GI activist that claim to be serving members of the Royal Navy are Kenneth McCourt and Mike Lynton. They told our source that Lynton recruited McCourt to GI while they were on the same Navy base and McCourt bragged about taking up a position on a nuclear submarine.

Background searches have revealed a picture of McCourt in a military uniform, reviews penned by him of navy recruitment test guides and he likes the Royal Navy magazine 'Navy News' on Facebook. Meanwhile, an article in the Exeter Daily pictures Lynton and describes him as a "Royal Navy engineer and technician".

saw as For Britain's excessive focus on religion at the expense of race, but were clearly excited about the new direction being taken by Waters. Closer cooperation between GI and For Britain had been teased for months, and members were finally about to see the transformation that had taken place. Waters did not mince her words in support of the white genocide conspiracy, telling the audience: "The only reason that the mass-migration into white Europe is happening on the scale that it's happening is to disempower white people, to make us a minority and therefore unable to wield political power."



Waters' shift to more explicitly racist and conspiratorial language clearly alarmed the two ethnic minority members of For Britain who had come to the conference, both of whom used questions from the floor to criticise GI's ethno-nationalism. A black member asked Ben Jones whether there would be a place for him in GI's ideal society. Ben told him that a small number of "non-indigenous" people could live in the UK if they signed up to certain principles, although this would not be desirable.

Two other speakers, Tomislav Sunic and Colin Robertson (AKA Millennial Woes), meanwhile, used their speeches to attack Waters for still over-emphasising the importance of religion over race. The mood in the smoking area after her speech was sour, with tension in the air between Waters, the other speakers, and her own members. Speaking to Robertson, Ben Jones criticised Waters' anti-Islam focus: "Counter-jihad [an anti-Muslim movement that grew in the 2000s] is just so boring and ten years ago. It's a dead-end, frankly."

As it turned out, Waters would be the least extreme of the speakers. Tomislav Sunic, a Croatian-American academic and co-director of the white nationalist American Freedom Party, spoke on the importance of racial identity. Sunic also spoke warmly of his close friendship with Kevin MacDonald, the antisemitic conspiracy theorist who described Norwegian terrorist Anders Breivik as a "serious political thinker with a great many insights and some good practical ideas on strategy."

After a short break, attendees returned to the conference room to listen to the third scheduled speaker. I was asked to put away my camera, as Thomas Rowsell (AKA Survive the Jive) had asked that his attendance be kept secret. Rowsell took the stand for a long and rambling lecture on the ethnographic history of Europe, ending with a plug for his book of pagan children's stories.

Rowsell's energy-sapping speech, which was recorded against his wishes by GI and stored in their unsecured online Dropbox, belied his colourful history in the most extreme fringes of the far right. A former skinhead, Rowsell spent a short spell as a freelance journalist. In 2012, he began attending meetings of the far-right London Forum, where he became friends with Jez Turner and Stead Steadman, who even Ben Jones described as a "neo-Nazi".

Rowsell gradually drifted towards the far-right pagan scene, founding the Frithgard Fellowship and, most notoriously, attending a National Action-led training camp in 2014.

It was the final speaker, however, who attracted the greatest controversy. Scottish YouTuber Colin Robertson (AKA Millennial Woes) describes himself as "pro-slavery" and has called for the torpedoing of refugee boats.

Although he claims to reject violence, he frequently indulges in genocidal fantasies, once predicting: "There's a huge contingent of the Scottish

population who will absolutely fucking mow down the Muslims when the time comes. I don't doubt that for a second."

In the same chilling video, he quotes a pro-migrant academic before saying: "I think we should be taking down names, because after the collapse I hope that people... I hope that certain people meet their just desserts. I hope that some people are punished, executed, as they should be."

Although members were not formally consulted on the speaker invitations, the possibility of inviting Robertson was discussed and objections were raised on account of his virulent antisemitism – a potential threat to the group's clean-cut image. Ben Jones consulted GI's other European leaders, who told him not to invite Robertson – advice which Jones chose to ignore.

GI members themselves were not entirely immune to violent fantasies. One member joked about dressing like ISIS and kidnapping Shadow Home Secretary Diane Abbott, to which Ben Jones replied that they should blame it on Mossad.



At one point, members discussed organising self-defence training. One suggested putting household ammonia in a water gun as a weapon. Ben Jones intervened, saying that the conversation was “bad optics”.

Another highly active member, with links to the British National Party and the white nationalist Creativity Movement, wrote in a private chat: “The sooner our people get sick of Muslims, the sooner they will throw them out. If Muslims start to play nicer, our people might not wake up till the great replacement is already accomplished.”

The same member later suggested the neo-Nazi ‘14 words’ as a slogan for GI. When this was rejected, he suggested ‘White Pride World Wide’. Ben Jones told him to stay away from the word ‘white’ for optics reasons.

In the end, Robertson’s speech went smoothly. Reading from his phone, and under strict instructions to avoid controversy, at several points he ostentatiously scrolled through inappropriate parts of his speech. After a few uninspiring

speeches from Ben Jones and London regional lead Charlie Fox, the conference came to an unceremonious close.

We were informed that the protest which had been planned for the afternoon had to be cancelled, as someone had gone missing with the GI flags. Instead, we took a group photo in the conference room with a banner, although this photo ended up being too blurry to use.

Once we got to the pub, members began to let their guard down. After one senior member, Ben Harrison, asked why I wasn’t using my real name, I told him I was concerned about possible leaks. Confusingly, he tried to calm my fears by pointing to various members and telling me their full names and places of work. It was at this point, too, that Kenny began, entirely unprompted, divulging his position in the Navy.

As Rowsell got increasingly drunker than everyone else, his two friends from the National Front arrived. I got talking to the one in the animal rights





t-shirt, who regaled me with stories of his days in “serious activism”. He was no longer involved, he said. The “movement” had gone down the drain. I asked him what he meant, and he gestured disdainfully behind me. Two of the GI boys were wrestling on the pavement, and a glass smashed in the confusion. He sighed.

The atmosphere was decidedly masculine, with only two women present throughout the whole night. When someone brought this up, they were comforted that Martin Sellner says women only join late in a branch’s development.

This gender imbalance sometimes made for an uncomfortable environment, with members undermining one another in a manner not exclusive to but particularly common in far-right male circles. Members would make fun of Ben Jones’s unique facial hair, calling him “Wolverine”, and Ben would take this out on others. In particular, he would target his ridicule at one of the more socially awkward activists, who later told me he found this bullying extremely uncomfortable and degrading. Ben would also make fun of Scott Williams, a Welsh activist whose height contrasted absurdly with Jones’ lanky frame.

The night was winding down, and after a brief flurry of excitement over Joel’s failed coke deal, we said our goodbyes.

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The next day, all hell broke loose.

Colin Robertson’s attendance had provoked shock from GI’s European leaders, who had not even been told that their request had been ignored. In response, Ben Jones issued a statement, justifying the appearance as the “free exchange of ideas.”

In a furious private Telegram message to his fellow European leaders, Martin Sellner wrote: “Ben disregarded our common opinion, that GI UK should no [sic] invite the Youtuber Millennial [sic] Woes to their official conference.”

Sellner continued: “He does not care about our opinion at all. All european GIs are beeing [sic] held hostage by him and have to hope that his decisions are not hurting our cause too much. [...] He does not act as part of our movement, so he cant be part of our movement.”

The European leaders resolved to publicly denounce the UK leadership on Twitter, and demand that they step down: “We will then reach out to other GI members and establish a different leadership that is cooperative, reasonable and not harming the european profile of GI, and sees himself as part of a greater organisation. If this not the case by tomorrow evening, we will have to disavow the english movement publicly and declare that it is no longer part of GI, demanding to change its Name and Branding.”



“Holy shit,” one UK member responded upon being sent the message in the Telegram group for UK activists.

Refusing to consider stepping down, Ben Jones immediately dug in and attacked the European leadership: “They are now basically trying to get rid of us it seems. Their view is that by inviting Millennial Woes we have damaged the brand. Now bear in mind, we know what the Germans and Austrians the French have been up to over the years. Martin Sellner is basically treating us as, I’m going to be frank, like dirt.”

George, a founding member of GI UK and a veteran far-right activist, called for reconciliation: “It was a bad mistake. No one can join us if they are a JQ-er [Jewish Question]. It is the bottom line.”

The leadership, however, refused to move. “There was no mistake, George” replied David, who runs the ‘Support Group’ for GI UK activists who stay out of the public eye.

“Really?” George responded. “He is a JQer. One cannot join if you are a JQer [...] We are trying to get totally away from the shadow of the Old Right. We don’t do that by getting a JQer to speak at our conference.”

Another member, Xurious Music, wrote: “I did say, ahead of time, that there were big problems with allowing Woes to the conference, and urged David and Ben to cancel him.”

George fumed. “They do not listen. It’s that simple. [...] If we have been thrown out by the rest of the movement, and if we cannot repair that break, then we have made a terrible mistake. The unique aspect of Generation Identity is that it is a pan-European movement.”

Ben, growing increasingly angry at the apparent insubordination, said: “With all due respect ladies and gentlemen, all of your regional leads and seconds made this decision. [...] Set aside romance for a moment, what have [European GI] meant for us on a day-to-day basis? They’ve caused us media headaches and a coup attempt.”

“I have seen this sort of thing so many times before,” George said, “and always with the same basic causes – monumental egos in small (and tiny) groups and movements, and the work of saboteurs. I am now (just) in my seventh decade. I am too old for this. So, good luck guys, and au revoir from the old git; or should that be adieu?”

And with that, George quit.

“OK, well, I am sorry to see George go,” said David.

“I don’t think \*you\* are sorry to see George go, to be honest, David,” snapped Xurious. “We are under UK leadership only because we respect the chain of command. Once that is broken, everything falls apart.”

“Nothing’s falling apart,” David replied.

“Yes, it is, David. We just lost a very loyal and dedicated member. And we are looking to fracture the very organisation we all joined. This is what falling apart feels like. These cracks won’t stop here.”

The conflict had brought out long-simmering tensions between the European and UK branches, both personal and strategic. Ben saw Sellner as jealously guarding Austria’s dominance in the movement and as regarding the UK with contempt. He was hurt when the German leader referred to GI UK as an ‘artificial branch’.

However, the fundamental tension behind the split was not personality but strategy. The UK leadership made it clear that they saw it necessary to interact with more extreme elements of the far right for strategic reasons.

For instance, when one member raised concerns over possible cooperation with white nationalist news site Defend Europa on the grounds that the site’s UK leadership are antisemites and Holocaust deniers, David responded saying: “They do express some fruity views, but were kind enough to chat with [GI activists] Ben and Charlie recently, so we are on generally good terms. We all have to find common ground where possible and advisable.”

Ben Jones similarly expressed willingness to work with US identitarian group the American Identity Movement after one member branded them as extreme. “They’ve distanced themselves from the JQ types,” Ben promised.

In the end, the split was final. While the senior leadership celebrated the opportunities this would bring, it was clear that not everyone was satisfied.

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Over the five months that I was inside Generation Identity, I uncovered some truly chilling examples of crass racism and violent rhetoric. In contrast to the slick, respectable image that the group works so hard to cultivate, it is clear that they are happy to associate themselves with the most extreme elements of the far right when out of the public eye. Most shocking of all was that two members of a group with such dangerous links, and whose openly-stated end-goal is the ethnic cleansing of Europe, could serve in the Royal Navy, one of them aboard a nuclear submarine.

The future of Generation Identity UK is far from certain. The schism with Europe has thrown the group into chaos – an organisation built entirely upon optics forced to rebrand wholesale. Having finally built a degree of name and brand recognition in the UK, the group will essentially be starting from scratch. Moreover, the leadership’s divisive strategy of deliberately alienating the UK branch from Europe and welcoming in more extreme elements of the far-right is likely to only fuel the existing internal divisions. As Xurious, a GI activist put it, “This is what feeling apart feels like. These cracks won’t stop here.”

American identitarians demonstrating in March 2019. Credit: Twitter.







# IDENTITARIANISM AROUND THE WORLD

## IDENTITARIANISM IN NORTH AMERICA

Identitarianism travelled to North America through the filter of the much discussed ‘alt-right’. Often framed as an essentially American phenomenon, from its inception the alt-right drew heavily from various schools of European far-right thought such as the European New Right (ENR) that began in France in the late 1960s and the identitarian ideology and movement that descended from it. From alt-right figurehead Richard Spencer – who has described himself as an identitarian<sup>1</sup> – attempting to start an explicitly identitarian activist organisation (the failed ‘Operation Homeland’ project) in December 2017, to US alt-right group American Identity Movement (formerly ‘Identity Evropa’) embracing European identitarian activist tactics, it is clear that the alt-right looked across the Atlantic to draw on both identitarian ideas and identitarian tactics.

Central to identitarianism is the rejection of liberal multiculturalism and the promotion instead of ‘ethnopluralism’: the idea that different ethnic groups are equal but ought to live in separation from one another. European identitarians’ desire for ethnopluralism, and attachment to such a strict notion of ethnic and cultural identity, draws especially from a conspiratorial fear that the continent will succumb to “Islamification” from mass migration, which would eventually lead to a “Great Replacement” of “indigenous” Europeans. In the US this has caught the attention of members of the far right who believe that similar demographic ‘threats’ are posed by migrants, with Muslim migrants again being a particular focus. As the Anti-Defamation League reported in June 2017, Identity Evropa were at the helm of popularising a slogan drawing on the same theme – “You will not replace us” (at times interchanged for, “Jews will not replace us”) – amongst the alt-right that year.<sup>2</sup>

## IDENTITARIAN IDEAS

Though not an exact copy, the importation of ENR thought to America was integral to the development of the American alt-right. In a December 2017 BuzzFeed profile of leading ENR philosopher, Alain de Benoist, the thinker recognised that some within the alt-right consider him “their spiritual father” though he did not consider them his “spiritual sons”.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless,

de Benoist spoke at the 2013 conference of Richard Spencer’s National Policy Institute, which is now part of the AltRight Corporation, and it was his *Manifesto for a European Renaissance*, co-authored with Charles Champetier and translated into English in 1999, which introduced notions such as ethnopluralism to the English-speaking world more widely. This importing of far-right ideology continued, with key contemporary European identitarian thinkers like Martin Semlitsch (AKA Martin Lichtmesz) speaking at a 2017 conference of white supremacist US organisation, American Renaissance. Moreover, the ideological exchange is very much in both directions, with Semlitsch, who is also a close associate of European identitarian street movement, Generation Identity (GI), for example translating *The Way of Men* by US alt-right figure, Jack Donovan, from English to German in 2016.

## DEFEND EUROPE & THE AMERICAN ALT-RIGHT

While prominent alt-right figures had long been looking across the Atlantic at the European Identitarian movement, it was the headline grabbing Defend Europe campaign in the summer of 2017 that really catalysed American far right interest in Generation Identity (GI). This involved GI activists from across Europe disrupting the work of NGOs working to save the lives of migrants and refugees crossing the Mediterranean, initially by blocking an NGO ship in May 2017 in Sicily, and later in the summer of that year by chartering a ship and sailing into the Mediterranean to further disrupt their work.

The action, which failed to achieve its stated objectives, nonetheless galvanised the international far right and demonstrated their current capability to work cooperatively on a global scale, including numerous North American actors. Defend Europe initially received wider attention via US vlogger Brittany Pettibone and Canadian vlogger Lauren Southern and had crowdfunding coming in from across the world on US alt-right troll Charles C. Johnson’s WeSearchr site. It also had media support from far-right news outlet Breitbart News Network, former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan David Duke, alt-right figures Richard Spencer and Jared Taylor and leading alt-right neo-nazi website, The Daily Stormer.

To capitalise on GI’s new found fame, co-leader of the Austrian branch of GI and *de facto* spokesperson for the movement, Martin Sellner,

visited the US to meet with members of the alt-right during Milo Yiannopoulos' failed 'Free Speech Week' in Berkeley, California in September 2017. During his time there Sellner spoke with Southern and Pettibone, and the three agreed that the issues are the same for America and Europe (and Australia and New Zealand), with Sellner adding that the exchange between Europe and America was at this point really one of "tactics". Reaffirming that it is indeed an exchange, Pettibone noted that, "We've mastered the online activism and you've mastered the in-real-life activism".

## IDENTITY EVROPA/ THE AMERICAN IDENTITY MOVEMENT

The adoption of GI's tactics by North American far-right groups is best seen in the aforementioned Identity Evropa (IE), a US identitarian youth movement founded in 2016, and which rebranded as the 'American Identity Movement' (AIM) in March 2019. In an interview with Greg Johnson of US alt-right publishers Counter-Currents Publishing in the same year, IE's founder Nathan Damigo told Johnson that European groups including Generation Identity: "[...] got me really excited and motivated because I could see [their] models and say 'hey we can do this here in America [...] that seems to be working over there so why not build a model over here?'"

The American alt-right as a whole reconsidered its public image following the events of 2017 – not least due to the murder of anti-fascist protestor, Heather Heyer, at the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia in August. As the Southern Poverty Law Centre (SPLC) note, the response of IE was to "[double] down on their identitarian label".<sup>4</sup> Vlogger Brittany Pettibone spoke with new IE leader Patrick Casey, in January 2018 and he confirmed that they "want to have a very identitarian aesthetic [and] approach and we want our rhetoric to be identitarian."

This US identitarian venture was soon offered support by a notable European partner in the form of Arktos Media, a key publisher of alt-right and European New Right texts based in Hungary, who in September 2017 partnered with IE to "promote Identitarian literature with [US] students." This partnership likely came about through William Clark, Former Registrar and North Atlantic Regional Coordinator for IE who became head of Arktos' US operation in February 2018.

IE/AIM leader Patrick Casey pushed forward with this approach, again explicitly drawing on the GI influences that Damigo had cited. In a post on his Maker Support funding page in January 2018 Casey responded to Brad Griffin (AKA Hunter Wallace) of the Occidental Dissent blog, explaining how his organisation "[...] want to depathologize ethnic/racial identity", something he believed Generation Identity "has proven [...] can be done". As the SPLC noted, "Casey drew a distinction between "1.0"



white nationalists like Griffin and identitarians like himself who, through the creation of their own culture, memes, and unique content, have created a space that appeals to a younger generation".

This focus comes through in IE/AIM's activism, which imitates common actions carried out by GI, such as banner drops, helping exclusively white homeless people and leafleting and engaging in "open dialogue" events on university campuses. At a deeper level, IE/AIM's activism consciously follows the identitarian 'metapolitical' strategy: the shifting of accepted topics, terms, and positions of public discussion in order to create a social and political environment more open and potentially accepting of identitarian ideology. It comes from a belief that societal acceptance is required before electoral and policy support can be successful. Like GI's efforts to mainstream discussions around "protecting" Europeans from multiculturalism and immigration, IE/AIM site claims at the time of writing that they bring attention to the need to preserve "America's historical demographics in the face of mass immigration".

## ID CANADA

In addition to smaller groups increasingly relying on identitarian themes – such as the Toronto-based Students for Western Civilization and the Quebecois group *Atalante Québec – Canada* is home to what appears to be the first North American branch of GI, though its affiliation to GI is somewhat ambiguous. Though their Facebook page appeared in 2012, their website states:

“ID Canada started off as Generation Identity – Canada back in December of 2014. As of August 2017, the organization came under new leadership. The new leadership team came to the quick realization that while the vast majority of our core Canadian tenets come from Europe, this organization needed its own unique Canadian brand. On January 1st, 2018, we officially re-branded as ID Canada.”

During 2018, ID Canada also came out in support of Canadian white nationalist Faith Goldy for her Toronto mayoral candidacy, and it was revealed that ID Canada activists had been assisting her.<sup>5</sup> The group claimed in 2018 to have chapters in Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal, Sudbury, Vancouver, Alberta, Manitoba, London and Prince Edward Island, which includes chapters on the east coast officialised in May 2018. At the time of writing they claim to have “hundreds of members and affiliates, spanning every major city across Canada” with expansion “into other cities and regions” occurring “rapidly”. The extent of their chapters and numbers of their membership, however, are likely exaggerations. Whilst still regularly active in their posterings and stickering campaigns, ID Canada’s claims to have “hundreds” of supporters continues to not be borne out by their actions, which are typically small banner drops featuring only a handful of activists.

## REACHING OUT

Offline interaction between North American and European identitarian groups and figures remains sporadic but online the transatlantic connections are much more established and regular. There has, however, been a significant recent in-person connection made in 2019 at the time of writing.

In May HOPE not hate revealed that UK GI activist Nick Scanlon had travelled to the US far-right American Renaissance conference, which hosted members of the extreme US far right including members of AIM. That Scanlon met with AIM and attended the American Renaissance conference is also telling about GI’s growing willingness to openly associate with extreme, open white supremacists and antisemites. Antisemitism, in particular, is an area of far-right politics the identitarian movement



in Europe has tried to avoid (public) association with, but this visit comes after AIM’s antisemitism has been revealed on numerous occasions.

Leaks from the group have confirmed that “membership require[s] applicants to be of wholly European non-semitic descent”<sup>6</sup> and revealed their internal conversations to be rife with, in addition to racism and homophobia, “anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial”, as the Anti-Defamation League note.<sup>7</sup> Of course, this is a conference which featured out-and-out neo-nazis, so GI’s willingness to attend should leave little question of their acceptance of antisemites. Indeed, Scanlon himself continued his interactions with antisemites after visiting, telling American white nationalist James Edwards on Twitter about his return from the conference. Edwards hosts the far-right Political Cesspool podcast which has featured, amongst other, former KKK Grand Wizard David Duke and Holocaust denier Willis Carto.

Notable also was the invite of French far-right thinker Jean Yves Le Gallou to the American Renaissance conference in question. Gallou was a member of the GRECE organisation, integral to the development of the European New Right and, so in turn, identitarian ideology that birthed the movement today. Gallou continues to be an active figure in the French identitarian network, co-founding the Iliade Institute think-tank in France in 2014, the 2019 conference of which featured French GI spokesman Romain Espino. It is unclear whether the invite of AIM, Gallou and a representative from GI UK is an effort by American Renaissance to help foster a connection between the US, UK and European identitarian movements, but doubtless the event acted as an opportunity to foster such a relationship regardless.

## WHERE NEXT?

Identitarianism in North America has been a mixed-success. Its ideas and model of activism have managed to travel across the Atlantic and have found support from the American and Canadian far right, who have looked across to Europe and seen a dynamic far-right movement that has successfully attracted younger activists and garnered international headlines.

Despite their efforts to emulate this success, they have been inextricably linked to the alt-right, a movement which has been thoroughly tainted since the events at Charlottesville. As the American Identity Movement’s rebranding from Identity Evropa exemplifies, identitarians in the US and Canada will continue to make every effort to distance themselves from this association. This may see them reach further abroad to cement their ties with identitarians elsewhere, the invite of French and British identitarians suggests, though here too they now must deal with the horrific attack in Christchurch and its links to the identitarian movement.





Canadian identitarians dropping a banner in Calgary, July 2019. Credit: Twitter.

# REST OF THE WORLD

## AUSTRALIA

Australia has a small, active identitarian group, Identity Australia (IA), created in 2017, which remains especially active in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. IA activists had met with the now dormant New Zealand identitarian group, The Dominion Movement, in October 2018.

There also used to be a facebook group called Generation Identity Australia run by an activist called Neil Erikson but this was later renamed as Australians Resistance Network. At the time of writing another Facebook presence is the Australian Identitarian Initiative, which has 919 members and four separate group chats for different regions of the country.



## CHILE

In Chile the group Acción Identitaria, active since July 2016, follows the model of European identitarian youth groups, eschewing traditional far-right symbols, engaging in community-oriented activism such as food distributions, and railing against “globalism” and – especially Haitian, non-white – immigrants who “threaten” Chile’s identity. Likewise, Chilean group, ‘Pancriollistas Research Circle’ created a website, still active at the time of writing, in 2015 to publish identitarian texts and provide “Synthesis and Analysis on the Reality of the White Man in the Southern Cone” (the southernmost region of South America which has a high concentration of people of European descent).

A further identitarian group in Chile is Fuerza Nacional-Identitaria, active since May 2013.



Acción Identitaria activists training in February 2019.



## NEW ZEALAND

The fringe identitarian group the Dominion Movement, founded in 2018, announced that it was dissolving shortly after the Christchurch massacres, although maintained that it had no association with the killer (the group had met with the Australian identitarian group, Identity Australia, in October 2018).



## SOUTH AFRICA

At the time of writing, there has been an active Twitter account for a Generation Identity South Africa branch since January 2019 though there appears to have been no offline activism as of yet.



Canadian far-right vlogger Lauren Southern promoting Identity Australia in October 2018.

- 1 Liam Stack, 'Attack on Alt-Right Leader Has Internet Asking: Is It O.K. to Punch a Nazi?', *The New York Times*, 21 January 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/21/us/politics/richard-spencer-punched-attack.html>.
- 2 ADL Blog, 'White Supremacists Adopt New Slogan: "You Will Not Replace Us"', *The Anti-Defamation League*, 9 June 2017. <https://www.adl.org/blog/white-supremacists-adopt-new-slogan-you-will-not-replace-us>.
- 3 J. Lester Feder and Pierre Buet, 'They Wanted To Be A Better Class of White Nationalists. They Claimed This Man As Their Father', *Buzzfeed*, 26 December 2017. <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/lesterfeder/the-man-who-gave-white-nationalism-a-new-life>.
- 4 'Identity Evropa', Southern Poverty Law Centre. <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/identity-evropa>.

- 5 'Doug Ford Stands Behind This Photo He Took With a Group of Extremely Racist White Nationalists', *Press Progress*, 24 September 2018. <https://pressprogress.ca/doug-ford-stands-behind-this-photo-he-took-with-a-group-of-extremely-racist-white-nationalists/>.
- 6 Chris Schiano, '“Americans of European Heritage Exclusively”: Identity Evropa Front Group Meetings Leaked', *Unicorn Riot*, 27 April 2019. <https://unicornriot.ninja/2019/americans-of-european-heritage-exclusively-identity-evropa-front-group-meetings-leaked/>.
- 7 'Identity Evropa', Anti-Defamation League. <https://www.adl.org/resources/profiles/identity-evropa>.





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