



Federal Ministry for  
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,  
Women and Youth

# Second Report of the Federal Government on the Work and Effectiveness of the Federal Government Programmes to Prevent Extremism



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# 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose of the report

On 23 April 2013, the German Bundestag established a reporting obligation with regard to the evaluation of the Federal Government programmes to prevent extremism:

‘The German Bundestag calls upon the Federal Government in each legislative period to prepare a report containing recommendations for action and an analysis of the effectiveness of the programmes to prevent extremism, taking into account the evaluation results from scientific monitoring of federal programmes to counter extremism, and to submit the report to the German Bundestag.’ (Bundestag Document 17/13225, p. 6)

The Federal Government fulfilled this mandate with its first report, which was submitted to the German Bundestag in summer 2017 (see Bundestag Document 18/1273).

The report focused on the federal programmes to prevent extremism that had been in place since 2013, most notably the ‘Live Democracy!’ and ‘Cohesion through Participation’ programmes. It also outlined the outlook for programme implementation and, in light of the experience

gained at the time, provided recommendations for federal policy.

As the current legislative period draws to a close, the Federal Government hereby submits a second report to the German Bundestag.

The reporting date is 31 December 2020.

### 1.2 Thematic focus

This report covers the period 2017 to 2020 and also provides a brief outlook on future developments and trends. It focuses on the federal Live Democracy! and Cohesion through Participation programmes, the social challenges faced in their implementation and the social sphere in which they operate and have an effect.

As in the past, over the course of this most recent legislative period and despite the fact that project funding is only made available for limited periods of time, the federal programmes to prevent extremism and promote democracy are designed as ongoing, long-term instruments. The main pillars of the Federal Government’s prevention work are the Live Democracy! programme run by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ)<sup>1</sup> and the Cohesion through Participation programme run

1 <https://www.demokratie-leben.de/>

by the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community (BMI).<sup>2</sup>

The report does not cover other nationwide approaches and measures to prevent extremism and promote democracy and deradicalisation outside of federal funding programmes. For example, addressing all forms of extremist attitudes and action is one of the key tasks and responsibilities of the Federal Agency for Civic Education (BpB), whose aim is to promote understanding of policy issues, foster democratic awareness and increase people's willingness to engage in politics. The main focus of the BpB's activities is on using citizenship education to counteract the emergence and consolidation of extremist attitudes and structures and to encourage socially engaged citizens to speak out against extremist views. In addition to developing its own programmes and services, the BpB is active in supporting recognised providers of political education and information – in particular those whose work places particular focus on promoting democracy and preventing extremism.

In an effort to counter Islamist extremism, the Advice Centre on Radicalisation, which was established in 2012 in collaboration with the German Länder and civil society organisations as an arm of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, gave rise to a successful and continually expanding nationwide counselling network to help family members and others in the social sphere of people at risk of radicalisation or who have become radicalised.

In 2017, in line with the Federal Government Strategy to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy adopted in 2016, and building on the many measures already in place, the Federal Cabinet resolved to develop a long-term National Programme to Prevent Islamist Extremism (NPP) with a range of additional focus areas. Under the NPP, projects are funded by the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community (BMI), the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media and the Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration. In addition to strengthening and expanding the various measures, the ultimate aim of the NPP is to facilitate existing cooperations and coordinate activities between the Federal Government, the Länder, local authorities, the security services and civil society.

The primary task of the federal programmes is to develop and test models, strategies and practices for use in the prevention of extremism and promotion of democracy. Here, the Federal Government acts as an impetus for others working in the area, structuring its activities in a way that cooperates well with the various Länder. Funding has been and continues to be provided primarily for educational and informational projects run by civil society stakeholders with the aim of developing, testing, evaluating and enhancing methods and models to prevent extremism, provide political and civic education and promote democracy and tolerance. Following the successful development, testing and implementation of the practices in the field, the aim is then to apply the experiences and results in other contexts.

2 <https://www.zusammenhalt-durch-teilhabe.de>

The strategic approaches adopted by the Federal Government include promoting engagement by members of civil society and strengthening democratic forces; preventive educational work with children, adolescents and young adults, their parents and other persons of trust; political and civic education work; the facilitation of knowledge and capacity building among specialist practitioners and disseminators; and the provision of counselling and advice. As a consequence, anti-democratic phenomena must be addressed using all of the resources available to a state in which the rule of law applies. This includes nationwide bans on extremist associations, careful monitoring and surveillance of extremist groups by the federal security services and determined prosecution of anyone who commits a politically motivated offence.

The first Federal Government Report on the Work and Effectiveness of the Federal Programmes to Prevent Extremism showed that the programmes are designed as 'learning' programmes and build, among other things, on experience gained through predecessor programmes. Whether prevention is effective cannot, however, be precisely quantified. It would be a mistake to attempt to evaluate the federal programmes and measure their effectiveness primarily in terms of the extent to which they have helped to reduce political extremism. Instead, the success of the various programmes must be measured first and foremost in terms of the extent to which they have been able to spark and encourage democratic action, provide specialist practitioners with new, tested strategies and practices for preventing political extremism and promoting democracy, reach new target groups and sensitise them to specific topics, and integrate the new approaches into institutional systems such as schools and vocational education and training programmes.

### 1.3 Federal programmes grow in proportion to the social challenges faced

The Federal Republic of Germany is an open, democratic state that offers diverse freedoms and development opportunities. The basic rights it guarantees must, however, be constantly lived out, defended and enhanced. Extremist and terrorist ideals and aspirations pose a substantial threat to social cohesion and to peaceful coexistence. Racism, antisemitism and all other ideologies based on people having unequal value in everyday society act as amplifiers and breeding grounds for such ideals and aspirations.

For those affected, this often has a negative, restrictive impact on their quality of life and their opportunities, up to the point of threats to life and limb. Right-wing extremism and racism weaken and divide society and democracy and the potential they offer, and contradict our basic constitutional values.

Events such as the murder of Dr Walter Lübcke in June 2019, the attacks in Halle/Saale and Landsberg in October 2019 and in Hanau in February 2020 underline in no uncertain terms that combating right-wing extremism and racism must be seen as an integrated societal task. In addition, incidents attributed to Islamist extremism and left-wing extremism and the spreading of conspiracy theories – which in many cases go hand in hand with a dangerous alliance between right-wing extremists, Reichsbürger ('citizens of the Reich' who reject the German state), anti-vaxxers and COVID-19 deniers – provide a fertile breeding ground for hate and violence and illustrate the need to vigorously defend our democratic principles and way of life.

The broad spectrum of anti-democratic phenomena makes it clear, among other things, that prevention work can only succeed in the long term if the specific forms, structures and functions of the various phenomena are taken into account. Anti-democratic attitudes and notions of unequal value are not limited to the political fringes, but can resonate across all sections of society. The prevention work implemented under the federal programmes aims to look at both the similarities and the differences that exist between the various phenomena and at their mutual interactions in order to develop and implement tailored prevention models and approaches.

The engagement shown by those who step up every day, working to ensure respectful interactions – including at a political level – is of key importance. Those who dedicate their time to volunteering to promote social cohesion in Germany form the backbone of our democracy. The Federal Government has been supporting this kind of social engagement for many years and it cannot be valued highly enough.

Live Democracy! is by far the largest federal programme for promoting democracy and preventing extremism. Launched in 2017, it developed into Germany's biggest democracy promotion programme and was the first of its kind in Europe. Thanks to its vast budget, it became one of the central pillars of the Federal Government Strategy to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy. The Live Democracy! programme strengthens people's understanding of democracy, democratic education and social cohesion. In the projects funded under the federal programme, the focus is placed on fundamental principles such as equality, the rule of law, protection of human rights and social participation in political processes. Children, adolescents and young adults in particular are supported in exercising their participation and codetermination rights.

Live Democracy! entered its second funding period (up to 2024) at the start of 2020. In the period up to 2024, some EUR 600 million in funding will be made available, including EUR 115.5 million in 2020 and EUR 150.5 million in 2021. This has enabled and will continue to enable more than 5,000 projects and individual measures to be funded in Germany each year.

The Federal Government's Cohesion through Participation funding programme was launched in 2010. It funds projects designed to strengthen democratic participation and combat extremism in rural and structurally weak regions. At its core are regionally integrated associations, clubs and disseminators, notably in the fields of organised sport, the voluntary fire service, the volunteer technical relief service (THW) and charitable associations. The aim is to support and expand the respective expertise and skills. Cohesion through Participation is designed to strengthen and train attentive, respected contact persons at a local level – the main focus of the projects being to initiate preventive action in the face of potential extremist threats and to create the conditions needed for non-violent coexistence among equals. In doing so, new target groups are won over and encouraged to engage in political education and participation.

Currently, the Cohesion through Participation programme has an annual budget of EUR 12 million. The new funding phase which began at the start of 2020 runs until the end of 2024. The programme is run by the Federal Agency for Civic Education (BpB).

## 1.4 Context of and cooperation and interaction between the federal programmes

Since the 18th legislative period, the Federal Government has further accelerated action to consolidate the approaches and measures for use in preventing extremism and promoting democracy. The already intensive exchange between the Cohesion through Participation and Live Democracy! programmes was intensified further as part of the Federal Government Strategy to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy adopted in 2016 (see Bundestag Document 18/9192). In addition, ongoing, cross-departmental exchange took place in the inter-ministerial working group on the prevention of extremism, the promotion of democracy in order to document departmental activities involving extremism prevention, democracy promotion and social engagement, and to further develop the programmes and measures in this area to ensure they met and continue to meet prevailing needs.

Adopted in June 2017, the National Action Plan Against Racism – Positions and Measures to Address Ideologies of Inequality and Related Discrimination (see Bundestag Document 18/12907) and the Federal Government Report on the Work and Effectiveness of the Federal Programmes to Prevent Extremism (see Bundestag Document 18/12743) set out the framework for further work in their respective policy areas.

Likewise adopted in 2017, the National Programme to Prevent Islamist Extremism (NPP) involved several federal government departments with projects of their own. Using NPP funding, a broad range of measures was implemented across various prevention-related areas and locations, including online work, prevention in prisons and in probation and parole services, youth welfare work, deradicalisation and the expansion of research on preventing radicalisation. Since 2018, up to EUR 100 million annually has been made available annually from NPP funds for use in the prevention of Islamist extremism. This funding has been used to finance projects of a practical and research nature, to further develop existing programmes and initiate new ones, and to enable additional programmes and projects.

As a response to the attack in Halle on 9 October 2019, and also to a range of other alarming incidents in the recent past, on 30 October 2019 the Federal Cabinet approved a package of measures presented by the Federal Minister of the Interior, the Federal Minister of Justice and the Federal Minister for Consumer Protection to combat right-wing extremism and hate crime. Further development of the Federal Government's prevention programmes was a key component of the package – they were to be expanded and their funding volume significantly increased. This was primarily implemented through resolutions by the Cabinet Committee for the fight against right-wing extremism and racism, which was appointed in 2020.

The Federal Government sees political education as an ongoing responsibility and task which involves nurturing a sustainable, lasting culture of democratic debate and decision-making, completely independent of political developments and trends. Alongside the essential work performed by the Federal Agency for Civic Education (BpB), additional instruments are needed to fulfil this ongoing responsibility and task. To promote social cohesion and effectively counter the various forms of anti-democracy sentiment and racism, democracy promotion and preventive measures must go hand in hand. This approach is not only integral to the Federal Government Strategy to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy, but also to the second funding period of the Live Democracy! programme (2020–2024). By adjusting and refocusing the goals, a further step is taken here in the triad of promoting democracy, shaping diversity and preventing extremism. In addition, one of the approaches taken by the Cohesion through Participation programme since 2010 is that, of promoting a vibrant and democratic community structure. This approach is being continued and intensified in the second funding period (2020–2024).

The Federal Government believes there is an urgent need for cooperation between institutional structures and implementers of pilot projects, with corresponding knowledge transfer. To ensure that the experience gained through the projects funded under the Live Democracy! programme is turned into usable knowledge and becomes widespread everyday practice, the competence networks and competence centres funded in the second funding period of the federal programme (2020–2024) are assuming the tasks of knowledge transfer, training and cooperation. In addition, the competence centres and competence networks are providing counselling and support services

and making their expertise available for specialist practitioners nationwide, holding specialist events and developing information and working tools. The competence networks are thus directing their programmes towards projects under the Live Democracy! programme and at institutional child and towards youth welfare structures.

Under the Cohesion through Participation programme, accompanying measures have been promoted since 2012 to initiate and support interaction, knowledge transfer, training and quality assurance in project work. A particular focus is placed on the long-term integration of project results into the structures of clubs and associations.

Since 2015, the Live Democracy! programme has also promoted and supported accompanying measures, interaction, knowledge transfer, training and quality assurance in project work. Particular focus has been placed on the long-term integration of project outcomes into institutional child and youth welfare systems.

These approaches to fostering greater dialogue and exchange must be continually expanded, intensified and result in real collaboration wherever possible.

# 2

## Live Democracy! The federal programme run by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

### 2.1 Summary

Through the Live Democracy! programme, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) funds and supports social projects designed to promote democracy and prevent extremism in its many forms. This report covers the second part of the federal programme's first funding period and the start of its second funding period as of 2020.

Manifestations of group-focused enmity, generalised rejection and other threats to social cohesion were among the thematic areas covered by the programme. In all of this, Live Democracy! focused not only on preventing extremism, but included large elements of positive, formative democracy promotion as a primary source of prevention. A complete overview of all programme measures is contained in the final report on the first funding period of the Live Democracy! programme (2015–2019).

Based on the scientific monitoring and programme evaluation, the structure of the first funding period proved effective. From the outset, one particular success factor was the involvement of civil society stakeholders along with the strengthening and expansion work carried out in the field – where democracy promotion and extremism prevention were practised and lived out. The federal programme also showed that it is possible to respond quickly to new societal developments and trends. Whenever programme partners needed support in implementing new measures, the Federal Government stepped in with offers of further education and training.

Taking the form of a 'learning' programme, the federal programme is subject to continual further development, with findings obtained and implemented as part of an ongoing process. While a range of tried and tested approaches from predecessor programmes are being continued, more current, emerging societal challenges constantly call for expansion of the measures in place.

From the outset, Live Democracy! took a holistic approach in which promoting democracy and preventing extremism were seen as mutually complementary and equally weighted issues for the first time. Encouraging local engagement and strengthening counselling, advice and coordination work formed the main focus of activities in the various Länder. In understanding the approach taken, it is important to explain that the focus of entire programme areas and many of the projects themselves was largely 'cross-phenomenon'. This means that it is generally no longer possible for measures and projects covered by the programme to be linked on an exclusively thematic basis to specific categories of extremism.

In implementing the programme, gender mainstreaming, diversity mainstreaming and inclusion were guiding principles right from the start. As a federal programme whose focus is on human rights and participation, Live Democracy! follows the principle that all people are equal irrespective of their personal traits – not least their skills and abilities, their origins and their orientations. In the spirit of empowerment, the aim is to ensure that people in socially marginalised positions within society and/or with impairments/disabilities receive the support they need to actively participate in political, cultural and social life.

The federal programmes run by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth so far have always emphasised the pilot project approach in project funding to reflect the Federal Government's limited federal jurisdiction. In line with the ministry's legally assigned responsibilities and tasks, the programmes targeted child and youth welfare and young people in particular. They were thus designed to serve as best-practice field experiments as part of the Federal Government's function of providing ideas and stimulus for practitioners in the field.

Until the end of 2019, funding was based on the guidelines for the Federal Child and Youth Plan (RL-KJP) of 28 August 2009. The legal basis was provided by section 83 of Book VIII of the German Social Code, in which the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, as the supreme federal authority responsible for the subject matter, can initiate and promote activities by child and youth welfare services where these are of super-regional importance and, due to their nature, cannot be effectively funded by a single state alone.

Funding was provided in particular for educational projects that targeted children and adolescents – their aim being to develop, test, evaluate and further enhance methods and models for promoting democracy and diversity and preventing right-wing extremism, racism and antisemitism.

The aim was for the results to be transferable to other funding recipients and, where appropriate, thematic areas. The purpose of the funding was thus not to provide ongoing infrastructural support, but instead to tackle emerging societal challenges in the various areas and address the resulting needs with regard to promoting democracy and preventing extremism.

### **Participation as one of the main aims of the Live Democracy! programme**

In addition to preventing extremism, Live Democracy! has another vital aim: to promote democratic thinking and action, first and foremost among children and young people. As a way of life and a societal form, democracy essentially means having a say in shaping society and participating in decision-making at various societal levels. Because participation was of key importance for the programme overall, data was collated and analysed in all scientific monitoring activities. It is on this data that the following is based.

According to the implementing stakeholders, the federal programme promoted the political aptitude of young people and offered them diverse opportunities to participate in decision-making that had an impact on their lives. Structures were designed to enable or simplify age-appropriate participation by young adults. There was also a focus on making participation a central guiding principle – especially as regards extra-curricular and non-school educational work. The issue of enabling and promoting involvement and participation was taken up in all areas of the federal programme. These efforts were largely motivated by the fact that the practitioners involved in the programme reported deficits in participation among young people and believed that in a democratic society, promoting participation plays an important role.

In the main, the projects focused on participation skills and participation structures – according to the programme topic, action area and target group age. How and to what extent participation was promoted depended on the differing thematic action areas and goals of the various programme areas, such as radicalisation prevention and democracy promotion. In all of this, what had to be considered was that there were significant differences in the available scope for action when it came to promoting participation in the projects funded under the federal programme. By way of example, the conditions for work carried out at children's daycare facilities or open youth (recreation) centres differ from those in the prison system.

According to data collected by the scientific monitoring, in the Partnerships for Democracy (PfD), it was primarily in the 220+ youth forums that young adults were able to bring their interests into political decision-making processes and conduct their own projects independently.

### **Identifying with the Live Democracy! programme and goals**

After a five-year period of programme implementation, the question arises – not least in light of the complexity and dynamics of programme development – of how far the Live Democracy! programme has led programme stakeholders to identify in some way with the federal programme and its goals. Related studies show that identifying with an organisation or a cause can have a positive effect on engagement. The overall evaluation of all programme stakeholders in a standardised survey conducted in the last funding year (2019) therefore analysed the extent to which stakeholders identified with the programme (or programme areas). Three-quarters of all programme stakeholders strongly identified with Live Democracy! and its goals. Only three percent of the stakeholders surveyed said they could not identify or hardly identified with the federal programme; the remainder were in the mid-level range. More than 80 percent of respondents said they felt an emotional bond with the programme. Likewise, more than 80 percent thought they saw some similarities with the other stakeholders funded under the federal programme. A similar number reported a great willingness to work to make Live Democracy! a success. The remaining survey responses, especially those concerning action taken, were also largely positive.

## 2.2 Programme expansion – 2017 to 2019

Sentiments of a more radical and more polarised nature were already evident in German society as early as 2015. Violence and threats against refugees and volunteers were on the rise. Hate speech on social media intensified, as did threats from Islamist extremists (terror attacks, growing numbers of Islamist militants posing a threat to public safety, and a significant rise in membership of Salafist groups). In all of this, it became clear that greater deployment of security services was simply not enough. Under the Live Democracy! programme, greater focus was placed on strengthening democracy and securing peaceful coexistence across Germany, a country of immigration. With additional projects, for example, strategies and approaches were developed to combat both racism and discriminatory attitudes and actions. For the first time, the federal programme extended its funding to migrant-founded organisations and projects.

To ensure these goals could be achieved, the German Bundestag decided to double the funding available in 2017 from EUR 50.5 million to EUR 104.5 million. This significantly improved both the quality of and the financial resources available for the Live Democracy! programme.

Further development of Live Democracy! occurred through the integration of findings from the scientific monitoring projects and from recent scientific research studies. Between May and November 2016, an intensive participation and dialogue process took place involving a range of experts. After a kick-off meeting at working level with the various Federal State Democracy Centres, a symposium was held on the current social situation along with a workshop in which existing topics and phenomena were further discussed and developed, new thematic areas identified and additional target groups assessed.

Representatives from various areas of the federal programme – civil society, academia, the Länder and the security authorities – took part in these discussion rounds.

The outcome was that tried and tested approaches were further developed and enhanced, new needs and requirements identified and new programme areas established.

### 2.2.1 Existing programme areas expanded and enhanced

#### Partnerships for Democracy

As trends towards polarisation in society were becoming more and more visible in 2016, it was decided that under the auspices of the federal programme, local-level partnership-based democracy promotion work would be further strengthened and be allocated additional counselling and advice, with more local authorities being recruited for the purpose. The underlying approach in the work performed by the Partnerships for Democracy across Germany as a whole has not changed in relation to the first Federal Government Report on the Work and Effectiveness of the Federal Programmes to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy. With the Live Democracy! programme, there has been a significant increase in the number of municipal structures involved in democracy promotion and extremism prevention. The Partnerships for Democracy were expanded to take in additional thematic areas and the available funding was increased.

It was more clearly stressed that in their work, the partnerships should also take account of other forms of anti-democracy, anti-rule of law and violent phenomena. This would further emphasise that partnership strategies focusing on local-level challenges could go beyond the specifically named fields of right-wing extremism, violence and differing manifestations of group-focused enmity. The involvement of (self-founded) migrant organisations, greater integration of youth forums by means of a right to vote in the monitoring committee and the implementation of dialogue-based event models would also broaden the range of activities.

Federal funding for Partnerships for Democracy was increased from the original EUR 80,000 to EUR 125,000 at the start of the second funding period. Setting an across-the-board minimum requirement for the use of partnerships' funds in the amount of 10 percent of the total funding amount over the entire partnership lifecycle made it possible to reduce the administrative effort – most notably at municipal and Länder level.

Additional municipalities were included in the federal funding programme. The number of local Partnerships for Democracy rose from 182 to 300 by the end of the first funding period. This enabled more than 4,000 measures to be implemented by smaller associations and groups each year.

### **Federal State Democracy Centres**

Under the Live Democracy! programme, the work of a Federal State Democracy Centre (Landes-Demokratiezentrum) was funded in each of the Länder. These were established in close cooperation with the respective state government.

The underlying structure of the counselling services and of the coordination and networking activities in the various Länder was established, developed and strengthened in the course of the first funding period. This was a result of the successful work performed by the various Länder-wide counselling networks and good cooperation between the Länder and the federal government. The basic funding was increased from EUR 620,000 to EUR 700,000 (15 March 2018) and then to EUR 900,000 (1 January 2020). Also with effect from 1 January 2020, funding under the Königsteiner Schlüssel (Königstein formula) – a system by which joint funding responsibilities are divided among the Länder – rose from EUR 3.5 million to EUR 5 million and the co-financing portion dropped from 20 percent to 10 percent.

Through the regular increases in the minimum funding amounts, among other things, the work of the mobile counselling and victim counselling services was continually improved and more intensively promoted within the various Länder-wide networks. The Federal State Democracy Centres reported expenditure for mobile counselling and victim counselling services in the amounts of EUR 50,000 (2015), EUR 70,000 (2016) and EUR 120,000 (since 2017). As of 1 January 2020, that figure has risen to EUR 180,000.

From 2017, the work of the 16 Federal State Democracy Centres was also intensified in that they introduced their own capacity-building pilot projects to counter Islamism, Islamophobia and Muslimophobia.

At least twice a year, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Länder held meetings to coordinate their efforts. The meetings were attended by representatives of the Federal State Democracy Centres, the ministerial administrations of the respective Länder and, at times, by experts from other organisations. Since 2017, the coordination meetings have also been attended by representatives from the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community, the Federal Agency for Civic Education and the Cohesion through Participation programme.

### Promotion of the structural development of nationwide NGOs

The Live Democracy! programme saw longer-term funding being provided to organisations as nationwide NGOs for the first time. In addition to the nationwide NGOs funded under the Federal Child and Youth Plan, since 2015 the work of civil society organisations in democracy promotion and extremism prevention has been strengthened and further developed.

Registered non-profit associations, cooperations and other independent providers with tried and tested, evaluated, nationwide models were able to apply for funding by submitting expressions of interest. From 2017, the maximum funding allocation was increased to EUR 300,000 per calendar year (EUR 200,000 in 2016), the co-financing portion reduced to 15 percent (20 percent in 2016) and participation in the Transparent Civil Society Initiative enabled.

A total of eight additional topics and structural areas were added to the 'Promotion of the structural development of nationwide NGOs' programme area:

- Dachverband Ausstiegsberatung (umbrella organisation for exit counselling)
- Promotion of acceptance and empowerment for lesbian, gay, bisexual and intersex people and their families
- Racism prevention and empowerment for Black people
- Bundesfachstelle Linke Militanz (Federal Expertise Centre for Left-Wing Militancy)
- Prevention of Islamist and religiously motivated radicalisation
- Radicalisation prevention and nature conservation engagement
- Prevention of Islamophobia and Muslimophobia and empowerment of victims
- Diversity promotion in the workplace

As a result, a total of 35 providers received support in their structural development towards becoming nationwide NGOs.

### 2.2.2 Implementation of new pilot projects

As part of the underlying structure of the Live Democracy! programme, thematic projects were promoted from the outset. The aim of the projects was to stimulate the further development of both educational practices and local structures and the transfer of tried and tested approaches to institutional structures.

The Live Democracy! approach of focusing on all anti-democratic and racist phenomena was thus taken forward in a concerted and consistent way. The number of pilot projects funded from 2017 onwards more than doubled. In the existing programme areas 'Pilot projects focusing on the selected phenomenon of group-focused enmity and democracy promotion in rural regions' and 'Pilot projects focusing on the prevention of radicalism', additional pilot projects were added to the funding programme in all thematic areas.

The following programme areas were also added:

- Engagement and diversity in the world of work and business
- Democracy promotion in education
- Coexistence in an immigration society
- Promoting engagement on social media – combating hate speech online
- Prevention and deradicalisation in prisons and in probation and parole services

### **Programme area: 'Engagement and diversity in the work and business world'**

One of the constantly criticised gaps in democracy promotion and extremism prevention involved the world of work. The programme area of engagement and diversity in the work and business world closed that gap by involving stakeholders from industry and business, especially companies and trade unions, as key partners in engagement to combat group-focused enmity and ideologies of unequal worth – including in the workplace. In this thematic area, various focus areas were promoted and funded, from training disseminators to developing strategies for democracy promotion to working with young people in vocational education and training and in the work environment.

### **Programme area: 'Promoting democracy in education'**

The programme area involving democracy promotion in education consisted of two independent sub-areas with new model approaches. In mid-2017, a cooperation project focusing on democracy and diversity in children's daycare was launched with the six non-statutory welfare organisations, the Child and Youth Welfare Association (AGJ) and the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. The aim of the project was to boost the standing of children's daycare as the first instance of diverse, democratic coexistence and to lay the foundations for learning about social engagement and standing up against all forms of exclusion. A coordination office was set up at the AGJ to connect the cooperation partners and facilitate networking.

In the sub-area involving democracy and diversity in the school-related social sphere, the federal funding programme promoted the 'OPENION – Bildung für eine starke Demokratie' (education for greater democracy) project run by the German Children and Youth Foundation (DKJS). The project was designed to foster cooperation activities between schools and non-school partners in which contemporary forms of democracy education for and especially with children are developed and tested. The models of effective cooperation between youth welfare and schools, in particular those aiming to boost participation among young adults, are to be tested in conjunction with the various Länder and firmly established in the longer term.

### **Programme area: 'Coexistence in an immigration society'**

In this programme area, pilot projects were implemented to promote and support social cohesion in an immigration society and participation among people who experience racism and marginalisation.

The pilot projects take a range of strategic approaches. The thematic area of empowerment through democratic participation aims to promote the self-empowerment of those affected by racism and exclusion. The central focus was to boost the participation of marginalised groups in social life. Skills and strategies were to be trained and improved to successfully counter the various forms of discrimination at an individual level. Projects focusing on conflict management targeted anti-democratic tendencies, which are sometimes expressed in what can become highly escalated conflict situations in the social sphere. The projects boosted democratic attitudes, fostered encounters with diversity, trained people in conflict resolution and developed methods for promoting a culture of democratic debate. In everyday life, institutions and organisations are the key actors in a society that is democratic and diverse. The aim was to strengthen these by means of a small number of pilot projects, the goal being to illustrate the diversity of and work effectively in and with an immigration society.

### **Programme area: 'Promoting engagement on social media – combating hate speech online'**

In this programme area, various approaches were tested in pilot projects to promote engagement by members of civil society in the digital world, take prevention measures online and strengthen democratic forces on the internet. The projects followed a range of different strategies: for example, they promoted critically-minded digital production skills among various target groups (such as children and adolescents, disseminators and media specialists). Some projects focused on counselling and empowering individuals who experience discrimination, both online and offline. Others tested new methods of contemporary online youth work with the aim of obtaining access to vulnerable young people at risk. And in many of the projects, often with the participation of their target groups, online content or applications were developed to, for example, target extremist propaganda or communicate credible positive narratives.

### **Programme area: 'Prevention and deradicalisation in prisons and in probation and parole services'**

For this programme area, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth – in close cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection – tested new approaches to radicalisation prevention and deradicalisation in prisons and in probation and parole services. The idea was that in each of the Länder, a model preventive educational programme was to be developed for young adult prisoners. The main focus was placed on preventing discrimination, strengthening democratic thinking and addressing radicalisation processes early on during imprisonment. The programme area also promoted approaches for exit and distancing work for prisoners who had already become radicalised. It also took a cross-phenomenon approach. The various measures were designed to take specific needs into account and meet the requirements concerning the phenomena involved, such as right-wing extremism and Islamist extremism.

The target group for these projects comprised parents and family members, and also voluntary and permanent staff working in youth welfare. These were to be trained in dealing with radicalisation and in working with people at risk of becoming radicalised. Among other things, this included prison staff and occupational groups who work with offenders (juvenile court services, probation services, the courts and public prosecution services).

## 2.2.3 Other activities

As the subordinate authority, the Federal Office of Family Affairs and Civil Society Functions (BAFzA) had been responsible for the administrative implementation of the federal programme since its introduction. Scientific monitoring was outsourced to the German Youth Institute (DJI) in Munich and Halle in conjunction with the Institute for Social Work and Social Education (ISS) in Frankfurt and with Camino GmbH in Berlin – a practice-oriented research institute that provides research and evaluation of public and civil society programmes, training and consulting services.

In addition to the DJI Research Unit for the Prevention of Right-Wing Extremism and Radicalization in Halle, various stand-alone research projects were funded under the Live Democracy! programme. These analysed, for example, cases of successful distancing from and interruption of religious radicalisation at an early stage. The research conducted also identified resilience factors among young people who are socialised in conditions which make them more receptive to extremist ideologies. The links between participation/exclusion experiences and religious radicalisation were also assessed.

In addition to the individual programme areas, a range of accompanying projects were conducted which in some cases arose in response to emerging societal developments. These were assigned to specific programme areas and were of an integrated, cross-area nature (such as a Diversity Media Library).

### Specialist forum

From 2017, the coordinating office (Regiestelle) provided assistance and support for the specialist forum, which took the form of a platform for expert dialogue and exchange for programme participants. It provided support for needs-based professional networking and cross-programme exchange between stakeholders in the federal programme. The specialist forum also organised and coordinated the events held in the various programme areas. In addition, it helped to identify and prepare relevant programme findings, thus providing input for the prevailing expert debate.

### Diversity Media Library

A wide range of project-related material was produced under the Live Democracy! programme, including brochures, books, working tools, films, learning material and more. To make these available to a wider audience, as of 2006 the Diversity Media Library of the Information and Documentation Centre for Anti-Racism Work e.V. (IDA) has archived all the materials produced under the federal programmes for democracy and diversity and provides them free of charge. During the reporting period, the Diversity Media Library placed increased focus on expanding its online services.

### Networking events

During numerous conferences and expert dialogue events, the programme partners had the opportunity to intensify their efforts towards collaboration and exchange.

From 13 to 15 November 2017, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth held an international expert symposium on radicalisation prevention in Berlin: Preventing Radicalisation – Towards Resilient Societies. The symposium was held under the auspices of the German G20 Presidency 2017 and targeted democracy promotion and prevention experts from the science and research community and professional practice.

On 5 and 6 November 2018, a programme conference was held in Berlin for all programme partners receiving funding under the Live Democracy! programme. The aim of the conference was to promote networking and exchange between the various programme areas. The main focus of the event was the challenge of sustainably integrating the prevention approaches that had been developed into institutional child and youth welfare structures.

The activities that took place under the auspices of the federal programme were accompanied by extensive public relations work. In addition to the programme website, the regular newsletter and the provision of brochures and other materials, this also included the nationwide ‘Who, if not us?’ campaign in 2017. In a three-phase, emotionally appealing initiative using a wide range of formats including posters, brochures, online offerings and short films, the importance of democracy promotion and extremism prevention was broadcast across Germany. In the course of the campaign lifecycle, a total of 747.5 million contacts were made in the catchment area, 280,000 billboards and poster sites were created and some 1,500 ideas for democratic engagement were submitted from among the German public.

The federal programme and the programme partners were also showcased at a large number of pan-regional specialist trade fairs.

## 2.3 Monitoring and evaluation results

In the first funding period (2015–2019), the Live Democracy! programme was evaluated by three scientific institutes: Camino GmbH (a practice-oriented research institution that provides research and evaluation of public and civil society programmes, training and consulting services in Berlin) the German Youth Institute (DJI) and the Institute for Social Work and Social Education (ISS). These were responsible for monitoring the federal programme, identifying conditions that were either conducive to or hindered programme activities, assessing programme performance and evaluating the programme outcomes. Teams comprising experts from the three institutes analysed each of the ten programme areas. The DJI also had the task of evaluating the overarching issues involved in the programme overall.

The following highlights the key outcomes of the scientific monitoring and programme evaluation conducted on the work and effectiveness of the first funding period of the Live Democracy! programme. For this purpose, impact is defined as changes in knowledge, resources and capacities for action where, for example, project managers and target groups plausibly demonstrate that those changes occurred as a result of (social) education programmes and projects or coordination and networking measures.

In an educational context, impact is generated in the form of collaboration between participants and the educational offering. Participants shape the educational process by means of their expectations, motivations and individual needs. This is particularly true of democracy promotion and extremism prevention programmes aimed at fostering reflection and driving change in attitudes, views and orientation.

The following outline of the results of the programme evaluation looks at the programme's focus areas and reflects the findings concerning the Partnerships for Democracy (local authority level), the Federal State Democracy Centres (Länder level), the structural development of nationwide NGOs (federal level) and the federally promoted pilot projects. The results are then summarised in Section 2.3.5 and discussed in conjunction with the findings of the programme evaluation. Literature references and further references have largely been omitted. Detailed findings and the methodologies used in the various parallel studies are presented in detail in the respective annual reports. Additional information (such as a list of funded projects and detailed research results) are contained in the final report covering the first funding period. All reports are published on the Live Democracy! programme website.<sup>3</sup>

3 [www.demokratie-leben.de](http://www.demokratie-leben.de)

### 2.3.1 Partnerships for Democracy



#### **Methodological approach to evaluating the work and effectiveness of the Partnerships for Democracy**

As the effectiveness of the Partnerships for Democracy is based on a broadly defined goal, the evaluation of their effectiveness must be equally broad-based. Thus, at two different points, the scientific monitoring used questionnaires to survey partnerships' perceptions of the local situation and their level of engagement in relation to two target dimensions. Interviews were conducted with partnership functionaries and also with members of government, administration and civil society. Where a link between changes and engagement could be demonstrated and then confirmed on the basis of the interviews, the scientific monitoring concluded that the Partnerships for Democracy had been effective in the corresponding target dimension.

The core of the Partnerships for Democracy is formed by collaboration in local alliances with state and civil society stakeholders, the aim being to work together to achieve democratic cohesion. The effectiveness of the partnerships was demonstrated in the following areas in particular.

The partnerships help safeguard local-level resilience to right-wing extremism. They boost situational awareness, strategic knowledge, mobilisation ability and continuity in tackling right-wing extremism and positioning powerful actors in the fight to prevent it.

The partnerships have created opportunities to break down prejudices towards refugees, asylum and flight. Using contact-based interventions such as intercultural festivals, they have initiated forms of encounter, thereby encouraging the use of the related programmes and services.

The partnerships have initiated processes for breaking down barriers to participation. They initiated youth and citizen question times and involved young people in youth welfare committees and the design of youth support plans. They have set up 259 youth forums with a combined total of 3,900 young, committed volunteers.

The partnerships sensitise people to the phenomena of antisemitism and antigypsyism and help create a vibrant remembrance culture. They have raised awareness, closed societal knowledge gaps, counteracted prejudices – through informational and encounter programmes, among other things and empowered those affected. In other target dimensions, such as preventing Islamist tendencies and activities, breaking down Islamophobia and Muslimophobia and also homophobia and transphobia, positive situational changes were identified but could not be attributed to the partnerships themselves.

In summary, the scientific monitoring concludes that the Partnerships for Democracy have proven effective because they mobilise members of civil society and (young) socially engaged citizens, create and vitalise networks, generate knowledge for use in practice and promote collaboration between local authorities and members of civil society. Their particular strength is seen in their ability to act in response to local situations and resources and to tackle prevailing problems on the ground. With the opportunity to provide a rapid response to problematic situations using the networks created and the practical knowledge gained, the Partnerships for Democracy are a useful tool with which to boost social resilience to anti-democratic and racist manifestations.

### 2.3.2 Federal State Democracy Centres



#### Methodological approach to evaluating the work and effectiveness of the Federal State Democracy Centres

The scientific monitoring evaluated the work and effectiveness of the Federal State Democracy Centres at various levels. At the coordination level, it used guided interviews with those responsible at the centres and a questionnaire-based survey of other programme participants to evaluate the effectiveness of networking activities. At the level of counselling and advice services, recipients completed a written questionnaire and were also interviewed. Mobile counselling sessions were monitored. At the level of programmes and pilot projects to counteract Islamophobia and Muslimophobia, guided interviews were conducted with the Länder-specific coordinators at the Federal State Democracy Centres.

The following conclusions were drawn regarding the various fields of activity in which the Federal State Democracy Centres are involved.

In the vast majority of the German Länder, it was possible during the funding period to extend the range of tasks involved in coordination work and to cover all of the topics and phenomena addressed in the Live Democracy! programme. In some Länder, the Federal State Democracy Centres have also been successful in acting as a source of counselling and support for the Partnerships for Democracy.

In addition to their traditional prevention and intervention programmes, in tackling right-wing extremism in particular the mobile counselling services were able to integrate programmes to effectively promote democracy and support civil society stakeholders in shaping democratic coexistence. Counselling recipients reported a significant increase in their available knowledge, a boost in their capacity to act and the creation of local networks as a result of the counselling work. In all of this, the counselling centres faced a major challenge in dealing with hostile and threatening situations.

During the funding period, the victim counselling centres were able to decentralise their work and focus on new target groups. Of those who received counselling, the share of people with a migration and refugee/flight/asylum background in particular has grown – the increase is going hand in hand with the expansion of local initiatives and networks which refer people in need of counselling. The victim counselling centres thus made a key contribution to promoting civil society engagement. Counselling recipients showed a high degree of satisfaction with the work of the counsellors they saw. Deficits were seen to exist with regard to the expansion of counselling services in the western German states.

In exit and distancing work, it was possible to further diversify the range of activities. While the main focus was placed on conducting distancing work with people with right-wing extremist tendencies and with vulnerable young people, right-wing extremists with consolidated ideologies were also assisted in their exit efforts.

In eastern German states in particular, it was possible to initiate needs and strategy analyses in dealing with Islamism, Islamophobia and Muslimophobia and to establish corresponding prevention structures. Using pilot projects, the need for training in these areas has been met and new prevention programmes introduced.

Deficits still existed when it came to involving Muslim organisations and mosque communities in prevention work.

In summary, the scientific monitoring confirmed that the Federal State Democracy Centres in conjunction with the umbrella associations for victim counselling, the mobile counselling services and the exit and distancing work have provided an important institutional basis on which to improve and ensure the quality of counselling work. Professionalisation processes were advanced at all levels and the professionalisation of the counselling work was enhanced.

### 2.3.3 Structural development of nationwide NGOs

#### **Methodological approach to evaluating the work and effectiveness of projects to promote the structural development of nationwide NGOs.**

To evaluate NGO-related structural development, guided interviews were conducted with project managers and combined with information obtained from other sources such as NGO applications and group discussions. In addition, all NGOs were sent a written questionnaire on two occasions in order to track their development over time. Supplementing a documentary analysis, the questionnaire-based survey was used to assess whether and how the funded NGOs developed the thematic and structural area further. To assess the resonance generated by NGO-run measures, the scientific monitoring drew on participant observations, interviews and surveys of target groups.

The aim of promoting and funding this programme area was to trigger structural changes in relation to organisational development and the development of the thematic and structural areas themselves. The funded NGOs set different priorities depending on the project implementers' starting conditions and the thematic and structural areas involved.

In the target dimension of NGO-related structural development, the scientific monitoring reported that most of the funded NGOs succeeded in adapting their organisational structures to such an extent that they were able to fulfil tasks of nationwide importance. They were able to promote programmes and services countrywide, establish decentralised regional offices/units and develop their own base of decentralised member organisations.

In the target dimension of structural and thematic area development, the scientific monitoring reported (further) development and enhancement in the structure of the programme and services. The NGOs largely assumed tasks involving the transfer of specialist knowledge, quality assurance and professionalisation and the representation of (specialist) policy interests. This included shifting from local-level measures with children and young people to capacity-building measures with (educational) specialists and facilitators.

The monitored measures taken by the NGOs met with great resonance. Participants attending the events expanded their specialist knowledge, took up ideas for their own work and reflected on and changed their attitudes and views. They also took their newly acquired knowledge back to their respective organisations so that a disseminator effect was observed. This resonance stretched far beyond specific target group-related effects. Whether or not it impacted child and youth welfare structures and programmes could not be answered with certainty.

In summary, the scientific monitoring documented that, to a large extent, the implementing organisations were able to establish nationwide structures, assume corresponding tasks and develop appropriate programmes. The programmes increasingly focused on structural development in the thematic area, generating resonance and impact among participants in the programme, within their organisations and among third parties. However, not all implementing organisations were able to fulfil nationwide tasks for selected thematic and structural areas within the funding period. At the end of the funding period, deficits existed among smaller-scale implementing organisations with close links to (local) practitioners.

### 2.3.4 Pilot projects



#### **Methodological approach to evaluating the work and effectiveness of pilot projects**

Each of the seven pilot projects were accompanied by parallel research which evaluated the programme areas using differing evaluation approaches according to the specificities of the programme area involved.<sup>4</sup> The objective of the evaluation approach was to obtain insights into the work and effectiveness of the programme areas from differing perspectives. The scientific monitoring combined various methodologies, such as interviews with programme participants and group discussions with target groups. In many cases, questionnaire-based monitoring was combined with qualitative case studies on selected pilot projects. One particular approach that was tried and tested in the programme area involved coexistence in an immigration society: four in-depth impact analyses were conducted on individual projects. For each of the projects, the scientific monitoring used a specially designed evaluation approach.

The funding and promotion of pilot projects was linked to the goal of developing and testing new, practicable models and strategies, work formats and access paths to target groups, topics and content. The aim was to make the experience gained available to specialist practitioners through the transfer of model approaches, knowledge and experience. Pilot projects were funded across the entire range of thematic areas involving extremism prevention and democracy promotion.

<sup>4</sup> For the model project areas alone, 24 interim and final reports were prepared in the course of the scientific monitoring and published on [www.demokratie-leben.de](http://www.demokratie-leben.de).

These were distributed across seven programme areas addressing a broad range of phenomena and topics. The heterogeneity of the tested approaches – which arose from the diversity of the topics involved – makes it difficult to produce a general summary of the findings at this point. As a result, only selected findings from the scientific monitoring are outlined below.

In the area of promoting democracy and digital skills, the low-threshold, phased training programmes for specialists and disseminators proved especially productive. Specialists and disseminators reported intensive exchange, reflection and growth in knowledge transfer and counselling skills and were able to pass on content from the seminars. Programmes that targeted young people were also effective in the areas of knowledge transfer, self-empowerment and conflict resolution. Where programmes to promote digital skills were concerned, it was found that young people's readiness to stand up to hate speech on the internet had increased. The positive effects described were especially evident in voluntary programmes with low participant numbers.

In the area of extremism prevention, access to target groups in both indicated and selective prevention was a major challenge. While indirect access paths to target groups proved helpful, in actual prevention work, continuous relationship work with participants was seen as a relevant factor. In youth education, long-term educational projects with a reflection component contributed to participants questioning and changing their own attitudes and self-images. To avoid stigmatisation, particularly where group programmes were concerned, reformulating the prevention mandate into specific, positive educational goals proved productive.

In the area of diversity management and preventing group-focused enmity, empowerment-oriented programmes and projects were especially effective in fostering the development of professional standards and working approaches in these action areas. Through greater involvement of organisations whose work focused on individuals and groups with experience of discrimination, the corresponding projects also helped to strengthen (migrant-formed) self-help organisations. At target group level, the empowerment programmes and projects were especially effective in connecting the various recipients. To achieve effects at the level of attitudes, views and orientation, long-term educational settings with firm trust-based relationships proved especially suited for use in empowerment and intercultural encounter programmes. With regard to preventing group-focused enmity, the scientific monitoring identified intersectoral working approaches which are seen as essential when considering related phenomena.

### 2.3.5 Overarching conclusions on the effectiveness of approaches to extremism prevention and democracy promotion

The following summarises the results from Sections 2.3.1 to 2.3.4. This is supplemented by survey results from the programme evaluation, in which all those involved in the Live Democracy! programme answered questions in writing in order to arrive at a final assessment of the programme's effectiveness with regard to the various target dimensions. The respondents thus assessed not only their own effectiveness, but also that of measures in other programme areas and of the programme overall. While this form of effectiveness assessment is not an impact assessment as such, the stakeholders' assessments provided important input for use in evaluating the effectiveness of the federal programme, as they are based on profound knowledge in the respective area and in some cases on vast experience.

Two key areas of impact can be identified within the Live Democracy! programme.

First, there are the successful capacity-building developments seen across the various programme areas. In Sections 2.3.1 to 2.3.4, it was shown that the wide range of networking, coordination and professionalisation measures adopted under the Live Democracy! programme were successful. For example, members of civil society at a local level were activated to strengthen resilience to right-wing extremism in particular, and to establish nationwide structures to facilitate specialist knowledge transfer, quality assurance, professionalisation and (professional) political interest groups.

In addition, the coordination and networking work in the various Länder was extended to take in the full range of phenomena and topics addressed. These findings from the scientific monitoring match those of the programme participants' assessments of the programme's effectiveness. At 97 percent, almost all respondents believed that the Live Democracy! programme resulted in more members of civil society being won over to activities designed to strengthen democratic structures, processes and competencies. Even in the pilot project areas, which were primarily used to test approaches for action, empowerment programmes also helped to strengthen (migrant) self-organisation. As a result, 91 percent of those involved in the federal programme reported that marginalised groups are now able to voice their political opinions and interests more visibly in public than has been the case so far. A similarly high number of respondents attributed opportunities to develop more sustainable democratic structures, processes and competences to the federal funding programme.

Second, across the entire range of programme areas, it was evident that the long-term educational measures used in group settings and the long-term relationship-building activities in specific case work had been effective. This is especially true where the mere acquisition of new knowledge is excluded as an upstream effect: changes in attitudes, views, orientation and behaviour presuppose ongoing processes of co-production. The long, five-year funding period applied in the Live Democracy! programme enabled long-term educational programmes to be used with their associated in-depth networking activities. Nonetheless, where long-term educational measures are concerned, access to the target group remains a challenge which will call for additional, innovative solutions in the coming years.

This was especially evident when it came to young people with tendencies towards anti-democratic views. It also involved accessing to young people in structurally weak or otherwise marginalised (social) spheres.

By contrast, mixed conclusions were drawn with regard to short-term educational measures and programmes for disseminators. While short-term educational measures were mostly suited to imparting knowledge, programmes for disseminators had a broader impact – for example, with processes for self-reflection and in-depth professional dialogue and exchange. The expectation that always accompanies disseminator programmes – that disseminators will pass on both the knowledge they have gained and their broader (self-)understanding in relation to other issues – was not consistently confirmed by the scientific monitoring in all programme areas.

A total of 72 percent of the 686 programme stakeholders surveyed said that Live Democracy! has been or can be highly effective. Some 22 percent said it has a medium-level effect. A negligible proportion of programme participants (0.7 percent) considered the programme activities to have poor potential for effectiveness. Of all the programme stakeholders, 75 percent strongly identified with the Live Democracy! programme and the programme goals. The programme evaluation attributes this to two factors: the federal programme's clear positioning and goals, which are shared by a broad circle of stakeholders, and the good communication structures and opportunities created for dialogue and exchange.

The programme's expansion during the funding period (see Section 2.4) enables members of civil society and the state to respond to emerging problematic situations in a flexible way and to develop further in both thematic and professional terms – for example in the area of engagement in social media. According to the scientific monitoring and programme evaluation, the central pillars of the Live Democracy! programme (Partnerships for Democracy, Federal State Democracy Centres and pilot projects) have largely proven effective. The area trialled under the federal programme of promoting non-governmental organisations in their structural development to become nationwide NGOs took on increasing shape over the course of the programme.

## 2.4 Second funding period (2020–2024)

### 2.4.1 Background, aims and structures

In May 2018, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth took the decision to continue with the federal programme. The German Bundestag allocated funding, thereby ensuring the financial future of Live Democracy! in a second funding period (2020–2024), with a budget of EUR 115.5 million for 2020 alone.

Separate funding guidelines were issued for the federal programme and entered into force on 1 January 2020. This greatly simplified the administrative effort involved because, as opposed to the individual funding guidelines previously issued for each programme area, the new guidelines apply to the programme overall. The guidelines thus created transparency and fair competition, while fostering equal treatment of and providing planning security for civil society stakeholders.

At the beginning of 2020, the federal programme's aims were realigned and given greater focus – not least with a view to current social challenges and building on the experience gained.

'Promoting democracy. Shaping diversity. Preventing extremism.' These are the central aims of the second funding period of the Live Democracy! programme. They form the guiding principles for action. The programme areas of promoting democracy and preventing extremism addressed under the federal funding programme since 2015 were added to by a new programme area: shaping democracy – the aim being to emphasise the importance of democratic activity in achieving cohesion in a diverse society. Given the increasing divisions in German society and the associated threats to peaceful, freedom-based coexistence, this third programme area is needed to achieve the programme's aims by means of the targeted promotion of empowerment and concerted action to combat racism and foster tolerance and respect. This was also one of the recommendations put forward in the programme evaluation.

In the second funding period, targeted efforts continue to strengthen the work of civil society stakeholders, most notably against right-wing extremism and racism. For the first time at a federal level, two state-run competence networks will be established with experienced stakeholders to consolidate and further improve efforts to combat antisemitism and right-wing extremism. A further 12 competence networks have been created to address additional topics.

Another focus area addresses civil society at a local level. In the 300 local Partnerships for Democracy that currently exist, large numbers of engaged volunteers work to combat right-wing extremism. These partnerships are increasingly supported at a municipal level. The programme places special focus on the Federal State Democracy Centres, with projects concerning exit, victim and mobile counselling being coordinated and financed at Länder level.

As of 2020, the approach of the federal Live Democracy! programme is based on the knowledge gleaned in the first funding period and in particular on the results of the scientific monitoring and programme evaluation. It also takes account of the recommendations put forward in the Report of the Second NSU Inquiry Committee (Bundestag Document 17/14600) and the Second Report of the Independent Expert Group on Antisemitism published in 2017, and of the provisions contained in the Federal Government Strategy to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy adopted in 2016 and the National Programme to Prevent Islamist Extremism. In developing the programme further, particular focus is placed on improving collaboration between state actors and a diverse civil society which, to the extent possible, is involved in developing measures and shaping social cohesion.

## 2.4.2 Programme areas and additional activities

### **Municipalities programme area**

At the time of writing, the programme provides funding for 300 local-level Partnerships for Democracy. These are local and regional alliances which develop participation-focused, sustainable strategies for use in addressing the actual situation on the ground. A new application phase began to attract additional Partnerships for Democracy at the end of 2020. As of 2020, the maximum amount of funding per partnership per year was EUR 125,000 (previously EUR 100,000).

### **Länder programme area**

In each of the 16 German Länder, the work of a Federal State Democracy Centre continues to be funded and promoted. The Centres consolidate regional counselling and support programmes (mobile counselling, victim counselling and distancing and exit counselling) and develop models for use in promoting democracy and diversity.

### **Federal Government programme area**

In the previous funding period (2015–2019), projects were funded which promoted structural development among certain project implementers and thus their professionalisation. In the current funding period (2020–2024), the federal programme is introducing a change with the creation of competence centres and competence networks within the Federal Government programme area. With the creation of competence networks and centres, the respective thematic areas involved in promoting democracy, shaping diversity and preventing extremism are being developed further. Under the programme, the 40 civil society organisations serving as implementers of competence centres and competence networks work on a nationwide basis to assist professionalisation processes in the relevant thematic area – for example, for other civil society stakeholders – and to foster greater networking.

Under the Live Democracy! programme, the competence centres and networks, which cover 14 thematic areas, make up the Federal Government programme area. As a core component of the federal programme itself, these are proven thematic expert alliances which further develop subject-related expertise in various thematic areas and make it available nationwide.

Where a single project implementer takes on the task, it constitutes a competence centre. Where an alliance of project implementers takes on the task, they constitute a competence network.

A competence network develops its respective thematic area further. This means that the competence centres and networks work to connect, advise and professionalise stakeholders in the thematic area and coordinate their activities, also in collaboration with with Federal State Democracy Centres (Länder programme area) and Partnerships for Democracy (municipalities programme area). They train disseminators and promote the integration of innovative and pilot projects into institutional structures.

First and foremost, the competence centres and networks provide their thematic expertise for use in nationwide specialist practice by collecting, preparing and enhancing subject-related content. They organise specialist events and discussions, especially with regard to current challenges and to aid professionalisation processes. They provide specialist advice and produce information, working tools and materials which are made available nationwide. The competence centres and networks help integrate successful, replicable approaches into institutional structures, such as child and youth welfare services, at a federal, Länder and municipal level. Here it is important that the centres and networks collaborate with other actors, both in the relevant thematic area and within the relevant structures, in order to consolidate and facilitate the nationwide exchange of topical expertise.

The promotion and funding of the competence centres and networks is explicitly aimed at promoting civil society engagement at a federal level. Preventive educational practices in the 14 thematic areas will be developed further.

## Thematic areas – competence centres and networks

### Promoting democracy

- Early childhood education and primary education
- School and extra-curricular education in adolescence
- Vocational education and training (including the education to employment transition system)

### Shaping diversity

- Antisemitism
- Antigypsyism
- Antidiscrimination and shaping diversity
- Homophobia and transphobia
- Islamophobia and Muslimophobia
- Anti-Black racism
- Coexistence in an immigration society

### Preventing extremism

- Right-wing extremism
- Islamist extremism
- Left-wing extremism
- Online hate speech

### Pilot projects programme area

A total of 145 pilot projects developed and tested innovative approaches in the programme areas involving promoting democracy, preventing extremism and the newly added area of shaping diversity. Of those pilot projects, 28 had an explicit digital context.

In the second funding period from 2020, the programme area of online hate speech was not continued in its previous funding form but was instead seen as a cross-sectoral task. The projects to be funded from 2020 onwards link the three programme areas of promoting democracy, shaping diversity and preventing extremism more closely with online and offline work with children and young people – the main aim being to learn more about potential interactions.

Pilot projects developed new, innovative approaches for preventive educational work with children, adolescents, young adults and their parents, and for work with stakeholders in child and youth welfare. They provided ideas for use in strengthening civil society structures and supported civil society engagement in promoting democracy. Following a successful trial period, the methods and materials developed in the course of the projects will be used in educational practice in child and youth welfare services and in other institutional structures.

The pilot projects were located in the three programme areas of promoting democracy, shaping diversity and preventing extremism.

### **Promoting democracy**

Children and adolescents should actively participate in shaping democracy. For them to exercise their rights to social and political participation and codetermination, a democracy promotion and political education strategy is needed which is aligned to their respective age group and developmental stage. In the projects that were funded, the focus was thus placed on the underlying principles of equality, the rule of law and protection of human rights. Methods were developed and tested which were designed to assist children, adolescents and young adults in exercising their participation and codetermination rights.

The pilot projects in the programme area involving **promoting democracy** focused on the following thematic areas.

### **Promoting democracy in childhood**

The aims within this thematic area were the (further) development of strategies and models for strengthening cooperation between child daycare institutions or family centres and families (e.g. childrearing/education partnerships); the (further) development of education and training models and approaches for and with educational staff in the area of participative, democracy-promoting models for work with children's groups; and parent-child groups, and the (further) development and testing of primary school age-appropriate approaches and models for more participation and codetermination in after-school clubs and in other child and youth daycare programmes in relation to primary school/all-day school.

### **Promoting democracy in adolescence and young adulthood**

The aims within this thematic area were the (further) development of models, processes and structures that take an innovative approach in encouraging young people to become engaged in promoting democracy; the (further) development of methods for constructive democratic conflict resolution in the social sphere, and in dealing with socio-cultural heterogeneity; and the (further) development of methods for promoting democracy in vocational education and training structures and the transition system.

### Shaping diversity

In this programme area, projects were funded which promoted awareness and understanding of diversity, mutual respect and appreciation of difference. The focus was on developing measures which – taking account of multiple discrimination – addressed selected forms of group-focused enmity and promoted the acceptance and appreciation of diversity in German society. The aim was to enable all people irrespective of their religious beliefs, sexual orientation, origin and political views to live peaceful lives within the democratic structures that exist in Germany.

The pilot projects in the shaping diversity programme area focused on the following thematic areas.

#### Antisemitism

The aims of this thematic area were:

- Further development, expansion and linking of approaches to prevent antisemitism
- Combining educational formats for use in the short term with those designed for longer-term application
- Building awareness among children, adolescents and young teachers of antisemitism in schools and extracurricular education
- Consideration of heterogeneous group constellations and their resulting, differing needs in the design and implementation of preventive educational programmes
- Inclusion of the Jewish perspective in developing educational and prevention programmes

#### Antigypsyism

The aims of this thematic area were:

- The (further) development and testing of anti-discrimination approaches in educational work with children and young people and with educational staff and disseminators aimed at combating antigypsyism
- The (further) development and testing of approaches
- Promoting the capacity to act among those with experience of antigypsyism
- The (further) development and testing of approaches which help to strengthen and empower members of Sinti and Roma communities

#### Islamophobia and Muslimophobia

The aims of this thematic area were:

- The (further) development and testing of preventive educational approaches to tackling Islamophobia and Muslimophobia in extra-curricular school and non-school settings
- The (further) development and testing of approaches to raising awareness among children, adolescents and disseminators
- The inclusion of Muslim viewpoints in the development of educational and prevention programmes
- The (further) development and testing of approaches designed to strengthen and empower victims

### **Homophobia and transphobia**

The aims of this thematic area were:

- Consideration of heterogeneous group constellations and the resulting, differing needs in the design and implementation of preventive educational programmes
- The (further) development and testing of measures to promote acceptance of same-sex lifestyles and gender diversity
- The (further) development and testing of approaches designed to strengthen and empower victims
- Consideration of the sexual and gender identity-building phase in children and adolescents and addressing typical juvenile identity-building processes
- The (further) development and testing of approaches that focus on multiple discrimination

### **Racism**

The aims of this thematic area were:

- The (further) development and testing of preventive educational approaches to address racism in extracurricular school and non-school settings
- The (further) development and testing of approaches to strengthen and empower victims
- The (further) development and testing of approaches to strengthen the social participation of people who experience racism
- Inclusion of racism victims' perspective in the development of educational and prevention programmes

### **Diversity and antidiscrimination – opportunities and challenges in an immigration society.**

The aims of this thematic area were:

- The (further) development and testing of approaches to promote intercultural encounters and strengthening diversity-related skills within organisations
- The (further) development and testing of approaches designed to foster social cohesion – including in relation to the issues of refugees, asylum and flight
- The development and testing of approaches that focus on social participation and diversity competence among newly arrived immigrants
- Strengthening migrant organisations that develop and test preventive educational approaches to address discrimination and programmes to empower victims of discrimination

### **Preventing extremism**

The aims of the projects in this programme area were to develop methods for use in secondary and tertiary education to eliminate radicalisation processes. The primary target groups were young people at risk of radicalisation or those already radicalised. Innovative approaches and methods were intended to create reliable, trust-based paths of access to enable educational work with these young people. The projects also targeted disseminators and stakeholders in child and youth welfare in order to boost their competencies and give them the skills they need to deal with politically and religiously motivated ideological radicalisation in their fields of work.

The pilot projects in the preventing extremism programme area focused on the following thematic areas.

**Right-wing extremism**

Funding and promotion of pilot projects in the thematic area of right-wing extremism aimed to open up new and innovative paths of access to young people with affinities for extreme right-wing ideologies and/or actors from the respective scene and organisations, and to (further) develop targeted approaches for educational work with this group of adolescents and young adults. Current forms of right-wing extremism and altered recreational and group behaviour among young people were to be taken into account, focusing on things like the quantity and quality of media use and membership of changing peer groups. In addition, adolescents were also confronted with right-wing extremism discourse and supporters in areas such as sports (MMA, free fighting and football) and nature conservation. The projects aimed to develop and test model approaches and methods for educational work with the target group described in order to enable critical assessment of anti-democratic and discriminatory attitudes and actions.

**Islamist extremism**

Funding and promotion of pilot projects in the thematic area of Islamist extremism focused on opening up paths of access to young people with affinities for anti-democratic and/or extremist Islamist ideologies and/or actors from the Islamist extremism scene and related networks and structures. It also had the aim of developing and testing model educational programmes to tackle religiously motivated, anti-democratic views, devaluation of people of other faiths and acceptance of religiously motivated violence and (ideologised) violence among young people. In this thematic area, educational practitioners faced the challenge of carefully navigating the relationship between legitimate religious practice and religiously motivated radicalisation. Then again, expressions of religiously motivated anti-democratic views and the devaluation of

people of other faiths can also be seen as a sign of protest and targeted provocation. These diverse motives and the professional challenges faced in this thematic area were to be given adequate consideration in the design and implementation of preventive educational pilot projects, the ultimate aim being to prevent stigmatisation. Implementing approaches reflective of gender when working with young people was also desired. Long-term educational programmes in particular were eligible for funding.

**Left-wing extremism**

The funding and promotion of pilot projects in the thematic area of left-wing extremism focused on testing indirect and socio-spatial paths of access to young people with affinities for left-wing militancy and with extremist left-wing tendencies, young people exposed to related risks and the associated training of disseminators. Use and legitimisation of violence by left-wing extremists could, among other things, be seen as an expression of radical opposition to the system or as the result of escalating conflict between political groups and protests at demonstrations. Radical opposition to the system was also expressed by rejecting state-financed prevention work. The main challenge in prevention work in this thematic area was thus obtaining access to the target group. For this reason, pilot projects were funded which tested indirect and socio-spatial paths of access to the target group. Disseminators in schools, youth and social work and in sports primarily faced situational and argumentation challenges when confronted with world views legitimising violence, patterns of argumentation and explanation and conspiracy theories from young left-wing militants. The ability to speak out and engage in high-level discussion meant them having to get to grips with the respective narratives in advance and believe in their own ability to engage and argue the case.

### **Prevention and deradicalisation in prisons and in probation and parole services**

Work in this thematic area had the specific aim of:

- Testing innovative approaches and methods for the early recognition and prevention of radicalisation in prisons
- Interrupting emerging radicalisation processes in prisons
- Initiating distancing processes among radicalised prisoners and supporting their exit, thereby preventing further radicalisation
- Preventing all forms of discrimination in prisons, especially on grounds of ethnic origin, sexual orientation and religious belief
- Enabling prison and probation/parole staff to deal with conflict
- Recognising radicalisation processes
- Developing approaches to interrupt radicalisation processes and aid deradicalisation
- Using new support programmes and network projects in probation and parole services to help stabilise clients with regard to forms of extremist and anti-democratic activities/attitudes
- Implementing effective transition management with the involvement of all stakeholders in advance of and following release from prison to help stabilise clients in relation to forms of extremist and anti-democratic activities/attitudes

### **Cross-phenomenon prevention: interactions, specific phenomena, and de-escalation work**

In the programme area of preventing extremism, the funding and promotion of cross-phenomena on pilot projects took account of the fact that there were interactions between the above-named phenomena (right-wing extremism, Islamist extremism, left-wing extremism). The thematic area thus focused on interactions between differing phenomena in terms of escalation, conflict and spirals of violence between various radicalised groups. The projects intended to develop model approaches for interrupting and deescalating spirals of violence which could ideally be applied in other socio-spatial contexts. The cross-phenomenon perspective was also intended to flow into the testing of further education and training measures for social workers (social educators and comparable specialists). In addition, by focusing on building awareness of and tackling conspiracy theories, the thematic area also took account of the fact that conspiracy theories are an integral component of extremist ideologies and human identity concepts. Beyond the specific manifestation of conspiracy theories in the respective extremist structures and networks, such theories are increasingly attractive among young people who demonstrate no clear affinity for or identification with a specific extremist ideology.

### **Research**

To expand the knowledge base in preventive educational practice, policy and administration, a total of 19 research projects were funded during the reporting period of the Live Democracy! programme. The lifecycles of the research projects are not linked to the federal programme's funding periods – at the time of writing, nine projects had been funded. The research projects looked at processes of political socialisation, radicalisation and distancing, discourse in radical scenes and the training of specialists in preventive educational work.

The Research Unit for the Prevention of Right-Wing Extremism and Radicalization was a central pillar in securing the DJI location in Halle/Saale for the longer term. It has received ongoing funding since 2000. In the unit's further development, provision was made for research and consulting on right-wing extremism. Analyses of political socialisation, (pre-)political attitudes and politically related aspects of young people's everyday worlds were to be intensified. Analyses were also to be used in social hotspots, and stakeholders in institutional structures (especially child and youth welfare) were to be involved. The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth would be assisted in its strategic planning and outlook, among other things by means of analyses of (inter) national practice in the areas of extremism prevention and democracy promotion.

### **Accompanying projects**

At the time of writing, 20 accompanying projects were funded under the federal programme to provide programme and project support, for example in the form of specialist networks, training and assistance in transferring measures to institutional structures. Projects such as the Umbrella Association for Victim Counselling and the Diversity Media Library were thus continued in this way.

### **Innovation fund**

A new innovation fund promoted some 20 projects which, in contrast to the longer-term pilot projects, provide short-term ideas for the programme areas covered by the federal programme and enable fast responses to current anti-democratic developments and trends. Project funding was provided for a maximum of two years.

### **Anti-racism campaign**

Experience of racism is a personal matter and often goes unnoticed by a large section of society. Thus, in November 2020 the 'Vorsicht, Vorurteile!' (Look out! Prejudice!) campaign sent a strong public message in favour of democracy and against (everyday) racism. Focusing on the same topic, the campaign was continued in March 2021 in the form of an online action day.

The campaign was designed to raise awareness of prejudice and racism in everyday life. Its primary aim was to encourage individuals to think about and question their own ingrained prejudices. The campaign also aimed to motivate people to actively speak out against racism on the streets, in the workplace, at a political level and among their circle of family and friends. People were made aware of the problem by giving them food for thought.

### **COVID-19 pandemic**

In 2020, a response was needed to the challenges that civil society structures were confronted with in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, wherever the measures needed to fulfil a project's funding purposes (such as events, seminars and surveys) had to be abandoned in 2020 because of the pandemic, additional funding was provided to enable these measures to be repeated in the following year.

In addition, by means of a needs-based approach, a total of 300 Partnerships for Democracy were given the opportunity to increase their funding in the form of a one-off amount of up to EUR 20,000 in 2020. This ensured that concrete, additional measures could be implemented in response to the social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and with reference to the aims of the federal programme (such as dealing with conspiracy theories and current racist phenomena). Those responsible at a local level continue to be confronted with anti-democratic activities.

### 2.4.3 Further development – monitoring and evaluation

As with its predecessor programmes run by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, in its second programme period (2020–2024) Live Democracy! has been and continues to be subject to external monitoring and evaluation by an independent scientific institute. The evaluation and scientific monitoring is conducted according to recognised professional standards, the ethical principles of empirical social research and the evaluation standards of the Gesellschaft für Evaluation (DeGEval – Evaluation Society).

In selecting the DeGEval, great care was taken to ensure that it not only had the necessary methodological and substantive expertise, but could also draw from and build on available findings from the first Live Democracy! funding period and predecessor programmes. This was especially important in evaluating the sustainable, longer-term impact and effects of programme funding.

From the outset, each of the programme areas covered by Live Democracy! were scientifically monitored and evaluated by a dedicated team specialising in the respective work and action area. Scientific monitoring and evaluation of the various programme and thematic areas of the Live Democracy! programme were carried out by a consortium comprising the German Youth Institute (DJI), the German Centre for Integration and Migration Research (DeZIM) and the Institute for Social Work and Social Education (ISS) in Frankfurt.

An additional independent working unit at the DJI in Halle was also involved in the programme evaluation.

With the new funding guidelines, the evaluation took on a binding nature. In particular, the guidelines required that in the evaluation, the scientific monitoring go beyond programme implementation and include the effects, impact mechanisms and sustainability of the funded projects. This was reflected in the scientific monitoring and programme evaluation approaches for the second funding period, with special attention being given to issues surrounding potential effects.

The guidelines also required closer collaboration between the scientific monitoring and programme evaluation teams, complete with exchange of empirical data and research findings. In this way, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth not only prescribed a specific evaluation structure, but also made collaboration between stakeholders involved in the evaluation a binding provision.

## 2.4.4 Outlook – the Live Democracy! programme beyond 2021

The experience gained so far in the second funding period launched in January 2020 shows that there was a need for additional support across all programme areas. As a result, funding for the Live Democracy! programme in 2021 was increased by an additional EUR 35 million to an overall total of EUR 150.5 million. There are plans to further increase the Live Democracy! budget in the coming years, subject to available resources. A total budget of EUR 565.5 million is planned for the 2022–2024 period.

The additional funding in 2021 is to be used to further foster local-level engagement nationwide, provide more intensive support for the work of the Federal State Democracy Centres, expand the competence centres and networks, and promote additional pilot projects in thematic areas which have been underrepresented thus far.

Particular focus is to be placed on improving civil society counselling services for victims and others in need of counselling, and the further development of exit and distancing work. Prevention work in relation to conspiracy theories is also to be expanded.

The additional funding will be provided in line with the prevailing funding guidelines.

# 3

## Cohesion through Participation – the Federal Programme run by the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community

### 3.1 Challenges and development potential

With the federal Cohesion through Participation programme, the Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI) in conjunction with the Federal Government Commissioner for the New Federal States promotes and funds projects to foster democratic participation and combat extremism. The aim is to support, develop and strengthen the infrastructure for civil society engagement with the aim of fostering a self-confident, vibrant and democratic culture in rural and structurally weak regions. The Cohesion through Participation programme is managed by the Federal Agency for Civic Education (BpB) and is thus closely linked with other political education programmes.

The programme focuses on building and expanding people's capacity for action in order to foster democratic practices in associations and clubs, such as the voluntary fire service and the THW, organised sport and welfare organisations. To achieve this, voluntary and permanent functionaries in clubs and associations receive training to enable them to implement counselling services in the thematic areas of promoting a democratic culture and conflict resolution in their respective organisations. In addition to counselling work, needs-based and target group-based formats for political education are developed for associations and clubs, thereby opening up new target groups.

As a result, an overarching and core concern of the programme is fostering democratic practices based on the notion of equality in club and association work and addressing the challenges and specific problems faced in the promotion of democratic practices within these organisations. The Cohesion through Participation programme – the name reflects its underlying purpose – is intended to help members actively participate in addressing the needs and shaping the interests of their association or club by democratic means.

By providing experiences of democracy in relation to everyday practice and life, the programme aims to combat both extremism and anti-constitutional tendencies.

At the end of the third funding phase in 2016, the work achieved under the programme so far showed that the projects had successfully engaged a large number of active association and club members in the counselling training, that numerous new educational programmes had been installed in the organisations, and that their functionaries had been sensitised and were open to programme topics and had become involved in programme implementation. On the topic of quality assurance, progress was seen in the projects over the course of the funding phase in relation to the development and use of a practical counselling standards system. The associations and clubs also faced specific challenges in relation to the intensified (structural) implementation of the new approaches, action strategies and counselling models that were developed. This gave rise, among other things, to the task of creating or developing concrete action and impact areas for democracy counsellor engagement within the organisations.

## 3.2 Fourth funding period (2017–2019)

During the fourth funding period, the Cohesion through Participation programme built thematically on the previous programme phases. New opportunities and challenges for project work in the funded associations and clubs were also developed. In this way, the funded projects integrated their counselling and educational work into associations and clubs (Programme Area 1A). Compared with the previous funding phase, the key changes in the fourth funding period were that the programme now covered the development and implementation of local and regional

action plans (Programme Area 1B) and that a pilot project cluster for intercultural learning in associations and clubs addressed issues concerning intercultural openness in those organisations (Programme Area 2). At the start of the 2017–2019 funding phase, the programme was expanded across Germany (with the exception of the three city states of Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg).

### 3.2.1 Programme Area 1A – Building and expanding people’s capacity for action in order to strengthen democratic practices in associations and clubs

Building and, in particular, expanding people’s capacity for action in order to strengthen democratic practices in associations and clubs was a central focus of the 2017–2019 programme funding phase. Voluntary and permanent staff were given the skills needed to develop and design new participation and inclusion opportunities for their associations and clubs. They were also trained to set up counselling services to deal with incidents and behaviours of a discriminatory and anti-democratic nature, and to establish and implement the necessary processes and procedures. The structures created enabled the voluntary and permanent democracy counsellors to respond appropriately to sexist comments and discrimination. This group of counsellors also assisted the associations and clubs in planning and implementing events in the thematic area of political education and democracy education and were involved in participation and organisational development processes. Both approaches – improving participation structures and processes and creating a conflict resolution programme – aimed to strengthen democratic practices in associations and clubs.

Successful implementation of these counselling, education and participation programmes called for the support of managers and functionaries in the funded associations and clubs. Their positions allowed them to pave the way for, announce and make visible new measures, strategies and programmes for promoting democracy and democracy work among their respective audiences. This group of key association and club actors thus forms another important target group in project work across all funding phases.

In the 2017–2019 funding period, 73 projects were funded in the areas of sport, fire service/emergency services/disaster management, welfare, the Church, local culture and tradition (Heimatpflege), and environment protection.

#### 3.2.2 Programme Area 1B – Strengthening democratic participation in community work through qualified and engaged associations and clubs

In expanding the project activities in Programme Area 1A, where the approach initially focused on activities within associations and clubs, the funded projects in Programme Area 1B went beyond tackling internal tasks in those organisations with the aim of strengthening democratic participation in community work. The projects developed cooperations to strengthen democratic culture in local communities and supported existing networks and cooperative partnerships by giving them insights into the views of associations and clubs and making these visible as partners in democracy work performed at a local level.

In the 2017–2019 funding period, 15 projects from Programme Area 1A were also funded in 1B.

#### 3.2.3 Programme Area 2 – Pilot projects focusing on intercultural learning in associations and clubs

In Programme Area 2, 18 pilot projects were funded on the topic of intercultural learning in associations and clubs. This programme area took account of the challenges faced by associations and clubs when including people with migrant or refugee backgrounds in their community work, opening up opportunities for them to participate in social life and thereby contributing to effective integration. In addition, as associations and clubs – especially those in rural and structurally weak regions – are confronted with problems of rural exodus and demographic change, the inclusion of people with a migrant background helps secure the infrastructure for engagement by civil society. This makes the process of mutual, intercultural learning a future-focused task for associations and clubs. The knowledge needed is to be developed and tested in this programme area.

For this purpose, education providers with expertise in the thematic area worked in tandem with (Länder-specific) associations and clubs to develop suitable and transferable measures, methodologies and instruments for use in intercultural learning in associations and clubs.

### 3.2.4 Accompanying measures

In implementing the federal programme, the accompanying measures developed and used proved effective and were thus continued into the fourth funding phase. All project implementers were given access to support in the form of coaching and supervision. Regional and organisation-specific networking meetings and counsellor forums served to enable mutual knowledge transfer and exchange between project stakeholders and democracy counsellors. The Bundesverbände der Deutschen Sportjugend e.V. (German Youth Sports Association), THW-Jugend e.V. (youth section of the voluntary technical relief service), NaturFreunde Deutschlands (Friends of Nature Germany) and Deutscher Feuerwehrverband e.V. (German Fire Service Association) coordinated networking activities on behalf of their regional organisations. In addition, at the end of the funding phase, a federal programme working group on programme quality was established to act as the interface between programme management by the Federal Agency for Civic Education and the funded projects. This is where the various instruments for programme quality and development are coordinated and knowledge transfer takes place between the programme and the projects.

### 3.2.5 Monitoring and evaluation results



#### **Methodological approach to programme evaluation for assessing the work and effectiveness of the funded projects**

In the evaluation of the federal Cohesion through Participation programme, the concrete programme objectives aim to achieve specific impact and effect targets which are defined for all programme areas and form the framework for the work performed in the funded projects. The multi-methodological implementation of goal-focused programme evaluation includes, among other things, continuous online monitoring of the funded projects in the various programme areas, continuous online monitoring of the counselling work performed in the projects using documentation forms and regular quantitative and qualitative analysis of counselling cases. Added to this come problem-focused telephone interviews and online surveys of democracy counsellors.

To analyse the models and approaches used in prevention work, intensive research was done on selected projects, and their impact models were reconstructed using a theory-based evaluation approach to assess their effectiveness. The results were used in the formative evaluation to reflect on and realign project-related practices. As part of the programme evaluation, qualitative impact assessments were also conducted using participant observation and qualitative interviews.

### 3 Cohesion through Participation

The Cohesion through Participation programme has been accompanied by a scientific monitoring and evaluation panel since 2011. The results of the monitoring and evaluation activities are constantly taken into account when managing and enhancing the programme. They are also published on the programme website at the end of the respective funding period.<sup>5</sup>

Since the programme was launched in 2010, some 3,000 voluntary counsellors have been trained (counsellor training was not covered in the first funding period). In the course of the fourth funding period, 1,344 counsellors were actively involved in democracy promotion work in their associations and clubs – in counselling sessions, in designing participation programmes and in implementing informational and educational events. In designing and implementing these events, the projects exceeded the implementers' self-defined (output) targets for the fourth funding period: a total of 4,271 informational and educational events were held, a 17 percent increase compared with the number originally planned. Project managers reported that more than 93,000 people attended the events.

Looking at the topic of sustainability, towards the end of the fourth funding period the outlook was optimistic in terms of counselling services becoming firmly established in associations and clubs, both with regard to existing projects funded over a longer period and newer projects added to the programme in 2017. A total of 27 old and 16 new projects reported that the counselling services were well or very well established at the time of the third wave of surveys in 2019 (at the end of the funding period).

To capture and document the counselling work carried out as part of the funded projects, an evaluation sheet was drawn up. This was used to assess the number of counselling sessions and the quality, intensity and effectiveness of each session. Since the start of the fourth funding period, the information has been captured in an online database (counselling monitoring) which gives the Federal Agency for Civic Education a continuous overview of the standardised data.

In the course of the fourth funding period of the Cohesion through Participation programme, 1,181 evaluable cases which occurred within the scope of the programme were documented in the online counselling monitoring database.

The evaluation of the outcome of the counselling monitoring shows that the projects have processed a wide range of counselling cases and that those documented involved both simple and more complex issues. The evaluation results demonstrate the use of approaches in case work that were in some cases highly sophisticated, such as developing an approach to diversity-focused organisational development and participation, designing a democracy-promoting empowerment strategy for a local club and introducing counselling by colleagues, for colleagues. In most cases, the voluntary and permanent counsellors rated the quality of the counselling provided as good or satisfactory. The counsellors assessed the **effectiveness**<sup>6</sup> of the counselling work as good

5 [www.zusammenhalt-durch-teilhabe.de](http://www.zusammenhalt-durch-teilhabe.de)

6 Measured based on the following indicators:

- I gained a better insight into the situation during the counselling.
- The counselling helped me see the situation from a different angle.
- The counselling gave me useful information in relation to my concern.
- The counselling helped me develop new options for action.
- The counselling enabled me to take action myself.

and the **acceptance**<sup>7</sup> of the counselling work as very good. In 55 percent of cases, counselling was either completely or mostly provided by permanent staff and in 20 percent of cases by volunteers. In 15 percent of counselling sessions, permanent and voluntary staff worked in tandem, and in 10 percent external counsellors were involved.

The vast majority of counselling sessions involved brief sessions or procedural counselling. Only in rare cases was counselling referral based, where an initial talk or initial counselling session was conducted to assess the problem and situation, with subsequent counselling provided by external counsellors and counselling centres.<sup>8</sup>

The in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of a range of selected, local-level projects in Programme Area 1B showed that the measures taken in those projects have helped the local associations and clubs involved see themselves as democratic actors in their local and regional communities. A qualitative analysis of the approaches taken in all of the projects showed that the vast majority had drawn on the existing local-level networks and only a few had initiated networks themselves. Connecting to existing (network) structures has proven to be a good approach in avoiding duplicate structures and utilising synergies. Another positive was that in almost all 1B projects, democracy counsellors were involved who had previously been trained in associations and clubs in Programme Area 1A. The activities in Programme Area 1B had also helped to make the associations and clubs visible as democratic actors on the ground. In structurally weak regions, they helped promote a vibrant, democratic community culture.

The targets set in Programme Area 2 were demonstrably achieved on the basis of numerous indicators. The evaluation results show that in the Länder-specific associations and clubs, key organisational changes had been made towards intercultural openness. This included the inclusion of intercultural openness in the guiding principles of the respective association or club, the revision of public relations work to include both multilingual content and the use of images, the development of new programmes and the creation of a steering group on the topic of intercultural openness. The evaluation results also show that if lasting effects are to be achieved, stakeholders in associations and clubs require forms of support and advice that go beyond pure training measures. The projects assisted those who had completed training in applying what they had learned to their association and club structures through regular meetings to foster exchange of experience, through shadowing and through individual advice on ways to implement tools and strategies for promoting intercultural openness in associations and clubs.

7 Indicators:

- I'm satisfied with the outcome of the counselling session.
- I would make use of the counselling services again in the future.
- I can imagine having another counselling session with the same counsellor.
- I would happily recommend the counselling services.

8 'A brief consultation constitutes a counselling case with a maximum of three counselling sessions. The counselling comprises a situation analysis, specialist counselling and an evaluation with the client. Expert counselling can also be involved.' 'Procedural counselling constitutes a counselling case with more than three counselling sessions. The democracy counsellors act as long-term advisory assistants for the client in the association or club. This is used to address more complex issues across several association or club levels and involving several groups of people. This can be a conflict of interest or a change process. Procedural counselling often includes structural, institutional, personal, hierarchical, symbolic and similar levels. Working with those involved, measures are agreed for achieving the desired goal (process architecture). In many cases, the counselling gives rise to a need for further activities such as targeted educational events, moderation, etc. For procedural counselling, the democracy counsellors ideally have knowledge of systemic counselling, experience with change management, large groups, etc.' (See impulse paper for projects in the Cohesion through Participation programm: [www.zusammenhalt-durch-teilhabe.de](http://www.zusammenhalt-durch-teilhabe.de))

## 3.3 Fifth funding period (2020–2024)

### 3.3.1 Background, aims and structures

The programme entered its fifth funding period on 1 January 2020. Associations and clubs had the opportunity to apply for funding in three programme areas.

In Programme Area 1 – Promoting democratic practices in associations and clubs, the focus is placed on developing and establishing internal counselling structures in the organisations for use in effectively dealing with incidents of an undemocratic nature. In addition, the funded projects must develop effective approaches to promote democratic participation in association and club structures, integrate measures for political education into their existing educational structures or implement a series of stand-alone educational events.

In developing the association or club, participation-focused structures and formats are established, management staff are sensitised to the topic and suitable formats are implemented for knowledge management and quality assurance. In this programme area, 53 projects are currently being funded with lifecycles of up to five years.

Programme Area 2 – Shaping social cohesion targets systematic collaboration between funded projects at association and club level and their subdivisions at a regional and local level. The ambitious task facing programme-funded projects at association and club level involves implementing a framework at a regional and local level which motivates and enables subdivisions and member associations to effectively promote democracy within their own structures. Using this collaborative approach, engaged local-level actors

are to be won over for the Cohesion through Participation programme's thematic areas of promoting democracy, participation and conflict resolution, and implement concrete projects in the respective subdivision. Regional and local actors, associations and clubs are to provide stimulus for democratic coexistence at a local level, meaning in their local community. In this programme area, 25 projects with lifecycles of up to five years are currently being funded in associations and clubs in which successful educational and counselling structures have already been established and installed.

In Programme Area 3A – Pilot projects to promote participation and engagement and focusing on digitalisation, model approaches are tested which provide an opportunity to introduce digital tools for use in promoting democracy in associations and clubs. Tandem projects are also used in this programme area: in collaboration with Länder-wide associations and clubs, implementing organisations with expertise in promoting democracy and participation online develop measures on behalf of the respective organisations for use in online democracy promotion, participation and association and club communications. Key target groups involve management staff, functionaries and volunteers who play an active role in the associations and clubs. Four projects with project lifecycles of up to five years are currently being funded in this programme area.

In Programme Area 3B – Pilot projects to promote participation and engagement/Idea funds for engagement in rural regions, Cohesion through Participation aims to integrate additional target groups into the programme. Small associations and clubs often have innovative ideas about how they can become more engaged in shaping their structures, motivating their members, encouraging volunteering and taking a more democratic approach to shaping their community. As part of the Cohesion through Participation programme's Idea Fund for Engagement in Rural Regions, regionally and locally effective associations and clubs can receive funding to

provide targeted stimulus for democracy promotion and shape a vibrant community culture. At the time of writing, 15 projects are being funded for a maximum of two years in this programme area. Applications for funding can be submitted at any time.

### 3.3.2 Further development – monitoring and evaluation

With regard to programme structure and programme management, in the course of its implementation, the Cohesion through Participation programme has become increasingly focused on impact and effectiveness. The importance of effectiveness is evident in the fact that the goals and targets set out in the new funding guidelines – which were developed with a broad-based, participative process taking all the programme stakeholders into account – were explicitly formulated as impact and effectiveness goals and that, at the level of individual programme areas, the targets are further specified and focused on effect. The programme objectives form the basis on which the programme's effectiveness is monitored over time.

As in the previous funding phases, in the fifth funding period which began in 2020, the programme goals form the basis for scientific monitoring and evaluation of the Cohesion through Participation programme. For Programme Areas 1 and 2 described above, these have been further specified and operationalised as impact and effectiveness goals which all projects strive to achieve. They also set out the changes and innovations to be introduced in the programme-funded associations and clubs, the target groups to be included for the purpose and the ways in which they are to be empowered and enabled. As in the previous funding phase, the programme evaluation includes, among other things, the task of using these programme goals to assess whether the activities introduced in the funded projects are moving towards achieving those goals and how, i.e. the measures used to achieve them.

One important further development in the existing process of scientific monitoring involved the further specification of quality management components at project level. In the form of a checklist tool, the key criteria in the underlying quality dimensions are to be implemented in the everyday work of the funded projects (quality of design, structure, process and results). In the course of the funding period, these quality criteria have been applied in evaluating project work in the area of funding participation-focused instruments and in the work with local and regional subdivisions of funded Länder-specific associations and clubs. The aim of this approach is to reflect on and critically assess the design process and the ways in which the measures were implemented in terms of their effectiveness, to identify and document the changes achieved by simple means, and thus enhance the project's effectiveness.

In Programme Area 3 (pilot projects), scientific monitoring in the current 2020–2024 funding period faces the task of identifying the goals and target groups of each of the funded projects and developing project-specific effectiveness models. This approach takes account of the more experimental logic applied in this programme area: while it is clear that it involves measures for digitalisation, just what can actually be achieved in terms of promoting democracy in associations and clubs remains to be seen. To be able to determine what is possible, the various digital approaches and the associated specific goals of the funded projects must first be reconstructed.

# 4

## Further developments

### 4.1 Cabinet Committee for the fight against right-wing extremism and racism

Following the right-wing extremist and racist attack in Hanau, Chancellor Merkel formed a Cabinet Committee for the fight against right-wing extremism and racism on 18 March 2020, thereby making the fight against hostile ideologies a top priority on the political agenda. By establishing the Cabinet Committee, the Federal Government again expressly emphasised the huge political importance it places on combating right-wing extremism, which it sees as the greatest threat to public safety in Germany at this present time. The aim of the Cabinet Committee was to develop further measures to combat right-wing extremism and racism in addition to those already in place.

On 25 November 2020, a comprehensive package of measures was presented which the Federal Government aimed to use to better understand the root causes of right-wing extremism and racism, provide a strong government response to right-wing extremist activities and increase support for democracy promotion in civil society. The package of measures was adopted by the Federal Cabinet in December 2020. To implement the Cabinet Committee's decision, at the suggestion of the Federal Government an additional EUR 50 million was allocated in the federal budget for 2021. In total, the Federal Government will provide over EUR 1 billion from 2021 to 2024 to combat right-wing extremism, racism and antisemitism. The package took account of statements from civil society representatives, particularly from migrant organisations, the science and research community and the Länder, who were heard by the Cabinet Committee when developing the measures. The input from civil society representatives, especially those from migrant organisations, the science and research community and the Länder has highlighted the importance of engaging in interdisciplinary exchange in order to include their specific needs and views, jointly identify projects and develop effective measures. In designing the package of measures, the aim was not only to protect and support victims of racist discrimination.

The Federal Government wanted in particular to emphasise the value of a diverse society with equal opportunities and to promote equal access to participation for people with migrant backgrounds.

The package of measures serves the four main goals set out in the first report of the Cabinet Committee for the fight against right-wing extremism and racism published on 20 May 2020:

1. Generate a greater awareness of racism as a phenomenon that affects society as a whole and improve state structures for fighting racism and right-wing extremism; expand cooperation between the security authorities, the judiciary and relevant state civil society bodies, and improve their empirical bases.
2. Extend and increase work within institutional structures across society to prevent right-wing extremism and racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia and all other forms of enmity against any perceived group of persons, including online. In addition, develop political education and work to promote democracy.
3. Extend the support for victims of racist discrimination and their social sphere. Ensure effective protection for victims and enhance sustainable structures for fighting racism.
4. Recognise and value a diverse society that ensures equal opportunities for all, and strengthen equal opportunities for people with a migrant background to participate in society.<sup>9</sup>

Among other things, the package of measures calls for improvement in the legal and budget-related provisions for funding civil society engagement aiming to promote democracy and diversity and combat extremism. The Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community and the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth were tasked with the timely development and presentation of a proposal for an Act to Strengthen and Promote Vigilant Democracy.

As part of the work performed by the Cabinet Committee for the fight against right-wing extremism and racism, cooperation between the two ministries in the area of extremism prevention was further strengthened in the course of the 19th legislative period. The Cabinet Committee's final report was adopted on 12 May 2021.

## 4.2 Further development – impact assessments

In the first Federal Government Report on the Work and Effectiveness of the Federal Programmes to Prevent Extremism, it was announced that the development of suitable instruments for evaluation and quality assurance would be continued and enhanced. In this second report, the results of the evaluation of the work and effectiveness of the programmes are based on previously enhanced evaluation designs which build on the findings and observations of predecessor prevention programmes and funding periods. The evaluation is characterised by the fact that impacts and impact assumptions are modelled on an empirical basis and that effects are identified by combining different viewpoints.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.bundesregierung.de/resource/blob/997532/1819984/4f1f9683cf3faddf90e27f09c692abed/2020-11-25-massnahmen-rechtsextremi-dاتا.pdf?download=1>

## 4 Further developments

Project managers' views on their projects are usually compared with those of recipients, cooperation partners and disseminators. This multi-perspectivity and triangulation ensured the reliability of impact modelling and impact assessments. In selected cases, impact assessments can also be conducted at an individual project level. In such cases, evaluation designs were carefully tailored to suit the respective projects.

As outlined in the previous sections, considerable challenges are faced when identifying impact and effects in the areas of democracy promotion and extremism prevention:

- First, almost all practice-based approaches in democracy promotion and extremism prevention are reliant on voluntary cooperation on the part of the recipients. These are programmes of an educational, formational, counselling and accompanying nature and which are thus convincing and supportive. Effectiveness is not solely the product of a measure, therefore – it also requires co-production on the part of recipients and is consequently the product of their personal interaction with the respective programme.
- Second, for (social) education programmes, it is important to focus on real life situations and adapt counselling and accompanying processes to suit the case at hand. To motivate recipients to engage in co-production, specially tailored programmes must be developed which lead people to change their attitudes and behaviour. Programmes to promote democracy and prevent extremism do not necessarily lend themselves to the kind of standardisation needed to prove an effect by means of (quasi-) objective evaluations.
- Third, programmes to promote democracy and prevent extremism cannot be limited to a single experimental core. Instead, they rely on a combination of programmes and measures. This can be a mix of different paths of access to the target group, individually designed processes in relationship building and variable combinations of methods and approaches. Global evidence of impact and effect – without referring to the underlying programmes and the measures of a given project – allows no conclusions to be drawn as to the reasons for the identified impact and effects.
- Fourth, recipients of programmes to promote democracy and prevent extremism – especially in cases where it makes sense to apply long-term educational and support processes – are also subject to external influences, for example peers, social media and persons of trust such as relatives. Separating the effect of a programme to promote democracy and prevent extremism from the influence of existing socialisation factors is highly presumptive and is only really possible in in-depth recipient interviews.

Given these challenges and limitations, to further enhance the evaluation of programmes to promote democracy and prevent extremism, in 2019 two rounds of expert talks were held with administrative staff, research experts and representatives from civil society to discuss programme evaluation and quality assurance as part of an interministerial working group on democracy promotion and extremism prevention.

During these expert talks, a distinct need was identified for transparent, independent, scientific discourse on appropriate, context-related evaluation design and for continuous collation and consolidation of evaluation results. Such discourse should also augment and drive the evaluation of programmes and measures for which differing ministerial departments are responsible.

Building on the results of the expert talks, the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community initiated a collaborative project: Evaluation Designs for Prevention Measures – multi-method approaches for impact assessment and quality assurance in extremism prevention and the intersections with violence prevention and civic education (PrEval). The project takes a cross-departmental approach which includes both implementers of extremism prevention, democracy promotion, anti-violence and political education projects funded by the various departments and the respective organisations involved in evaluating the prevention programmes and programme-funded measures. As part of the PrEval project, knowledge relating to evaluation methodologies will be collated, evaluation needs and capacities assessed and multimethodological evaluation designs developed and tested. The specialist discourse initiated in the expert talks on appropriate, context-related evaluation designs will be continued using regular formats as part of the PrEval project. The first specialist symposium was held on 27 November 2020.

To further ensure the long-term quality and effectiveness of the work performed in extremism prevention and political education financed by public funds under the provisions of German grants law, it is the responsibility of the funding entity to ensure – by means of continuous scientific monitoring and evaluation of the programme areas and projects – that the funded projects are of the necessary quality, have a lasting

effect and are both innovative and transferable. For this purpose, processes and methodological approaches for use in scientific monitoring and evaluation will be developed further and new forms of quality assurance created. In the future, an independent scientific institute whose work will be overseen by the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community in its capacity as the lead ministry and with the involvement of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, will assist in the application of scientifically recognised quality standards and evaluation designs and develop these further.

The Federal Government believes that combating right-wing extremism, racism and antisemitism can only be achieved by taking a broad-based policy approach that places the preservation and protection of our vigilant democracy at the centre of all we do. To fulfil this core government responsibility and task, in addition to a strong state, a vibrant civil society is needed with strong citizens who allow no room for extremist, anti-semitic and racist views and who endeavour to counter them with courage and conviction. Policy against right-wing extremism, racism and antisemitism relies on the support of society as a whole, on robust, untiring and sustained civil society engagement and on resilient security forces whose actions are both concerted and consistent. Through targeted prevention work and measures to support and collaborate with civil society, to protect people against discrimination and promote equal participation, the Federal Government reinforces the vigilance of our democracy in order to safeguard our open society.

## **Imprint**

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### **Published by:**

Bundesministerium  
für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend  
Referat Öffentlichkeitsarbeit  
11018 Berlin  
[www.bmfsfj.de](http://www.bmfsfj.de)

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Public service telephone number for all government agencies and offices: 115\*

**As of:** July 2021, 1st edition

**Designed by:** [www.zweiband.de](http://www.zweiband.de)

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