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MAGNUS WEEKLY ANALYSIS REPORT

Extremism Without Borders: Hate Goes Global

Written by: **Magnus Intelligence Desk** | Ryan Mathoera



Introduction – Extremism Without Borders: Hate Goes Global

The surge of violent protests worldwide reflects the growing influence of extremism on both ends of the political spectrum. Far-right movements have intensified xenophobic demonstrations and hate-fueled rallies, while far-left groups, including radical climate activists and anti-capitalist protesters, have escalated their actions into clashes with authorities and severe acts of property damage. This rise in politically charged unrest spans continents, threatening democratic values and amplifying societal fragmentation. As these polarized movements gain traction globally, the challenge of addressing extremism while preserving stability and freedoms has become increasingly urgent.

A Rise of Polarization in Europe

The growing influence of far-right movements in different areas of Europe, has led to an increase in xenophobic rhetoric and actions. One example for this is the rise of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) political movement, which is predominant in eastern regions like Thuringia and Saxony, where the AfD has gained significant political power. These areas have witnessed a noticeable rise in hostility toward immigrants and foreigners, with incidents of racial abuse and violence becoming more frequent. As a foreigner, it is essential to exercise caution in these regions, especially in rural areas where far-right sentiments are more pronounced. While Germany remains generally safe for travelers, avoiding political demonstrations, particularly those organized by extremist groups, is crucial, as such rallies can sometimes escalate into violent confrontations. Staying informed and steering clear of potentially volatile situations can help ensure your safety while traveling or operating in these areas.

The rise of far-left activism, marked by radical movements advocating for radical societal change, climate justice, and anti-capitalist reforms, reflects deep societal divisions and a broader global trend of polarization. Actions such as the occupation of infrastructure, the defacing of historical monuments, and disruptive protests have gained momentum, sparking backlash and provoking reactionary responses from opposing groups. These movements often criticize entrenched systems of inequality, but their more extreme tactics, such as property damage or clashes with authorities, risk alienating broader segments of the population. An example for this is the steadily growing Pro-Palestinian protests and rallies, which have greatly intensified in the face of the “Iron Swords” war. In November 2024, Jewish individuals in Amsterdam were directly targeted by Pro-Palestinian activists, in violent protests which resulted in many injuries. During these protests, severe property damage was carried out, as protesters lit a tram car on fire. Like their far-right counterparts, far-left groups effectively use digital platforms to organize and amplify their messages, rallying support for causes such as anti-imperialism, economic equity and environmental sustainability.



Analysis

Both Far-right and Far-left extremism have evolved into transnational movements that transcend borders between the U.S. and the EU, with groups sharing symbols, ideologies, and strategies while leveraging online platforms to spread their messages globally. The neo-Nazi march in Columbus, Ohio, in November 2024 exemplifies this by openly targeting marginalized communities with hateful rhetoric, echoing similar events in Europe such as the 2018 Chemnitz protests in Germany, where anti-immigrant chants escalated into violence, and rallies organized by France's National Rally, which used divisive rhetoric to stoke fear. Leaders like Hungary's Viktor Orbán have fueled xenophobia through campaigns portraying Muslim immigrants as threats, while social media has amplified these movements, spreading extremist content such as posts glorifying the Christchurch Mosque shootings in 2019. A troubling transatlantic feedback loop connects far-right ideologies like white nationalism and anti-Semitism in the U.S. with similar movements in Europe, inspiring events like the 2017 Charlottesville rally and Poland's 2021 Independence March which states that travel security is essential these days.

Far-left activism has escalated in various instances worldwide, often manifesting in disruptive or violent protests. Environmental groups like Extinction Rebellion (XR) have blocked transportation hubs and vandalized landmarks, with incidents in London and Germany sparking public backlash and clashes with authorities. Anti-capitalist demonstrations, such as those during the 2017 G20 Summit in Hamburg, escalated into riots with looting, arson, and violent confrontations with police. Similarly, counter-protests by far-left groups like Antifa against far-right rallies, such as in Charlottesville, Virginia, and Berlin, Germany, have led to intense clashes and property damage. These movements, while often rooted in calls for climate justice, anti-capitalism, or anti-fascism, have sometimes alienated the public due to their more extreme tactics, reflecting the broader challenges of polarization and unrest in politically charged environments.

The rise of violent protests poses a risk for those traveling abroad. It is important to know what to look out for, and to take safety precautions in order to minimize the risks encountering such protests may pose.



8 Ways to Stay Safe in the Climate of Extreme Protests

1. **Stay Informed Beforehand:** Monitor local news and social media for updates on protest locations and times. Avoid areas where demonstrations are planned.
2. **Know Your Surroundings:** Familiarize yourself with the area, including escape routes and nearby safe spaces, such as shops or hotels, in case the situation escalates.
3. **Trust Your Instincts and Leave Quickly if Needed:** If the atmosphere becomes tense or violent, prioritize your safety and leave the area immediately, avoiding large crowds or bottlenecks.
4. **Avoid Staying at Nearby Hotels or Lodgings:** If possible, book accommodations far from protest hotspots to minimize risk and ensure a peaceful environment.
5. **Be Cautious with Social Media Sharing:** Avoid posting real-time updates or photos from the protest area, as it could expose you to unwanted attention or place you in danger.
6. **Avoid Filming or Photographing Protesters Closely:** While capturing footage might seem tempting, it can provoke hostility from both protesters and authorities, especially if tensions are high.
7. **Wear Comfortable and Practical Clothing:** Opt for durable, non-restrictive clothing and closed-toe shoes to move quickly and protect yourself if you need to navigate rough terrain or debris.
8. **Have an Emergency Contact Plan:** Memorize at least one emergency contact number in case your phone is lost or damaged, and carry a written copy of important information.



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