



Bundeskriminalamt

HERBST-
BKA TAGUNG 2012
AUTUMN
CONFERENCE

**The suppression of right-wing extremism –
a challenge for society as a whole**

BKA Autumn Conference, 13 - 14 November 2012

Women in the right-wing extremist scene

Abstract

Prof Dr Ursula Birsl

Social and political scientist

Right-wing extremist violence has - with cyclical fluctuations - been the subject of socio-scientific research since the 1960s. While research in the past had mainly focused on organisational aspects, the studies undertaken since the late 1980s and the early 1990s have dealt with the connections of right-wing extremist and violence-prone attitudes in the total population or among juveniles. The analysis of attitudes generally dominates the research into right-wing extremism. Although the findings differ, depending on the definition and operationalisation of right-wing extremism and the methods of analysis, it may be said that exhaustive information has been gathered. The basic pattern of attitudes has been identified, the competing explanations and theoretical approaches have been presented.

In contrast to this, only few studies dealing with juveniles in right-wing and violent-prone youth cultures are available, and only two comprehensive studies have been published on offender profiles and offender structures in connection with right-wing extremist crime. Although right-wing extremism is no *youth phenomenon*, it is predominantly juveniles and young adults who resort to right-wing extremist violence. While, in the case of boys and young men, the dynamics of violence are seen in connection with the socialisation conditions and standards typical of boys and the scene they move in, this connection is completely unclear as far as girls and young women are concerned. So far, we have no more than reasonable indications to suggest that their role and positioning in the youth scenes, and thus also in the right-wing scene, are becoming more differentiated and that their propensity for violence increases. However, there is no empirical corroboration of these indications. They cannot be satisfactorily explained by either the findings of research into right-wing extremism and violence or by official statistics. This is a matter of development processes which remain in the dark.

This presentation will attempt to elaborate on some of the conclusions reached in the research into right-wing extremism and in gender studies and to outline the roles of girls and young women in the violent right-wing extremist scene. The fact that hardly any scientific findings are available on this subject will also have to be critically discussed in this connection.