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Symbolic Image, public domain

Germany Gate

'We Stand with Ukraine', Norwegian Style: False Flags Abound, Co-sponsored by the EU and Germany

On 17 May 2022, after a Covid mandate-induced hiatus lasting two years, Norwegians took to the streets to celebrate the anniversary of the proclamation of their constitution. It was the first such event I had personally witnessed and, for an Austrian citizen born in the 1980s, it was quite a sight to behold: 17 May is the day of the year when most Norwegians dress up in traditional costumes or put on something elegant, and go out to celebrate. As my neighbour told me, 'at least once a year, we put aside our differences and come together as one people'.

The 2022 festivities were unusually exuberant, however, and the mood could

not be attributed to Covid-19 alone. Quite the contrary. Beginning on 24 February 2022, the Russian 'special military operation' in Ukraine has had a profound and rather curious impact on Norwegian society.

'We are marching to show our gratitude to Norway'

Under this header *Bergens Tidende*, the most popular newspaper in Norway's second-largest city, reported on the specifically Ukrainian aspects of its 17 May parade. As is so often the case, there is

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much, much more to this than first meets the eye.

This article is an investigation into the strange underworld where the EU's tentacles exert considerable, though fairly well-concealed, influence on the effect of non-governmental organisations on public opinion—and policy. In other words, this is an inquiry into the role of several such NGOs and their connections to both the EU Commission and, in particular, the German government. Although it certainly seems possible, particularly in this day and age, that foreign intelligence services may also be involved, the available documentation does not provide conclusive evidence of this.

As our point of departure, we shall first take a closer look at the article in *Bergens Tidende*, which appeared on 17 May 2022 [2]. Written by Pål Andreas Mæland, it contains a wealth of quite intriguing bits and pieces of information (I take full responsibility for the translation and the emphases in the citations that follow):

‘In the main procession, the Ukrainians’ Association in Bergen was among the formations that received the most applause along the route...’

“This is the first time we have participated in the 17 May festivities. It is fantastic”, says Volodymyr Novosad, the chairman of the Association.

“I used to call myself Valdemar in Norway, but **now Norwegians have learned that I have the same first name as President Zelensky**”, he adds.

[Mr Novosad] has lived in Norway for 20 years, and **the Association has always been so small that there would have been no point in participating** in the 17 May festivities.

“**But now there are many more Ukrainians in Bergen**, it's quite unfortunate, if we consider why they are actually here”, says Novosad.

Well over 1,000 Ukrainians came to Bergen as refugees after the Russian invasion on 24 February.

At the time, many of the Ukrainian refugees were put up in the 4-star Rosencrantz Hotel next to Bergen's Hanseatic Quarter, Brygge. In May 2022, these rooms were priced at slightly more than 200 € per person and night, including breakfast. In other words: someone managed to get quite

a good deal, all things considered. It was probably not the worst way to spend the tax-payer's hard-earned money, in particular given the potentially traumatic experiences of many refugees.

However, I have not forgotten what the mother of one of my daughter's kindergarten friends told me around the same time. Of Russian extraction herself—her parents had emigrated to Norway as white-collar professionals in the 1990s—and working as a clinical psychiatrist at the University Hospital, she told me that

“... here in Bergen, most of the Ukrainian refugees actually ask for information and counselling in Russian.”

By the way, this is also true of the one refugee family that was resettled in the small rural community in the Sognefjord I call home today; their children attend my daughter's school. Much to the bewilderment of my daughter—and, I would hasten to add, contrary to the non-stop propaganda in legacy media—many refugees here in Norway speak Russian, not Ukrainian.

I do not doubt the sincerity of local bureaucrats in their desire to help the Ukrainian refugees; they prepared leaflets, brochures, and all kinds of services—all in the Ukrainian language.

My acquaintance of Russian extraction shares the predicament felt by many refugees—they frequently find themselves quite uncomfortably positioned between a rock (Russia's ‘special military operation’) and a hard place (an attachment to their ‘inner’ Ukrainian). The mantra ‘we stand with Ukraine’, so frequently peddled by politicians and amplified by legacy media, typically overlooks the distinction between ‘the people of Ukraine’ and the government in Kyiv, to say nothing about the ethno-linguistic divide between speakers of Ukrainian and Russian.

More on this from the article in *Bergens Tidende*:

‘The members of the Ukrainians’ Association are both Ukrainians who have lived here for a long time and newcomers. They carried both Norwegian and Ukrainian flags.’

“We are marching to show our gratitude to Norway for all the help from the municipalities and the Norwegian people”, says Oleksandr Aleksandrovskyy, who joined the procession of Novosad...

The war in Ukraine was clearly the backdrop to this year's 17 May festivities. And **unlike in Oslo, there was no debate about the use of Ukrainian or any other foreign flags. Along the route, many Ukrainian flags were to be seen, as well as Norwegian ones.**

“17 May in Bergen is for everyone, and people can come with any flag they want. We have paid particular attention to integrating the Ukrainian refugees who have come here, and we hope we have succeeded”, says [Cecilie] Lycke [chairwoman of the 17 May Organisation Committee].

Note, by the way, that the same mechanism is used to conflate the Norwegian government with the Norwegian people. One should remember that—with no public debate—the former had shipped heavy guns to Ukraine less than two weeks earlier [3].

Then there's the mention of Oslo, hinting at the larger issues of ‘antifascism’ and the anti-Russian sentiment that was openly encouraged. Here is the rest of *Bergens Tidende's* article:

‘In the speeches at “Festplassen”, Bergen's main square, where the official part of the festivities took place, Russia's invasion of Ukraine was mentioned frequently...’

In his speech commemorating the fallen, the commandant of Bergenhus fortress, Commander Erik Alf Bøe, said: **“We thank everyone who is fighting in Ukraine, not only for their own country, but for the whole world. A new fascist regime has become a threat to the world”**.

He drew parallels between the current Putin regime and Hitler's Germany, which invaded its neighbours 84 years ago.

Rune Bakervik, the mayor of Bergen also devoted much of his speech to Ukraine: Amongst other things, he said: “If you read the text of the Ukrainian national anthem—‘The glory of Ukraine has not yet perished’—you will understand that Ukraine cannot lose the war”.

This is about as dishonest as it gets: the military commander of the Bergenshus—one of the key pillars of the Norwegian state—compares Putin with ‘Hitler’ and describes him as the leader of ‘a new fascist regime’ that ‘threatens the world’.

Faking History: Vladimir Putin as the ‘new Hitler’ (and Stalin, all at once)

Commander Bøe certainly made these statements with the approval of—if not at the behest of—his superiors, i.e. the Norwegian military and/or government. Without a doubt these statements will have been cleared with the military command or the Defence Ministry in advance.

This fact alone is quite significant and should serve as a reminder that one should distinguish between a government and the people. In the aftermath of the Second World War, at the Nuremberg Trials, ‘even’ Joseph Stalin had insisted on *this* particular differentiation. Today’s ‘collective West’ no longer does.

Lest you accuse me of false equivalences or ‘whataboutism’, keep in mind that until about 2016–17, Western legacy media routinely, and quite accurately, reported on the ubiquitous presence of Neo-Nazi or ultra-nationalist sentiments, paramilitary groups, and armed formations, mainly the Azov Regiment. I have written about this elsewhere [4], and I shall not dwell on this aspect here.

From 2016–17 onwards, however, this changed: Azov and the Ukrainian far-right paramilitaries became ‘freedom fighters’, were supplied with western equipment, and trained by NATO officers. Just before the commencement of Russia’s ‘special military operation’, these inconvenient facts simply vanished.

Well, what facts are we actually talking about?

Please read the Minsk 1 and 2 agreements [5] that both became part of international law via the UN Security Council. Note that the common trope, accusing Russia of violating the agreements, is simply false: Moscow was a guarantor—much like France and Germany, since the agreements pertained to the Kyiv government



Symbolic Image,
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and the Donbass republics.

Note, further, that both former French president François Hollande and former German chancellor Angela Merkel have since revealed their duplicity [6].

There were almost no Russian troops in Donbass before February 2022, which was, by the way, quite accurately reported by the *Kyiv Post* [7] and the *Washington Post* [8], among others (yes, according to the former, there were some 56 Russians, which is about the number of, say, Swiss mercenaries in Syria fighting on behalf of ISIS).

This is the background before which the dramatic rise of Ukrainian paramilitary formations, especially the notorious Azov formations, must be understood: they became part of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU). This was all described in a *Reuters* article published on 26 Jan. 2022 [9]. Note that these paramilitaries are under the command of the Ministry of the Interior, which explains why the Russian Supreme Court announced that members of the Azov formations would not be tried as members of the military, but as terrorists [10].

Speaking of these paramilitary formations, it is well known and widely acknowledged by a variety of governmen-

tal institutions and media outlets, such as *USA Today* [11], that the Azov units consist of far-right extremists. Entirely disregarding these facts, Western legacy media condemn any mention of this as ‘Russian propaganda’, as, for example, *Le Monde* [12]. Nonetheless, the widespread presence of Neo-Nazis has been confirmed by the *Times of Israel* [13], members of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre [14], and the US Army’s Combating Terrorism Centre at West Point Military Academy [15], among others.

Interested readers can follow through on this issue in a piece I wrote in April 2022, which documents the contortions German legacy media engage in to obscure this very fact [16].

In my 8–9 May 2022 column I brought more of this madness to light [17], such as renaming the Russian-German Museum in Berlin—they dropped the ‘Russian’—even though the museum is dedicated to the remembrance of Hitler’s attack on the USSR during WW2. In the meantime, the Ukrainian ambassador to Germany called upon the German government to ‘take this war more serious-

ly... which means going beyond merely symbolic gestures, and to undertake all that is possible... to ensure that Ukraine doesn't lose this war'.

Exiled American former marine and police officer-turned-journalist John Mark Dougan has documented what went on in the recently vacated Azov HQ outside Mariupol (there is one video lasting 15.22 minutes [18] and another a bit shorter at 5.47 minutes [19]).

I would encourage everyone to watch these videos and see for themselves the huge amount of Neo-Nazi and other far-right paraphernalia that was left behind. Note, also, that there is clear evidence of US-supplied ammunition, which again hints at the usefulness—or outright necessity—of distinguishing between ‘the people’ (both individually and collectively) of any state and the government of said state.

By the way, John Mark Dougan served with the US Marines and later became a police officer in Florida. In the latter capacity, he unearthed rampant corruption, including the shenanigans known as ‘Russiagate’ (which was about as ‘true’ as the claims that ‘we in the West’ are supporting the ‘freedom fighters of the Azov formation’). Dougan posted the material online after trying in vain to interest the authorities in these activities—only to have his residence raided by the FBI. Dougan was then placed on a no-fly list, escaped from the US to Canada in 2016, and emigrated—or was forced into exile—to Russia where he applied for asylum. US attorneys have threatened Dougan with 95 years in prison.

As an illustration of the different portrayals in western legacy media and reality, read Mark Dougan's own account [20] and compare it with what the media say [21] (I had to replace the original link [22] to the *Daily Beast* with a link in the *Wayback Machine*, because the original doesn't work anymore; it was fine two days ago when I started writing this piece.)

The stage is thus set and we can turn to the main plot.

Ukrainian and Russian Exile NGOs in Norway—and their Funders

At the beginning of this article, I promised to take you down a very particular rabbit-hole. Without much further ado, therefore, I will show you how all of the above—Norway's 17 May festivities, the Azov formations, the Kyiv government, and the machinations of Western governments and intelligence services—intersect.

To properly set this up, I take recourse to a piece that appeared in *Bergens Tidende* on 15 February 2022 [23]. It contains several issues that warrant attention:

‘The Ukrainians’ Association in Bergen holds that **Norwegians don't understand that Ukraine has been at war for eight years**: “People die every day”, says Volodymir Novosad (52).’

It is at least a little curious that this article appeared literally one day before the Ukrainian army and paramilitary began firing into the Donbass from

across the line of contact, thereby precipitating the Russian ‘special military operation’, as is well known. This information derives from the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, as per their report dated 21 February 2022 [24], which can be downloaded directly [25] (the graphs depicted below are from pages 2 and 3):

A whopping 81.4% of all conflict-related civilian casualties in Ukraine from 2018 up to 31 December 2021 occurred on the territory held by the Donbass ‘separatists’. In other words, according to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights [26] (data on p. 2), four out of five casualties were most likely due to fire originating from territory held by the Kyiv government.

Returning to the above-cited *Bergens Tidende* piece from 15 February 2022, which cites Hanna Veits (28), a native of Lugansk in the Donbass who fled to Bergen where she now studies music (she plays the violin):

“**For eight years, no one thought that Russia would invade, but now we know better and think one must be prepared for everything.** The suitcases were packed and I had been working hard to get travel documents for the cat, hoping that, if something happened, I would quickly be able to apply for asylum in Norway”, said Veits.’

Then there is a quote from Mr Novosad:

“Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday that he did not want war. He has also said that Russia has started a partial withdrawal.



Image 1: This appeared in the news-ticker of NRK; the highlighted sentences translate as follows: ‘This is one of many protests in Norwegian cities today. The organisation “SmåRådina: For Democracy in Russia” has organised a protest outside the Russian embassy in Oslo at 11 a.m. on Thursday’. (Image: Screenshot NRK News ticker)

It is difficult to believe what he says. He speaks with many tongues”, says Volodymyr Novosad (52).’

As a reminder, this piece appeared on 15 February 2022, just one day before the Ukrainian side began to heavily increase their shelling of Donbass.

It is perhaps not surprising that a clear anti-Russian bias was discernible at least 11 days *before* the beginning of the Russian operations in eastern Ukraine.

Equally unsurprising is the fact that there was a ‘spontaneous’ anti-Russian demonstration outside the embassy in Oslo, which was reported as early as 9.53 a.m. Norwegian time by the Norwegian state broadcaster NRK on 24 February 2022, the first day of the Russian ‘special military operation’. (See Image 1).

What a coincidence to find Mr Novosad from the Ukrainians’ Association website [27] mentioned with reference to anti-war protests in many Norwegian cities! Similar news items also appeared in English [28]. The organisation ‘SmåRådina’ (Little Motherland) began to interest me and I wondered who they might be...

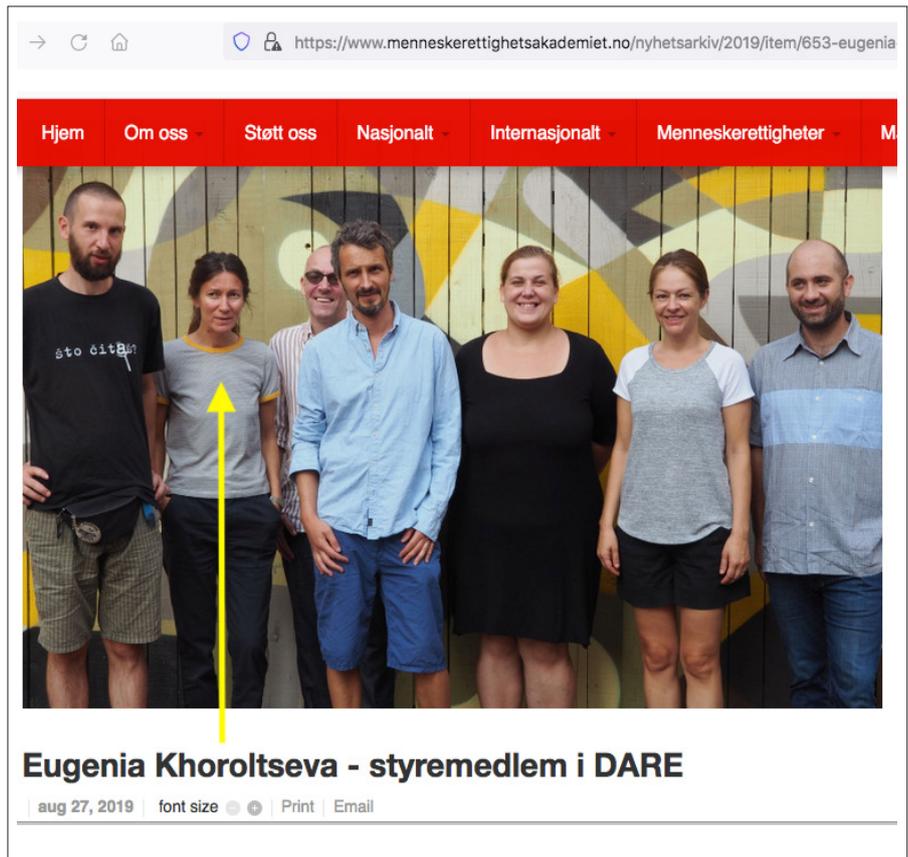
On SmåRådina’s website [29], the organisation describes itself as ‘the place for all those concerned about Russia and the development of democracy in Russia’.

SmåRådina is a ‘pro-democracy-in-Russia’ NGO based in Norway [30] that also runs the website stopvoina.no (stop the war) [31]. The website has little to no information on SmåRådina’s funding [32].

They are working on a big project entitled #freenavalny [33] that provides some clues about where they may get part of their funding: from other western ‘NGOs’, governments, and/or intelligence services.

And then there is Eugenia Khoroltseva, a member of SmåRådina’s steering committee [34], who piqued my interest. Because the link leading to information on her has been taken down, one has to make do with a rather fawning piece in the *New York Times* that features her [35].

Ms Khoroltseva was—or is (?)—not only a member of SmåRådina, mentioned



Ms Khoroltseva next to fellow DARE board members Matia Losego, Eugenia Khoroltseva, Frank Elbers, Georg Pirker, Zuzka Schreiberova, Agnese Balode and Marco Oberosler (from left to right) [40].

favourably in the NYT, but also a project leader with a focus on Russia for the Norwegian Human Rights Academy *Menneskerettighetsakademiet* [36], based in Oslo.

As regards their funding, the Human Rights Academy’s Annual Report is rather ambiguous:

‘In 2021, [Human Rights Academy’s] activities have been funded through project support from the City of Oslo, Sparebankstiftelsen DNB, the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDI), the DAM Foundation, the Nordic Council of Ministers, EEA/Norway Grants, the Lennox Foundation, **and others**. Income is also derived from fees for lectures, workshops, and counselling, as well as membership fees. After a challenging year in 2018, when [the Human Rights Academy] received significantly less funding for its activities in Russia than in previous years, we have had a good development. The outlook for 2022 and beyond is positive.’

Curiously enough, while ‘others’ are mentioned, in addition to the EEA/Norway Grants, the latter’s bland and non-specific website is left out [37].

Let us return to Eugenia Khoroltseva, though, to avoid getting lost in the underworld of NGO financing.

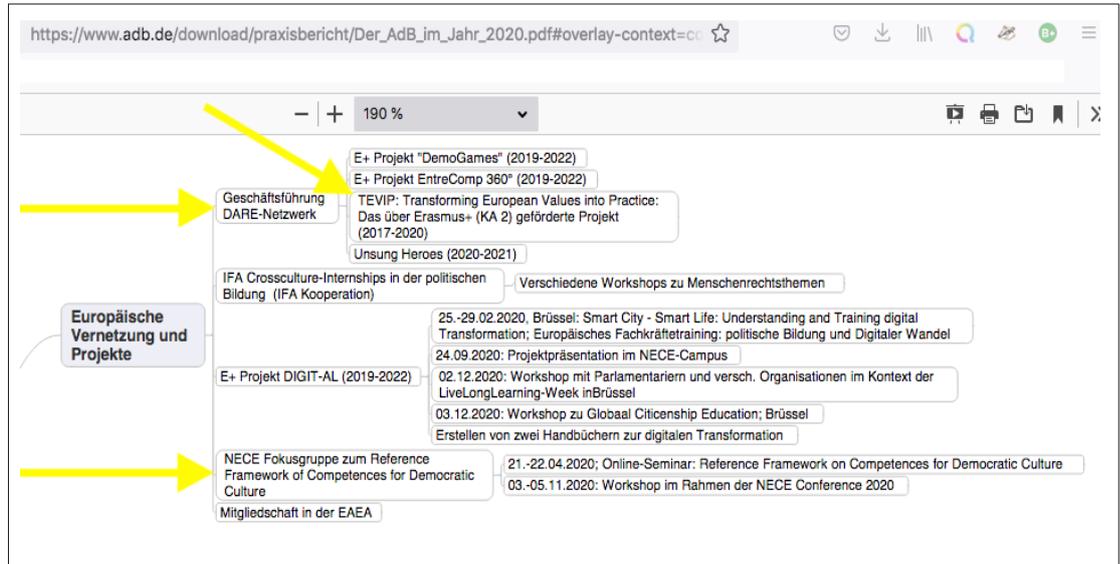
DARE to Know

Apart from her engagement on the part of the Oslo-based Norwegian Human Rights Academy, Ms Khoroltseva is also a member of the steering committee of DARE [38], the network for ‘Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe’ [39].

DARE is another NGO that does not disclose its funding sources. When you click on the link titled, ‘about the DARE network’ [41], you find the following information:

‘The Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe (DARE) Network

Image 2: Mind Map with Partners of the 'Arbeitskreis deutscher Bildungsstätten e.V.' (Source: Arbeitskreis deutscher Bildungsstätten e.V. [45], screenshot)



is a Europe-wide network of primarily NGOs, academic institutions and training providers devoted to promoting active democratic citizenship and human rights through formal education, non-formal and informal education, and life-long learning.'

It sounds wonderful, doesn't it? Although DARE does not disclose its funding, they at least have a sub-page entitled 'partners' [42], which provides some insight into their backers. Their support derives from, among others, the Council of Europe, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights [which patently ignores Julian Assange] [43], the Lifelong Learning Platform, and ... NECE.

Now, NECE stands for the Networking European Citizenship Education, yet another of the 'NGOs' that, much like the proverbial Russian matryoshka dolls, keep on turning up once one starts opening up the 'about' pages.

A Trail of 'NGOs' Leads to the EU ... and the German Government!

I discovered that both DARE and NECE are supported by the Arbeitskreis deutscher Bildungsstätten e.V., the Association of German Educational Organizations, or AdB [44]. The AdB is

'an association made up of approximately 170 continuing education centres throughout Germany with various pro-

files—youth education centres, adult education centres, academies, Europe centres, educational centres of party-related foundations and international encounter centres. As a whole, these independent educational organisations represent a wide spectrum of various training offers as well as organisational structures...

Our aim is to preserve and promote civic education as an important element of democracy. Democracy is not only a form of government but needs to be experienced and promulgated in the daily lives of citizens. Civic education is a training field for democracy. Through their training offers, the member organisations of the association strive to motivate and enable citizens to recognize the relationship between the conditions given by political frameworks and their own lives, play an active role in public affairs and participate in shaping social and political processes. The member organisations see themselves as places of encounter between people of different cultures, demographic groups and worlds. **As a specialised organisation of civic education we foster an exchange of information and experience, training and a joint representation of interests in the area of civic education. We actively contribute to specialised discussions on civic education. We advocate a European Educational Network for Human Rights and Democracy** and are committed to the realisation of equal

opportunities between men and women in all our fields of work' (my emphases, their propaganda).

On the other hand, NECE is connected to DARE, which, in turn, is connected to the Oslo-based Human Rights Academy via shared personnel, specifically Ms Khoroltseva, who also works for the anti-Putin activist group SmåRodina, whose members work with the Ukrainian Association in Bergen. It's a small world.

The website of the Arbeitskreis deutscher Bildungsstätten e.V. has a fairly comprehensive, though somewhat confusing 'mindmap' showing the partners they work with [45] (Image 2).

Again, we can easily make out both DARE and NECE as well as another institution called 'TEVIP', which I had not come across before.

TEVIP stands for 'Translating European Values into Practice' and is an organisation with a web presence [46] offering 'Education on European Values'. In other words, they offer

'concepts and materials for educational activities to trainers, multipliers, and teachers on the topic of values. The aim is to enable and promote an open debate on this sensitive issue, and particularly on its European dimension.'

Curiously, they are very open about their 'target group', which is defined as **'multipliers working with young people (aged under 25) who have had no or**



Image 3: Partners of TEVIP (Translating European Values into Practice) (Source: <<https://www.tevip.eu/#partners>>, Screenshot)

only little contact with Europe-related topics before. Most activities have been developed for use in non-formal education but may also be used by teachers in formal education. They can also be used by international youth groups at European youth events, camps etc. (emphasis in the original)

TEVIP's funding comes via the Erasmus+ program, i.e., from EU contributions that flow into educational and research projects, at least from 2017 through 2020. Its partners include (Image 3)

If one wishes to contact them, there are two 'Contact People' [47]: Charlotte Wiessenthal in Berlin, Germany, and Ramón Martínez of the DARE Network.

However, their imprint page [48] indicates that TEVIP's homepage 'is run by planpolitik Simon Raiser and Björn Warkalla'.

What is 'Planpolitik'?

At this point, we have reached the (preliminary) endpoint of this piece. Planpolitik was founded in the mid-1990s [49] by Simon Raiser and Björn Warkalla, both

students of Political Science at the Free University (FU) of Berlin. They claim to run 'political simulation games' and the like and, though their brainchild seems to have had quite a bumpy ride in the beginning, Planpolitik is a very interesting, though little known, fixture in the neverlands of NGO-mediated influence-peddling.

Venturing on to their 'partners' page, you will discover who backs Planpolitik. For an organisation founded by two students, their list of sponsors is quite impressive, in particular because Planpolitik only got off the ground in late 2004. Their 'partners' include:

- Various German state governments (Berlin, North Rhine Westphalia, Thuringia)
- Many universities, such as the FU, the Europa University Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder), the Universities of Magdeburg, Marburg and Duisburg Essen, among others, incl. universities outside Germany
- Various religious institutions, most notably a number of Lutheran academies (Berlin, Frankfurt am Main) as well as the Junge Islam Konferenz (Young Islam Conference).

Quellen:

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- A host of NGOs, including (again) the DARE Network, the partners we already encountered on the TEVIP website, the Aga Khan Foundation (Portugal), the Bertelsmann and Joachim Hertz Foundations, as well as **all the major party-affiliated foundations of the SPD** (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung), **the Greens** (Heinrich Böll Stiftung), **and the CDU/CSU** (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung). Clearly, they are 'spreading the risk'
 - And then there are virtually all of the institutions of the German state: the *Bundestag*, the Chancellery, the Federal Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Education and Research, Nutrition and Agriculture, the Federal Press Office—as well as many institutions we could expect to find there, such as the EU Council, UNESCO, and a host of other German state and regional actors.
 - There are a number of institutions for higher education, ranging from ETH Zurich in Switzerland to the French École Nationale d'Administration (Macron's alma mater), the Soros-funded CEU, the American University in Cairo, Egypt, the Fudan University in Shanghai, China, the Free University of Brussels, Belgium, and many, many more.
 - At the bottom of this long list, there is another host of foundations—from the Körber and *Zeit* foundations to the German Marshall Fund, the Greens, and the Amadeu Antonio Stiftung.
- Not bad for two virtually unknown political science graduates!

Bottom Lines

Most members of the Ukrainian diaspora in Norway were very open about the Neo-Nazis in the Azov formations, and no-one really believed in a Russian attack—until mid-February 2022. Then, curiously, the mood shifted, literally one day *before* the Ukrainian formations began increasing their shelling of the Donbass on 16 February 2022, which precipitated the Russian 'special military operation' on 24 February.

On that very same day, 24 February 2022, as early as 9.53 a.m. (10.53 a.m.

in Moscow), Norwegian media reported on a planned anti-war protest outside the Russian embassy in Oslo, organised 'at short notice' by both the Ukrainians' Association of Norway and an obscure NGO 'for democracy in Russia' called SmåRådina.

On SmåRådina's board sits one Eugenia Khoraltseva, who also works for the Oslo-based Human Rights Academy (another NGO that does not disclose its funding, much like SmåRådina).

Ms Khoraltseva is also a member of the steering committee of the DARE Network, which appears to be a front organisation for 'democracy education', which DARE conducts in cahoots with TEVIP, another EU-funded front organisation that is actually carried by Planpolitik.

Planpolitik, then, is a Germany-based 'NGO' that, while as mum about its funding streams as the DARE Network, is linked to both the Association of German Educational Organizations and virtually all the other 'usual suspects': EU and especially German state institutions on all levels, a plethora of universities and foundations.

These connections do not imply that the Ukrainians' Association in Norway or the other 'NGOs' that appeared in this piece are all bought and paid for by the usual globalist suspects, although I readily admit one might reach that conclusion.

I do not wish to intimate that Mr Novosad or Ms Koraltseva are actually aware of these many connections and/or streams of funding.

What I do want to say, however, is this: how many Norwegians (and other Europeans, for that matter) know—or care enough—about their body politic being systematically influenced by foreign governments and transnational institutions, such as the Council of Europe, the EU Commission, or the German Government?

This is of heightened relevance after the revelations by Seymour Hersh concerning possible Norwegian involvement in the bombing of the Nord Stream Pipelines in September 2022. While both the Norwegian and U.S. governments strenuously deny Hersh's account (which, truth be told may or may not be true, but

I would add that Hersh's track record is quite a tad more credible than that of the U.S. government), what we have not talked about nearly enough is the role of these 'NGOs' in various European and extra-European countries.

This is not to say that these 'NGOs' are intrinsically malign influences. An yet, if we consider a democratic *régime* to mean that these organisations should (must) transparently reveal their funding streams so that citizens can make truly informed decisions about whom to celebrate or trust, uncomfortable questions about the health of 'our democracy' and 'our values' emerge.

However, these streams of money often remain hidden, perhaps left so unintentionally by those working in legacy media, journalists who simply shun taking the time and making the effort required to disentangle these connections. It took me about a week of 'research' to systematise these connections, and my results, however interesting, remain shallow and are, at best, a preliminary effort. Nonetheless, these findings indicate that heightened levels of suspicion might be appropriate whenever one comes across any of these institutions, their funders, or even articles that speak highly of them.

Buyers beware!

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