

Eight members of far-right group arrested in Germany and Poland

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Masked German police officers guard a house after arresting suspected members of a right-wing group in Dresden, Germany, November 5, 2024 [Matthias Rietschel/Reuters]

Berlin, November 5 (RHC)-- Eight suspected members of a right-wing hardline group have been arrested in Germany and Poland on charges of promoting conspiracy theories and militarily training for the collapse of state order, prosecutors said.

More than 450 police and security officers conducted raids in 20 locations linked to the so-called group of Saxonian Separatists in eastern Germany and neighbouring Poland, with locations also searched in Austria, German federal prosecutors said on Tuesday.

“Our security authorities have thus thwarted at an early stage militant coup plans by right-wing terrorists, who were longing for a Day X to attack people and our state with armed force,” Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said in a statement.

In anticipation of that day, the group had planned to take control of parts of their state of Saxony and potentially other regions in eastern Germany, according to a statement from the prosecutor’s office.

Those arrested belong to Saxonian Separatists, or Sächsische Separatisten, a domestic “terrorist organisation” founded in November 2020 with about 15-20 members. The group’s ideology is based on “racist, anti-Semitic and, in some cases, apocalyptic ideas”, the statement said.

The group aims to conquer areas of former communist East Germany to prevent what it believes is the inevitable collapse of German society and therefore establish “by force of arms” a state based on “national socialism”, the far-right totalitarian ideology associated with the Nazi Party led by Adolf Hitler, it said.

“If necessary, undesirable groups of people are to be removed from the area through ethnic cleansing,” it added.

The group’s members – mainly young men – completed paramilitary training with combat equipment and bought military equipment such as camouflage fatigues, combat helmets, gas masks and bulletproof vests, the prosecutor’s office said.

The suspects will be brought before an investigating judge on Tuesday. Some are to be prosecuted as minors and adolescents. Seven suspects were arrested in and around the eastern cities of Leipzig, Dresden and Meissen, while another was taken into custody at the Polish border town of Zgorzelec.

It is the second coup plot uncovered in Germany in recent years. The so-called Reichsbürger movement, led by Heinrich XIII Prince Reuss, a German businessman and former aristocrat with ambitions to overthrow the state and install a caretaker government, was exposed in 2022. The case shocked Germany with its detailed network and planning.

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