

**Overview of the Disillusioned (DI) Segment**  
 based on data from *surveys & focus Groups* & secondary sources<sup>1</sup>  
 Nov 19, 2024

**Summary Description:** Anti-migration, NGO-sceptical, democracy = welfare state, corruption-conspiracy thinkers, angry, lost, poor, older

<i>Attitudes to Great Replacement &amp; pathway narratives on NGOs</i>	<i>Openness to GR based on attitudes to migration/muslims</i>	<i>Anxieties on Belonging &amp; Control</i>	<i>Demographics</i>
<p><i>Great Replacement (GR)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Around 1/3 aware of GR</li> <li>● Tend to believe in the idea of the GR</li> <li>● Unsure if GR is a deliberate plan by global elite</li> <li>● Unsure if German liberal elite is aiding the GR global plan</li> <li>● <i>GR was brought up in focus groups</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Traitor &amp; pathway narratives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strongly agree that the Klima Kleber are too radical/extremist</li> <li>● Tend to agree that NGOs are too political</li> <li>● Agree that NGOs are wasteful and incompetent</li> <li>● Unsure on the humanitarian, open borders idea</li> <li>● <i>The 4 pathway narratives above came up in the focus groups</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Attitudes to Migration &amp; Integration</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Angry about spending on refugees over germans</i></li> <li>● Think continuing migration will lead to increasing conflict &amp; loss of state control</li> <li>● On balance, disagree migrants try to integrate.</li> <li>● Agree well-integrated guest workers can stay and especially 2nd or 3rd generations contribute equally</li> <li>● Think refugees deserve asylum</li> <li>● <i>Agrees the white population will become minority &amp; that increasing migration threatens EU</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Attitudes to Muslims &amp; Islam</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Think Islam &amp; Germany society are incompatible</li> </ul>	<p><i>Belonging (in or out group identity)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feel undervalued/Lowest rung in society</li> <li>● Distrustful of others (went down in Covid)</li> <li>● Lower levels of belonging than other segments (same as DT)</li> <li>● Highest level of loneliness (same as DT)</li> </ul> <p><i>Control (responsibility &amp; ability to take action)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Some feel in control of their future</li> <li>● Think the world changing too fast &amp; becoming more dangerous</li> <li>● Feel even more economically marginalized (<i>through covid and inflation</i>)</li> <li>● Agree that “people look after themselves” vs each other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Middle-aged to older age groups</li> <li>● More female</li> <li>● More rural</li> <li>● More female</li> <li>● More with no religious affiliation</li> <li>● Non-voting or don’t know, some AfD &amp; Linke</li> </ul> <p><i>Prone to CT</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lower income &amp; education</li> <li>● Financial situation significantly worsened in covid and inflation &amp; say they are “slipping further within German society”</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Profile developed as part of the [Proactive Protection](#) (Proaktiver Schutz) project by ICPA 2024, with analysis commissioned from Dr. James Dennison (Migration Policy Centre). See sources on p.2. Supported by the Innovation Fund of the [Demokratie Leben](#) Programme.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsure that NGOs are traitors acting in the interest of foreign actors</li> <li>• Tend to disagree that NGOs are a front for terrorism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't think Muslims are part of the community</li> <li>• Disagree Muslims hold similar values to them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disagree that citizens can change society</li> <li>• Most follow the news closely</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Attitudes on NGOs</b></p>	<p><b>Conspiracy mindedness</b></p>	<p><b>Trust in Democracy &amp; Institutions</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't trust NGOs</li> <li>• 52% have knowledge of the sector, so unsure if they know the sector</li> <li>• Mixed knowledge about different types of NGOs</li> <li>• Really angry about environmental protest groups, calling them 'illegal'</li> <li>• Better ones perform charitable work, but their work is what the government should be doing</li> <li>• Most NGOs focus on own interests/corruption and agenda/'lobbyism'</li> <li>• Criticism of DUH &amp; scandals around AWO came up.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committed to a corruption-driven, conspiracy meta-narrative</li> <li>• 2/3 tend to agree on a conspiracy oriented world view</li> <li>• Tend to agree that secret orgs influence political decisions &amp; that politicians are 'puppets of the powers behind them'</li> <li>• Unsure if events are the result of secret activities</li> <li>• Tend to agree government &amp; media conspiracies around covid</li> <li>• Little trust in scientists &amp; see them as paid actors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the ideal of democracy, but not satisfied in practice.</li> <li>• Strongly agree democracy must take care of its people, but tend to disagree the system delivers</li> <li>• Don't trust politicians – especially national ones &amp; strongly agree politicians don't care about folks like me (worsened during covid)</li> <li>• Angry about government pressure on vaccination and shutdown in covid time &amp; removal of choice</li> <li>• Unsure about EU membership</li> <li>• Mostly agree that working more closely with international institutions to solve things like covid or climate is good.</li> <li>• Some authoritarian tendencies &amp; tend to agree that in emergencies, we need a strong leader willing to break the rules.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Sources:</i> This profile was built mainly on data from 2 national surveys (n = 1000) conducted by ICPA using IPSOS Fast Facts panel in 2023 &amp; 2024.. In addition, the profile was confirmed, adjusted and some new data points added based on 2 focus groups with the Disillusioned run in November 2023. The foundation of this segmentation profile comes from <a href="#">More in Common study in 2019</a>. It was updated with insights on this segment from More in Common papers from <a href="#">2020</a>, <a href="#">2021</a>, <a href="#">2023</a>, <a href="#">2024</a> and a <a href="#">Bosch &amp; More in Common paper from 2021</a>. Insights from the <a href="#">OSF Barometer</a> and <a href="#">FES Middle Study</a> from 2023 also fed in.</p>

## The Disillusioned - Qualitative profile

built on 2 x Surveys, 3 x Focus groups in 23 & 24 & secondary sources listed on P2.

The most striking thing about meeting this segment in focus groups is their mood – somewhere between lost and angry. They are the segment at the lowest economic and social status level in Germany and have been further hit economically by covid and inflation. The older ones talk nostalgically of times past (“The best days of Germany are behind us”<sup>1</sup>) and lost security (mostly economic) and the younger ones talk of promises undelivered (“I had to put away 90% of my dreams”). The notions of marginalisation come up and they use metaphors like we are “sliding down the embankment”. With low levels of engagement, they can hold quite diffuse opinions on core issues with some in the group reading like angry far-right voters and others more moderate.

While they agree in principle with the idea of democracy, their own pressing needs is what immediately what comes up in these discussions, so they are looking for a “democracy that prioritizes community and security, built on a foundation of a strong state”<sup>2</sup>. This focus on the need for a strong welfare state that is the scaffolding through life to ensure security underpins their views and their top priority is for the state to be ‘more fair’ in this regard. But they have lost faith in this system and especially don’t trust the national governments of the past decade – reacting especially negatively to covid lock downs & vaccine pressure – and open to voting for more populist parties, like Afd & BSW.

They strongly oppose migration as a zero sum game, where their security and welfare is traded off for that of refugees. They disagree that Islam and Germany society are compatible and also say they feel less safe in their neighbourhoods in the last decade due to increasing migrant populations. They also tend to believe in migration conspiracy ideas like the Great Replacement and brought it up themselves in our focus groups. However, they still feel that it is Germany’s obligation to provide asylum to those fleeing conflict and also think that longer term migrant populations contribute equally.

They hold limited and polarised views of the role of NGOs, seeing those who provide help to the marginalised like refugees and homeless as good and those who speak out on issues as too political, working in “lobbyism” and mostly protecting their own interests in a corrupt manner. They also think NGOs are wasteful and incompetent, thinking the funding could be better spent by government. They see volunteering as a way to get free labour, which undermines the jobs of professionals, e.g. nurses in the care field. They are strongly against environmental protestors like FFF or KK, with some even proposing the need for violent responses to the protests. Overall, they don’t trust NGOs.

The majority hold a conspiracy mindset and have little trust in science and think politicians are ‘puppets of the powers behind them’, with some feeling that the state is monitoring them at every move. So they are definitely [conspiracy thinkers](#), but are aware of the social stigma around conspiracy thinking and tended to introduce it in focus groups with leading questions like: “Well, what else could it be?”.

Along with the Detached, they are the segment who say they are the most lonely and have the lowest levels of belonging. This combination of isolation and marginalisation does not drive much community action or engagement. However, a key insight that was evident in our focus groups was: “This passivity is not, however, an arbitrary decision stemming from indolence – it arises from a deep insecurity regarding their own agency”<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> All quotes from ICPA Focus groups in this paragraph

<sup>2</sup> More in Common (2021) [Vertrauen, Demokratie, Zusammenhalt: wie unterschiedlich Menschen in Deutschland die Corona-Pandemie erleben](#)

<sup>3</sup> More in Common & Robert Bosch Stiftung (2021) [It’s Complicated. People and Their Democracy in Germany, France, Britain, Poland, and the United States](#)