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RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Right-wing Extremist Group Survival in Finland – a Qualitative Case Analysis of Soldiers of Odin and the Nordic Resistance Movement

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**Abstract:** The survival of right-wing extremist (RWE) groups is a relatively understudied topic despite its relevance to such matters as the prevention and countering of violent extremism. In this article we investigate why some RWE groups are able to survive for a protracted period of time. Updating previous knowledge on group survival, our study analyses the life trajectories of two Finnish RWE organisations, Soldiers of Odin (SOO) and the Nordic Resistance Movement (NRM), as examples of how and why groups survive. SOO is a vigilante street patrol organisation with a network-like structure and no clear commitment to any particular RWE ideology, while the NRM, by contrast, is a more hierarchical national socialist group. The lifespan of both groups far exceeds the average duration of Finnish extremist organisations, rendering them suitable objects of research for a study on group survival. The topic is explored through empirical observation of the two groups and combined with insights from previous studies and theories. The main body of data consists of material on SOO and the NRM that the authors have gathered during the past seven years. The study is carried out as a contextualised and thematic qualitative analysis based on a framework of external and internal factors on group survival that previous research has formulated. Our study partly supports and partly challenges previous findings on the factors deemed as crucial to group survival while also demonstrating that individual factors may influence the fate of RWE groups in more than just one way.

**Keywords:** Right-wing extremism, group survival, national socialism, vigilantism, qualitative analysis

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## Introduction and Research Problem

Why is it that some right-wing extremist (RWE)<sup>1</sup> groups are short-lived while others exist for several years or even decades? Italy's CasaPound, for example, has survived for two decades while chapters of Soldiers of Odin (SOO) have disappeared in most countries within months of being founded.<sup>2</sup> Besides its academic importance, the question of group survival also carries relevance to preventive and countering measures, as it is useful to know which organisations need to be followed more carefully. Understanding the factors that contribute to group survival may also help to tailor the content of such measures accordingly.

Our study asks why some extra-parliamentary RWE groups survive for protracted periods of time. As a qualitative case study, we analyse here the life trajectories of the two Finnish RWE groups, the street patrol organisation SOO and the neo-Nazi group Nordic Resistance Movement (NRM). SOO was founded in Finland in 2015 but soon spread outside the country. It continues to exist to this day. The NRM meanwhile originated in Sweden, with a Finnish chapter founded in 2008 and definitively disbanded by court order in 2020.<sup>3</sup> Both organisations can be characterised as long-lived in nature, since the average lifespan of Finnish extremist groups is two years at the most.<sup>4</sup>

The topic of group survival is explored through empirical observation of SOO and the NRM and combined with insights from previous research and theories. The main body of data consists of empirical material on SOO and the NRM that the authors have gathered during the past seven years. Applying and updating a framework from earlier studies, we explore both contextual, external factors, as well as internal factors contributing to the survival of the two groups. Although we focus on organisational survival, at the end of the study we also briefly address the possible consequences of the changes in the RWE landscape that are manifested especially in the survival of movements despite organisational demise. By organisational survival we mean here the survival of an organisation as a group of activists conducting continuous collective action outside the virtual environment also.<sup>5</sup>

## Previous Research

While SOO and the NRM have formed a topic of interest to earlier research, most works do not discuss group survival.<sup>6</sup> There are exceptions, however Gardell, for example, argues that SOO Sweden was brought down by a host of factors including street-level opposition from political adversaries and other groups including a biker gang, internal strife, and a focus on online rather than offline activities by some local chapters of the group.<sup>7</sup> Bjørge and Gjelsvik meanwhile maintain that a unified approach by the Norwegian police to ban the wearing of SOO hoodies during street patrols was of key significance to the downfall of SOO Norway, although other factors such as infighting also contributed to the outcome.<sup>8</sup>

Archambault's and Veilleux-Lepage's research on SOO Canada, in turn, demonstrates how a tension existed within the group between concentrating on national or transnational issues, and how some of its elements – at least ostensibly – sought to distance themselves from the overtly racist views and neo-Nazi affiliations of SOO Finland. Splits ensued, with SOO Canada itself

ultimately withdrawing from the SOO movement. Individual members also defected to other groups due to such issues as the aforementioned tension between a national or a transnational focus.<sup>9</sup>

With respect to the NRM's fortunes, Kotonen has investigated the impact of the banning of its Finnish chapter. Members of the group, he notes, established new organisations and carried on with their prior activities even after the ban.<sup>10</sup> Ravndal's research on the NRM and Generation Identity meanwhile touches upon the founding, demise and re-establishment of the NRM's Norwegian and Danish chapters while also elucidating on the organisational split that produced Nordisk Styrka (Nordic Strength), a new group founded by several prominent members of the NRM in 2019. The first attempt to establish a Norwegian chapter in 2003, the author notes, was short-lived as committed members proved difficult to find, whereas the initial effort to found a Danish chapter in 2013 may have foundered due to the existence of a fairly similar organisation in the country. Although the NRM later established a more permanent presence in both countries, the 2019 split saw several members from Sweden and Norway leave the organisation due to disagreements over what kind of a strategy the NRM should pursue.<sup>11</sup>

The dynamics of RWE groups are arguably different from those of left-wing movements and organisations with respect to relations with political parties, for example.<sup>12</sup> Many social movement studies on left-wing groups nevertheless do provide valuable insights regarding general organisational demise. Della Porta's research, for example, tracks the evolution and decline of Cold War era West German and Italian left-wing social movement organisations (SMO) including those that refused to demobilise after the protest cycle reached its end and rather became more centralised and radicalised.<sup>13</sup> With respect to research on the longevity of SMOs in a wider sense, Soule and King, for example, suggest that the survival of Cold War era American SMOs belonging to the environmental, peace and women's movements was influenced by the level of specialisation of their tactics and goals. Those SMOs with a greater degree of specialisation, that is, were less likely to survive although this tendency decreased if the wider social movement industry that they were a part of enjoyed a high degree of concentration.<sup>14</sup>

## Research Framework

The starting point of our study is the observation that longevity is not characteristic to most terrorist or RWE groups although estimations of their exact lifespan vary. Some studies claim that group survival is less than a year in ninety percent of cases while others maintain that around fifty percent of organisations survive for longer than one year.<sup>15</sup> A 2008 study on white supremacist groups in the United States (US) meanwhile estimates that less than five percent of the organisations researched passed the three-year mark.<sup>16</sup>

Two previous studies on group survival are especially relevant to our analysis. Both studies – the first one by Freilich, Chermak, and Caspi, and the second by Suttmoeller, Chermak, and Freilich – focus on RWE groups in the US. The causes of group survival or demise are assessed by these studies through a qualitative case analysis of four different organisations<sup>17</sup> and statistical data on more than 400 groups<sup>18</sup>. The studies have been further supplemented by the same researchers with analysis on the role of violence in group survival and an article only looking at short-lived groups.<sup>19</sup>

In their qualitative analysis on the life trajectories of four RWE groups, Freilich et al. present four key factors supporting organisational survival: “Three organizations experienced growth and longevity because they: 1) had able leadership that set forth a clear ideological message and goals; 2) undertook concrete actions to advance their ideology and goals as well as had the finances necessary for this; 3) took advantage of political opportunities; and 4) were internally cohesive.”<sup>20</sup> Demise meanwhile appeared to be “a culmination of two broad factors that likely interact and encompass many circumstances: organizational instability and responses by government and nongovernment agencies.”<sup>21</sup>

Building upon and expanding the qualitative research by Freilich et al. and providing the general framework for our analysis, the quantitative study by Suttmoeller et al. identifies key elements of RWE group survival and divides them into internal and external ones. Identified external factors include economic ones, intergroup competition, ability to use technology, legal and government restraints, social change, and political vulnerability. Internal factors meanwhile comprise factional splitting, group size, group ideology, and the loss of group members.<sup>22</sup>

Summarising the most relevant results of their study, Suttmoeller et al. argue that “not using the Internet seems to be the most important variable that influences whether a group lives or dies.”<sup>23</sup> Another external factor of significance is political vulnerability especially in the sense of how open to political change the environment in which RWE groups operate is. The most relevant internal factors include factional splitting and group size. Those organisations that sustained splits were more likely to perish, Suttmoeller et al. note, whereas those that were larger in size held greater chances of survival.<sup>24</sup>

While employing the framework by Suttmoeller et al. in our study, contextual differences between the US and Finland, as well as a lack of some types of data for the latter forced us to approach certain factors such as political vulnerability, social change, and competition in a slightly alternate fashion.<sup>25</sup> Such analysis of group ideology as carried out by Suttmoeller et al. was also excluded from our study due to contextual and data-related matters.<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, however, we also expanded the framework of analysis in different ways. Regarding internal factors, we included organisational age and discussed financial aspects, with the latter also investigated by Freilich et al., while similarly looking at instability beyond mere factional splitting.<sup>27</sup> With respect to external factors, we included the general level of unemployment as an economic variable. We furthermore discussed the opportunities provided by Finnish politics in connection with vulnerability and included the reactions of extra-parliamentary political opponents alongside legal and government constraints, referring to this factor as *repressions*. Reactions by non-state actors were not explicitly present in previous studies, but the role of non-governmental agencies is mentioned by Freilich et al.<sup>28</sup>

## Data And Methods

The primary source data of this study comprises a wide selection of material, much of which has been collected during our previous research on SOO and the NRM in Finland.<sup>29</sup> Written sources include police and court investigation protocols, government documents, statistics and register data, and material from the websites and social media pages of the two groups – Facebook in particular. Apart from providing indications on the growth or decline of the groups, discussions

on these pages also allow for an internal view of their general organisational strategies and unity. Online discussions constitute important objects of research, although they cannot be taken at face value. Through data triangulation, or drawing from different sources, the validity and reliability of the findings may, however, be enhanced and the possible biases of individual datasets overcome.

The primary source data also includes interviews. With respect to SOO and other vigilante organisations, these are semi-structured in nature and have been carried out among members between 2017 and 2018. Thematically, such interviews focus on the evolution of the groups. This source type has been further supplemented in 2022 by an interview with a former NRM member. Offline observations of street patrol activities in 2017 similarly form one type of primary source data included in the study.

The secondary sources of the study include earlier research literature, scientific reports, and other texts, government reports and other publications, Finnish criminal code, media items, material produced by antifascists, memoirs by current or former RWE and far-right characters, and an expert interview conducted in 2022.

The primary source data is mostly from open sources such as the groups' public Facebook pages. Police investigation protocols are also publicly available in Finland after the end of the investigation, although sensitive content regarding health issues, for example, is censored. Due to ethical reasons, we have kept direct quotes or links to online discussions to a minimum. The data has been collected and handled in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the authors' respective universities.

Our study is a contextualised and thematic qualitative analysis<sup>30</sup> based on the revised and expanded framework of external and internal factors by Suttmoeller et al. Qualitative analysis produces richer and more detailed findings with particular regard to internal group dynamics, although it does not allow a similar operationalisation of factors as quantitative analysis. Previous studies have stressed the relevance of internal factors and group dynamics to organisational survival,<sup>31</sup> and these arguably become more visible when looking at them from qualitative perspective. They can also be tested empirically by using qualitative data. The internalist approach,<sup>32</sup> or looking at groups from the inside out, may better capture processes of adaptation as well, as it does not assume mechanistic reactions to external factors.<sup>33</sup>

The starting point of our analysis was the evaluation of the applicability of the framework of internal and external factors by Suttmoeller et al. to the Finnish context. We adjusted and expanded the approach to certain factors on the basis of this assessment, as described above. We then identified the different internal and external factors in the data at hand, and studied them one by one. With respect to the case of SOO, other street patrol groups in Finland from late 2015 onwards were also investigated in greater detail. The field of vigilante organisations, as later described, was quite crowded and a deeper understanding of its dynamics required. The analysis was then updated accordingly and pursued further. In addition to presenting the findings of our empirical research below, we have also provided short overviews on the history and structure of both SOO and the NRM.



## Soldiers of Odin

### *History And Structure*

SOO is a vigilante street patrol organisation founded in Finland shortly after the outbreak of the so-called refugee crisis in the autumn of 2015.<sup>34</sup> Its growth was very rapid. Founded around Facebook groups and building a supporter network via the platform, SOO soon established itself in almost every major Finnish city and at best also had international chapters in around thirty countries. While the pace of its expansion in Finland levelled during the spring of 2016 and a decline in activity was witnessed shortly after, SOO nonetheless continued to carry out activities during later years as well.<sup>35</sup>

As per its official rules, SOO aims “to maintain and to support the security culture at its territory, and to enhance voluntary maintenance of the secure environment by the citizens.”<sup>36</sup> To realise these goals, it has organised street patrols as a key modus operandi. Alongside this, it has done charity work and organised demonstrations, among other things. Especially early on, members of SOO openly spoke about white nationalism as the ideological basis of their activities, and their main target were male Muslim refugees, whom they saw as a security threat.

Founded by Mika Ranta, a self-declared national socialist,<sup>37</sup> SOO has been constantly linked with RWE in Finland. The organisation has a hierarchical membership structure with prospect members and full members.<sup>38</sup> Before being accepted as a member, the candidate is interviewed in order to avoid infiltrators.<sup>39</sup> SOO has had one leader throughout its history, who also represents the group in the media. It also has a leadership group as well as a separate international leadership board. The international network of SOO has supported its activities considerably by providing the organisation with membership fees and helping it secure international media attention.

SOO is reminiscent of a franchise organisation, as local chapters only need to accept certain general rules and submit membership fees, but can act relatively independent otherwise.<sup>40</sup> The founding of local chapters and recruitment previously took place mostly via Facebook, although SOO has now been banned from the platform. In the following two sections, SOO is analysed from the perspective of group survival by exploring both external and internal factors, and by looking at how the organisation has responded and adapted to factors threatening its survival.

### *External Factors*

#### *Economic Factors*

The general level of unemployment does not appear to explain the rise or longevity of SOO. Unemployment increased slightly in 2015 but turned down again in 2016, with the overall trend also pointing downwards.<sup>41</sup> Local socio-economic factors also do not appear to play a role in this respect even though members and leaders of SOO are typically blue-collar workers.<sup>42</sup> Suttmoeller et al. refer to a distinction between rural and urban groups, yet there is no clear pattern as to where SOO established its presence in Finland.<sup>43</sup>

### *Intergroup Competition*

S00 faced heavy competition from the beginning. At least fourteen different groups organised or planned to organise street patrols during late 2015. Some were arranged as side-projects by more established groups whereas others were very short-lived. Half had patrolling as their sole form of activism. Most groups quit patrolling by 2016, but some continued as organisations. Out of the single-issue groups none persisted beyond a year. Four groups emerged as splits from a larger organisation, i.e. S00. Short-lived groups were often local initiatives only, although some had members across Finland.<sup>44</sup> It appears that single-issue groups mostly did not have a solid ideological position and were a reaction to the refugee crisis, losing purpose when the situation wound down. The activists themselves, however, did not disappear altogether. Three groups later merged with S00, with some of their activists abandoning street patrolling entirely and some becoming active within S00. Intergroup competition thus eventually brought new members to S00.

Unlike most other street patrol organisations, S00 extended its activities into other fields also, organising, for example, charity events and building its own club houses.<sup>45</sup> Besides garnering media attention, these activities arguably made joining S00 more attractive and the organisation less vulnerable when its founding purpose, anti-refugee activism, became less salient in 2016.

### *Ability to use Technology*

Facebook was key to the success of S00. Organising activities and founding new chapters was considerably assisted by local support groups. S00 had more than 50 000 supporters on its main Facebook page already in 2016, making it also a lively discussion forum. Facebook, however, removed both the main group as well as the pages of local chapters in 2019, causing the organisation to shift to other platforms such as Telegram and VKontakte. The downward trend of S00 was nevertheless already visible at that time, which makes it difficult to estimate how much the Facebook ban actually harmed its activities. Social media has been the main propaganda outlet for S00, although it also has a website. Comparing S00's social media visibility to other street patrol groups, it has been much more successful in gaining supporters. As an example, 105<sup>th</sup> Guardians, the longest-standing street patrol organisation besides S00, has only gathered around two thousand supporters on Facebook.

### *Repression*

Media attention to street patrols, especially those of S00, led to political debate over whether they should be banned. Proposals of bans were, however, never realised or extended into political motions. S00's activities were nevertheless monitored and sometimes also intervened in by the police, and law enforcement has, in general, provided negative comments on the usefulness of street patrols. There have, on the other hand, only been a handful of legal cases targeting individual S00 members that have resorted to violence. Overall, government and police repressions have not played any major role in the survival of the group.

S00 also faced external pressure from extra-parliamentary political opponents when, for



example, its club house in Tampere was vandalised. Police never caught the perpetrators, who left antifascist messages at the crime scene and published a report on the incident on an anarchist forum.<sup>46</sup> According to leaked internal messages, the incident led SOO's national vice-chairman to suggest that one should beat up all "lefties" and patrol anonymously.<sup>47</sup> The frustrated vice-chairman also referred to the police with the slogan ACAB (All Cops Are Bastards).<sup>48</sup> Antifascist activists made other attempts as well to stop SOO's patrols and other activities, often trying to disarm them by ridicule. These included Loldiers of Odin, an antifascist performance group dressed as clowns that sometimes harassed SOO patrols and gained much media and scholarly attention. The results of such performances, Laaksonen et al. nonetheless note, were mixed, as they mostly cemented the audience members' positions and polarised online discussion.<sup>49</sup>

### *Social Change*

There was arguably much demand for SOO's activism at the time of its founding, and even leading politicians expressed concern over the refugee situation. One of the most critical phases in SOO's history, however, was spring 2016, when the influx of refugees actually wound down. For some members of SOO, Finnish police have remarked, this meant that the organisation's *raison d'être* had disappeared.<sup>50</sup>

SOO's leadership reacted to the crisis in different ways, trying to counter the lack of organisational purpose and declining membership figures. SOO established new chapters in 2016 and increased its visibility by organising events and marches.<sup>51</sup> It also brought together members from several cities for larger, joint patrols as a show of strength. Alongside visibility, patrolling with members from neighbouring cities may have also increased group solidarity. Efforts to enhance internal cohesion constitute one possible reaction of a movement in decline and focus on mere organisational survival. To survive, it may "bind the individual fate to the fate of a group."<sup>52</sup> The visual messages on SOO's Facebook pages increasingly focused on group solidarity and emphasised brotherhood especially after the spring of 2016. Only around 20 percent of SOO's Facebook posts between December 2015 and January 2017 concerned the organisation's activities and spread.<sup>53</sup>

Other measures included the broadening of ideological frames by introducing additional political elements such as criticism of Finnish EU-membership.<sup>54</sup> The NRM had, especially in Sweden, claimed during the spring of 2016 that SOO lacked ideological cohesion.<sup>55</sup> A certain reorientation was also visible in SOO's withdrawal from collaboration with the "Zionist" Finnish Defence League (FDL), and in gradually becoming a NRM affiliate. Radicalisation and increased conflict-orientation were also observed by the police,<sup>56</sup> and might be seen as additional consequences of the group's troubles.<sup>57</sup>

### *Political Vulnerabilities and Opportunities*

Media attention to the street patrols of SOO in particular, as earlier noted, also generated political debate over the topic in early 2016. The attitudes of the political establishment towards the phenomenon might be characterised as somewhat mixed. While key figures from the centre-right National Coalition Party and the Social Democratic Party of Finland, for example, took a

negative view towards street patrols with a racist ideology, vigilantism found more support among the right-wing populist Finns Party.<sup>58</sup>

Finns Party members mostly focused on legal issues and the fundamental rights of the citizen in their argumentation and maintained that the Finnish constitution guarantees the right of anyone to walk on the streets, thus excluding the possibility of prohibiting SOO.<sup>59</sup> A more concrete form of support was participation in SOO's activities - some local members of the party, indeed, acted as the leaders of local chapters. One local Finns Party representative saw the patrols as a low-threshold means of countering the alleged negative effect of immigration and bringing back agency to their members: "It brings back to you a sense that you can make an impact."<sup>60</sup>

At the grassroots level, it might therefore be said that SOO gained much political support from the Finns Party. Those in support of patrols were often the party members most critical of governmental policies regarding refugees. The ruling government coalition of which the Finns were party to, critics argued, did little to halt the arrival of the refugees. This caused tensions within the party and opened opportunities for extra-parliamentary anti-refugee activism. The political situation changed in 2017, however, when Jussi Halla-aho, the leader of the Finns' anti-immigration faction, was elected as party head. Alongside a declining number of refugees, the leadership change reduced demand for extra-parliamentary activism, as such tendencies now held parliamentary representation.

## ***Internal Factors***

### *Organisational Size and Age*

Large group size was a factor in the success of SOO. Its network grew rapidly during the first months of 2016 and gained several hundred new members worldwide. This helped SOO to secure funds for its activities and produced organisational resources which may partly explain the movement's longevity. Expansion did not, however, mean stability, as some members had to be expelled because of their views. Especially several skinheads and other possibly violence-prone characters joined SOO early on, but left or were removed soon after.<sup>61</sup> Later vetting processes appear to have been more careful, although such measures may have again been relaxed after organisational decline.<sup>62</sup>

The age of an organisation may also be a factor, especially if there are no changes in leadership as in the case of SOO, since this teaches a movement how to react to different internal and external pressures. Sufficient longevity also reduces the pressure to market one's brand. An additional factor, as suggested by Sabine Volk with respect to PEGIDA, may be so-called "sheer persistence."<sup>63</sup> SOO wanted to make a statement that, against all odds, and in ridicule of the police and scholars speculating otherwise, they would continue with their struggle - something perhaps seen as an achievement in itself. On the other hand, the appearance of SOO on the streets may nowadays come as a surprise and constitute a news item,<sup>64</sup> suggesting it is less visible and more or less forgotten even if its brand is still recognised.

### *Financing the Activities*

Soon after its founding, SOO started to sell merchandise and also collected membership fees from local and foreign chapters. Compared to other similar groups in Finland, SOO was very prosperous. Membership fees in particular became a remarkable source of revenue during the movement's expansion in 2016. Increased income was, surprisingly enough, also seen by some SOO members as harming the organisation, as it produced internal fights over the use of funds.<sup>65</sup> On the other hand, revenue made it possible to travel abroad to arrange relations with foreign chapters, for example, as well as build clubhouses – therefore contributing to internal solidarity and cohesion.

The club houses, which several chapters established as premises for hanging out and drinking, were indeed quite important to members, and being together may have been more important than actual patrolling.<sup>66</sup> Patrolling itself, however, also included a social element, and even when totally uneventful, members seemingly enjoyed themselves, although outsiders may have seen them as intimidating.<sup>67</sup> Patrolling became a ritual and was often done for the sole purpose of visibility and taking photos for social media.<sup>68</sup>

### *Instability and Ideological Incoherence*

Internal conflicts, which were sometimes solved by fighting, have been a constant feature within SOO. The closure of SOO's Vaasa chapter and club house, for example, did not unfold peacefully. The division of property and the fighting that ensued were later dealt with in court.<sup>69</sup> Fights were also initiated because of matters related to personal relations.<sup>70</sup> Schisms with foreign chapters have also often been related to the use of funds rather than the general or ideological direction of the network. Some foreign chapters claimed that the bullyish Finnish leaders used their funds to renovate the organisation's headquarters.

Ideologically, SOO has almost made a full circle during its existence. It gained media attention early on because some members told the press that they were white nationalists protecting white Finnish females from refugees. Nazi memorabilia at their Kemi clubhouse, which was visited by a foreign journalist, also did not help to dispel the image of a neo-Nazi group. After negative media attention, SOO tried to polish its image by removing members with too explicit extremist views, as well as those who had committed crimes while wearing a SOO jacket.<sup>71</sup> Ideologically, SOO focused on countering the alleged Islamisation of Finland, and claimed that Islam is a political ideology, not a religion.<sup>72</sup> When the process of proscribing the NRM in Finland started in 2017, SOO affiliated strongly with the group despite its openly national socialist ideology, and also began to attract former or current NRM members, who openly patrolled with it. SOO as an organisation has not assumed as radical position as the NRM but is open to militant neo-Nazis also, contradicting its earlier attempts to show a more mainstream position. Instability and ideological incoherence have not, however, been a decisive matter to SOO, as it has survived several splits<sup>73</sup> and periods of membership decline, and its ideology was not very coherent to begin with. The pull factors for joining SOO seem to be elsewhere. In its internal messaging as well as its public Facebook posts, SOO stresses the common cause and a sense of brotherhood in particular, and has actively built clubhouses in several cities. Logos and jackets

as well as the gatherings of members also strengthen internal solidarity. Common enemies may have also contributed to a closing of ranks.

### *Loss of Members*

Tensions between local chapters and SOO's leadership culminated in a bigger confrontation in 2016 after which several chapters left the organisation. Based on online observations during the spring of that year, eight local chapters out of twenty-three disbanded or became inactive. These included some bigger cities, such as Turku, Kouvola, and Pori. Those who left were branded traitors, and SOO burned their vests on a video shared on social media.<sup>74</sup>

The quarrels were not solely the result of a lost sense of purpose as several chapters continued to patrol albeit without wearing SOO's insignia. Some also directly challenged the group's leadership.<sup>75</sup> According to Ranta, SOO's membership decreased by perhaps as much as thirty percent in 2016.<sup>76</sup> Considering that new chapters were also founded and new members accepted at the same time, it may be estimated that several hundreds of members left the group that year. Members coming and going seems to be a constant feature of SOO, however. One chapter leader has said, for example, that in 2017 they only had one original member remaining.<sup>77</sup> In this sense, SOO appears as a relatively adaptative organisation. Also, despite having a hierarchical structure on paper, SOO seems quite flexible in comparison to some other groups and has given a lot of room for local initiative.<sup>78</sup>

Some departees, it should be noted, later returned to SOO. One justification for returning was that patrolling without group insignia was ineffective as nobody noticed the participants.<sup>79</sup> This suggests that group identity and visibility were of substantial significance. The aforementioned fights over relatively worthless movable property also indicate some level of emotional attachment to the organisation.

## **The Nordic Resistance Movement and its Finnish Chapter**

### ***History and Structure***

The NRM is a neo-Nazi organisation aiming to establish a pan-Nordic national socialist state via revolution. Its first chapter, the Swedish Resistance Movement (*Svenska Motståndsrörelsen*, SMR), was established in 1997, with chapters in other Nordic states founded later.<sup>80</sup> The organisation's leadership structure witnessed major alterations in 2015 with the establishment of a Nordic council comprising members from Sweden, Finland, and Norway. While the NRM retained its official head, the stated purpose of the council was, among other things, to strengthen Nordic cooperation and demonstrate that the NRM is one pan-Nordic entity.<sup>81</sup>

The NRM's Finnish chapter was founded in 2008 and definitively disbanded by order of court in 2020 (see below). It was headed by Esa Holappa until 2012, when Juuso Tahvanainen took over. Tahvanainen continued in this position until 2015, when he handed it over to Antti Niemi. The group also established its own leadership council in late 2015.<sup>82</sup>

The Finnish chapter initially featured cells in Helsinki, Oulu, and Turku, but expanded over

the years and was estimated to include seven cells with around a hundred active members in 2018.<sup>83</sup> The membership structure of the NRM comprised activists, regular members, and support members. Apart from carrying out activities in the public space, the organisation also established so-called “Homes” (Koti), or clubhouse-like centres of activism for members and supporters.<sup>84</sup>

## ***External Factors***

### *Economic Factors*

The level of unemployment in Finland would not appear to explain the establishment of the NRM’s Finnish chapter as it improved in 2008 when compared to the previous year.<sup>85</sup> While unemployment began to increase in 2009, it is nevertheless unclear whether this fed into the popularity of the NRM. The Finnish Security and Intelligence Service (*Suojelupoliisi*), for one, characterised the average member of the NRM as a middle-class *working* male with family.<sup>86</sup> Local economic factors also appear of limited utility in explaining the presence or longevity of the NRM in different parts of Finland.<sup>87</sup> Assessing the possible impact of an urban-rural divide is meanwhile complicated by the fact that although the NRM’s local cells were often named after the key cities in their region, some of their members lived beyond such urban areas, with the cells furthermore carrying out activism in less densely populated localities also.<sup>88</sup>

### *Intergroup Competition*

The NRM’s early years saw little competition on the streets, and while new groups mobilised especially from 2015 onwards, the organisation remained largely unrivalled in terms of the range and frequency of its offline activities. Apart from spreading propaganda, members of the group engaged in such activities as athletics, combat and survivalism training, ideological education, cultural events, environmental conservation work, charity, demonstrations, and the commemoration of national socialist and other figures – among other things.<sup>89</sup>

A lack of offline competition should not, however, be mistaken for a lack of competition in general. The NRM railed against the FDL, for example, which it characterised as a supporter of Zionism and other values allegedly alien to “true” nationalism.<sup>90</sup> A more formidable competitor, perhaps, was the ethnonationalist organisation Suomen Sisä.<sup>91</sup> While the groups engaged in intermittent cooperation, there were bouts of animosity as well. Whereas members of the NRM and Suomen Sisä cooperated in creating the “612” torchlight procession in Helsinki, for example, the latter group also distanced itself from the NRM on several occasions.<sup>92</sup>

Intergroup competition had a mixed impact on the NRM. Its image of an organisation active offline has been described as a probable source of appeal among some prospective members.<sup>93</sup> The group’s reputation as an ideologically uncompromising, revolutionary national socialist organisation may have, however, directed some nationalists towards other organisations. Suomen Sisä, for example, secured a plethora of new members during the influx of refugees into Finland in 2015.<sup>94</sup>

Just how decisive of a loss the NRM perceived the latter phenomenon is up to interpretation.



While the group sought to grow, it did not aim to evolve into a mass movement in the immediate future. The NRM's near-term strategy, by its own admission, rather focused on recruiting ideologically reliable and committed members, and preparing the groundwork for revolution by spreading awareness of itself via propaganda.<sup>95</sup> The very process of joining the NRM may have also turned away some recruits. Whereas applying for membership in Suomen Sisä, for example, was a matter of filling out a form and paying the membership fee, the NRM had more restrictive criteria and a possible probationary period for applicants, and occasionally also rejected some candidates as untrustworthy.<sup>96</sup>

### *Ability to Use Technology*

The NRM was adept at furthering its cause online. It published a steady stream of material through its website, operated an internet radio podcast, and employed several social media platforms such as Facebook, VKontakte, Youtube and Bitchute to push propaganda and connect with supporters. Some of these functions likely had a direct bearing on its longevity. The group characterised Discord, for example, as a social media application through which it had reached new recruits.<sup>97</sup>

The group nevertheless also suffered setbacks online. Its accounts were removed from social media platforms such as Youtube during the later 2010s.<sup>98</sup> The NRM was similarly hit by hacking events that revealed information on its membership applications, internal discussions, and the customers of its webstore.<sup>99</sup> Finnish antifascists also published images and personal details of NRM activists online.<sup>100</sup>

### *Repression*

The NRM was the first Finnish RWE group disbanded by order of court since the Cold War.<sup>101</sup> Legal action against it began to take shape after an incident of violence in September 2016. The NRM was distributing propaganda in Helsinki when a passer-by confronted them and was assaulted by an activist. The passer-by suffered trauma to the head and died a week later after exiting the hospital against medical advice.<sup>102</sup> While the activist was cleared of the death and rather sentenced over aggravated assault with racist intent, Finland's National Police Board announced that it would seek the disbanding of the NRM. The case passed through all courts of law during 2017–2020, with the Supreme Court of Finland placing a temporary ban on the NRM in 2019 and definitively disbanding the group the next year. The verdict was based upon the NRM's contravening of the Finnish Associations Act by supporting acts of violence by its members and agitating against minorities, among other things.<sup>103</sup>

The NRM responded to the case with propaganda and by organising demonstrations in support of itself.<sup>104</sup> While it did not explicitly defy the ban, some members continued under the guise of a new organisation – Towards Freedom (Kohti Vapautta). The Helsinki District Court decreed in 2022 that Towards Freedom constituted an attempt to continue the NRM's illegal activities.<sup>105</sup> Former members nevertheless carried on with the NRM's functions through other groups as well while also pursuing financial activities such as the selling of RWE literature and merchandise even after the ban.<sup>106</sup>



The NRM also faced extra-parliamentary opposition throughout its existence. Its members occasionally clashed with antifascists, with offline resistance compounded by online measures – Finnish antifascists, as earlier noted, published information on the NRM’s activists online.<sup>107</sup> The impact of such attacks was mixed. With respect to the core members of the NRM, they failed to act as a deterrent. While the head of the group was, for example, injured in a fight with antifascists in October 2012, he took back to the streets less than a month later.<sup>108</sup> Media coverage of violent clashes furthermore stimulated an inflow of membership applications to the group. It has nevertheless also been estimated that the threat of violence or being exposed online may have dissuaded some prospective members from joining.<sup>109</sup>

### *Social Change*

Social change proved of assistance to the group after a setback it suffered in 2015. Members and supporters of the chapter alongside Swedish NRM activists marched through Jyväskylä on 1 August and distributed leaflets to passers-by without incident, yet later assaulted a group of three including a local antifascist.<sup>110</sup> Key members were arrested, with some only released nearly three weeks later. Certain charges against them, such as leading a violent riot, furthermore carried the potential for lengthy prison sentences.<sup>111</sup> The setback momentarily reduced the group’s online activity. While the NRM had published material on its website throughout July 2015, such activism was on hold until 10 August.<sup>112</sup> The group did, however, communicate via Facebook even in the immediate wake of the incident, claiming that its website had crashed.<sup>113</sup> The Jyväskylä case also temporarily reduced the the NRM’s offline activity, as only one cell reported events for the week after it.<sup>114</sup>

The influx of refugees into Finland from the autumn of 2015 onwards, however, opened fresh opportunities for RWE organisations.<sup>115</sup> The NRM, indeed, soon adjusted its message to address the topic of refugees.<sup>116</sup> It also used the demonstrations of other organisations to distribute information on its own ideology and activities.<sup>117</sup> The NRM’s offline activities for August–December 2015 ultimately stood at nearly the same level as for March–July of the same year, with activities related to the influx of refugees forming a significant part of the figure. The group also established a new cell in Lahti in December 2015, alluding to the development as a partial result of the refugee situation.<sup>118</sup>

### *Political Vulnerabilities and Opportunities*

The Finnish political establishment generally took a negative view towards the NRM. Its acts of violence were condemned across party lines, with key politicians also calling for measures against the group. The Finnish prime minister, for example, questioned the NRM’s right to exist after the above incident in Jyväskylä.<sup>119</sup>

Some data nonetheless attest to the sympathies of individual figures from the Finns Party in particular. Leaked membership applications, for example, reveal that a municipal politician of the party had considered joining it.<sup>120</sup> Some members of the party also participated in offline events with NRM activists, occasionally causing a public uproar.<sup>121</sup>

The Finns Party also posed a challenge to the NRM, however, as it channelled into a more moderate, parliamentary context pressures that might have otherwise fed into the group's own popularity. The NRM, indeed, repeatedly challenged the party's commitment to nationalism in its propaganda. The election of Halla-aho as the head of the party did little to temper such criticism as he, too, was characterised by the group as a supporter of hostile values.<sup>122</sup>

## ***Internal Factors***

### *Organisational Size and Age*

While the NRM had some hundred active members by 2018, its size paled in comparison to that of Suomen Sisu and was also smaller than SOO's.<sup>123</sup> The NRM, however, compensated for this by utilising the potential of its activists in a manner unknown to other organisations. These members were obligated to carry out activism regularly, with the group establishing a score sheet system to monitor the execution of such tasks.<sup>124</sup> This bound activists to the NRM more comprehensively than in the case of SOO, for example, whose internal communications from 2016 reveal difficulties in mobilising members offline.<sup>125</sup>

Suojelupoliisi considered the NRM's longevity as exceptional among Finnish extremist groups.<sup>126</sup> As in the case of SOO, such longevity may have contributed to its ability to respond to various pressures. The group's longevity might, however, also reflect its ability to evolve and adapt. While the NRM's early years, as described below, were fraught with problems, it nonetheless evolved into an organisation with sustained and widespread activity.

### *Financing the Activities*

The NRM was primarily supported by the personal wealth of its leadership early on. External revenue began to accumulate in 2010, however, after the group founded Northern Tradition (*Pohjoinen Perinne*), a registered association, to support its economic activities. The NRM established a webstore to sell RWE literature and other material while also utilising skinhead concerts as a venue for such sales.<sup>127</sup> The group's activists, members and support members were similarly required to pay a monthly fee to the organisation.<sup>128</sup> While the NRM also enjoyed close ties to the head of the department store chain Kärkkäinen, it is difficult to ascertain the exact financial impact of this connection.<sup>129</sup> Income from the above functions was channelled into the production of propaganda material and the renting of venues for events, among other things.<sup>130</sup>

The legal process against the NRM revealed specific figures on its finances, as the balance sheet and income statement of Pohjoinen Perinne for 2014 and 2015 were included as evidence. The group appears to have held ample funds to support its activities, as the equity of the association stood at over ten thousand euros in 2014 and had further increased by the end of 2015.<sup>131</sup> Donations, as noted by Kotonen, were a major source of inexpensive income to the group especially in 2015 and likely influenced the decision of its members to establish a Bitcoin wallet to facilitate such inflow of capital even after the banning of the chapter.<sup>132</sup>

### *Instability and Ideological Incoherence*

While the Finnish chapter projected an outward image of cohesion, its internal relations were not free of friction. Esa Holappa, the group's first leader, relates how one source of division concerned the NRM's organisational format as a strictly hierarchical group or as a network-like entity with an emphasis on subcultural activities. There was also disagreement as to whether the NRM should follow an orthodox reading of national socialism or adhere to fascism of a more general sort. Some members of the group saw national socialism as somewhat foreign to Finland and fascism as an ideological current with stronger historical roots in the country.<sup>133</sup>

These pressures did not, however, tear the group asunder. The schism between the supporters of national socialism and fascism, for example, eased when the head of the SMR ordered Holappa, who belonged to the former camp, to accommodate the views of the latter.<sup>134</sup> Holappa furthermore notes that his successor, Juuso Tahvanainen, sought to enhance the internal cohesion of the group by placing greater emphasis on activism rather than on ideological questions.<sup>135</sup>

### *Loss of Members*

While several long-standing members of the NRM persisted until the end, others departed over time. A key member from Turku, for example, left the cell in the mid-2010s.<sup>136</sup> The group also sustained deliberate damage by its former leader in 2016. Holappa, who had earlier left the chapter, publicly disavowed national socialism and published an autobiography that revealed much previously unknown knowledge on the NRM.<sup>137</sup> Although the group tried to guard against suspicious characters by placing certain applicants on a probationary period, for example, such measures were of little utility against the departure of members or their actions post-NRM.<sup>138</sup>

The impact of the loss of members was somewhat mixed. The departure of the aforementioned member from Turku was compounded by a change in the leadership of the local cell and quite possibly played a role in the notable reduction of its activity from the mid-2010s onwards.<sup>139</sup> The revelations by Holappa similarly damaged the NRM's reputation and secrecy. Again, however, such adversities failed to bring down the group as a whole. Adversity, in fact, occasionally stimulated an inflow of new members to the group. While Suojelupoliisi estimated in early 2017 that the NRM had around 70–80 active members, this figure, as noted above, had increased to around a hundred in 2018 – all the while that the court case against the NRM was ongoing.<sup>140</sup> Such inpouring of new members might be seen as indicative of the wider support that other elements of the Finnish RWE scene rendered unto the NRM during its legal ordeal.<sup>141</sup>

## **Conclusion and Further Research Needs**

Our analysis on the longevity of SOO and the NRM partly supports and partly challenges earlier findings on the significance of different internal and external factors to RWE group survival. Some elements also impacted the fortunes of the two groups in complex and divergent ways. With respect to the intergroup competition faced by the NRM, its extreme ideological and

strategic profile alongside the range and frequency of its activities ensured that, in contrast to the NRM's early fortunes in Denmark, there was no comparable organisation in Finland.<sup>142</sup> Ideological extremism may have, however, also set limits to its growth by turning away prospective members. The exponential growth of SOO meanwhile brought financial benefits to it, yet later led to trouble as unsuitable members had to be removed from the organisation. Rapid growth at the expense of the quality of members has been identified as a possible risk by earlier research also, since less-committed characters may later cause a decline in the organisation's membership.<sup>143</sup>

In contrast to the findings by Suttmoeller et al. on the impact of group size on longevity, the relatively small membership cadre of the NRM did not bring about its demise.<sup>144</sup> The group compensated for this by utilising the potential of its activists to the maximum effect. Both the NRM and SOO furthermore survived in spite of internal instability and ideological incoherence. This finding challenges earlier evidence of such factors being conducive to organisational failure.<sup>145</sup> When comparing SOO Finland to its Canadian counterpart, moreover, accusations of ideological extremism did not lead to local chapters of SOO Finland breaking away from the organisation, but rather to the ousting of individual members by the group's leadership.<sup>146</sup>

The significance of financial resources to group success as noted by Freilich et al. appears straightforward in the case of the NRM.<sup>147</sup> A strong inflow of capital was also important to SOO, although finances proved to be a source of infighting as well. Social change, or the large-scale influx of refugees into Finland in the autumn of 2015, was furthermore of significance to both groups, although the waning of the phenomenon in 2016 also posed a threat to SOO. The impact of repressions on the NRM is a matter of interpretation. While the Finnish chapter faced opposition from extra-parliamentary political opponents throughout the years, it was only the direct intervention of the state and the verdict by the Supreme Court of Finland that spelled its demise as a group. Even then, however, many members carried on with the NRM's functions through new organisational formations.

Unlike in Sweden, external repression did not have a marked impact on SOO Finland. While the group was challenged offline by the Loldiers of Odin and other political opponents, such resistance was more of an irritant than a deterrent. It should be noted, of course, that SOO Sweden also faced resistance from a biker gang – a more serious threat, perhaps, than the elements encountered by the Finns.<sup>148</sup> Whether such police measures as employed in Norway<sup>149</sup> would have worked against SOO Finland is an interesting question – as our study demonstrates, some members that departed the group later returned to it as patrolling without SOO insignia was seen as ineffective.

With respect to online repression, SOO was deplatformed by Facebook in 2019, when its activities were already in decline, and the direct impact of the measure is therefore hard to estimate. Our findings on the use of technology by SOO Finland in a more general sense stand in contrast to those concerning SOO Sweden.<sup>150</sup> It does not appear, more precisely, that the use of technology by SOO Finland led its chapters into favouring online over offline activism – at least not to a degree that would have harmed the organisation. In the case of the NRM, the ability to use technology was of significance to attracting new members, yet it also suffered a series of

data breaches. The publication of its members' personal details online may have also scared off some prospective applicants.

It is worth noting that, in contrast to the findings by Suttmoeller et al., the ability of SOO and the NRM to use the internet did not decisively differ from that of their less fortunate peers.<sup>151</sup> The ability to use internet technology as such does not, in other words, appear to constitute a reliable indicator of organisational survival. Such a finding was, in fact, predicted by Suttmoeller et al., with the authors of that study calling for greater research into *how* the internet is used.<sup>152</sup> Our work covered the online activities of SOO and the NRM on both conventional websites as well as social media platforms, yet even here there is space for further inquiry. Social media continues to gain in importance and future research would benefit from a stronger focus on the ways in which different social media platforms and applications in specific are used and their connection to organisational longevity. It may well be that the ability to shift between platforms in order to neutralise the impact of bans and deplatforming is, for example, of greater relevance than the use of social media *per se*.

Both SOO and the NRM offered a lot to their members, yet future research on organisational longevity should also look into what is demanded of activists. This point pertains to the NRM in particular, as it required continuous participation from activists. Joining the organisation was an investment that raised the threshold of leaving quite a bit.<sup>153</sup>

The breadth of a group's ideology and the prognostic frames that it offers should furthermore be considered when evaluating commitment. The NRM's ideology and goals were broad enough to constitute a possible driver of its longevity – organisational studies, that is, suggest that groups with more extensive objectives may survive better than those with limited ones, as the latter often cease to exist when their mission is accomplished or it no longer constitutes an issue.<sup>154</sup> The NRM's vision was additionally a very long-term one, as it did not expect to achieve revolution in the near future. This may have influenced its members' understanding of how long of a commitment they were making while also perhaps tempering the volume of serious violence within the context of the NRM's activities, as any large-scale bloodshed would have been premature.<sup>155</sup>

A final, more general factor, and one related to the banning of the NRM, is the shift in the RWE landscape<sup>156</sup> towards more connective action, changing the meaning of what group survival actually means. Our study interpreted RWE group survival as continuous, collective action by the members of a clearly defined organisation outside the virtual environment also. Yet future research might need to differentiate between survival as a group and survival as a movement or a network. Non-survival of a group, that is, does not necessarily imply that its activists disengage from the movement, let alone deradicalise, as demonstrated by the NRM.<sup>157</sup> A study on RWE in Canada by Perry and Scrivens also demonstrates that activity may remain relatively stable on the movement level even as movement organisations themselves continuously rise and fall, making them a "moving target" of sorts.<sup>158</sup> The meaning of survival has also significance to policies that target or seek to ban RWE organisations. The banning of an organisation is not necessarily very effective if RWE structures and networks alongside the root causes that underlie the emergence of different groups remain the same.



A focus on the factors analysed by our study carries certain limitations that partly pertain to the aforementioned duality between organisations and networks. Such limitations are not absolute, however, as the factors that explain organisational demise or survival do bear relevance on other levels too. Group solidarity building, for example, is relevant on the movement level as well, whereas the financing of activities is of similar importance irrespective of the organisational context through which it is pursued. That former members of the NRM carried on with established forms of fundraising such as the selling of books and other merchandise post-ban is a case in point. Another possible limitation is the applicability of the framework of our study to other contexts. We had to adjust and expand the framework by Suttmoeller et al. to suit the Finnish context, and possible future research trying to replicate our study in a different environment will likely face similar considerations as well.

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## Endnotes

- 1 With right-wing extremism (RWE) we refer here to extremists at the right wing of the political spectrum who reject democracy and are willing to use violence or other nonconventional means to achieve their goals. See Tore Bjørgo and Jacob Aasland Ravndal, "Extreme-Right Violence and Terrorism: Concepts, Patterns, and the Responses," *ICCT Policy Brief*, September 2019, <https://doi.org/10.19165/2019.1.08>.
- 2 Caterina Froio, Pietro Castelli Gattinara, Giorgia Bulli, and Matteo Albanese, *CasaPound Italia: Contemporary Extreme-Right Politics*, Routledge Studies in Fascism and the Far Right (Routledge, 2020); Tommi Kotonen, "The Soldiers of Odin Finland: From a local movement to an international franchise," in *Vigilantism against Migrants and Minorities*, Routledge Studies in Fascism and the Far Right, eds. Tore Bjørgo and Miroslav Mareš, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019): 241-256. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429485619-15>.
- 3 Daniel Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin en äärioikeistoliikehdintä ja maahanmuuttovastaisuus 2010-luvun Suomessa*, Publications of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Helsinki 97 (Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2018): 32, 38, 39; Daniel Sallamaa and Tommi Kotonen, "The case against the Nordic Resistance Movement in Finland: an overview and some explanations," *Right Now!* November 2, 2020, <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/news-and-events/right-now/2020/the-case-against-the-nordic-resistance-movement.html>.
- 4 Suojelupoliisi, "Asiantuntijalausunto Pohjoismaisesta Vastarintaliikkeestä," 2.
- 5 Regarding changing landscape and the role of the Internet in shaping social movements and organisations, and emphasising a shift from collective action to more network connective action see esp. W. Lance Bennett and Alexandra Segerberg, *The Logic of Connective Action: Digital Media and the Personalization of Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
- 6 Cf. Sarai B Aharoni and Élise Féron, "National populism and gendered vigilantism: The case of the Soldiers of Odin in Finland," *Cooperation and Conflict*, 55, no. 1 (2020): 86–106, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836719850207>; Kaarina Nikunen, Jenni Hokka, and Matti Nelimarkka, "Affective Practice of Soldiering: How Sharing Images Is Used to Spread Extremist and Racist Ethos on Soldiers of Odin Facebook Site," *Television & New Media* 22, no. 2 (2021): 166–185, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476420982235>; Daniel Sallamaa and Leena Malkki, "Ethnocultural and Racial Ambiguities of National Socialist State-Building. Finland and the Nordic Resistance Movement," in *Nordic Fascism. Fragments of an Entangled History*, eds. Nicola Karcher and Markus Lundström (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022): 188–211, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003193005-9>.
- 7 Mattias Gardell, "Pop-up Vigilantism and Fascist Patrols in Sweden" in *Vigilantism against Migrants and Minorities*, Routledge Studies in Fascism and the Far Right, eds. Tore Bjørgo and Miroslav Mareš, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019): 293–294.
- 8 Tore Bjørgo and Ingvild Magnæs Gjelsvik, "Sheep in wolf's clothing?: The taming of the Soldiers of Odin in Norway," in *Vigilantism against Migrants and Minorities*, Routledge Studies in Fascism and the Far Right, eds. Tore Bjørgo and Miroslav Mareš, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019): 268.
- 9 Emil Archambault and Yannick Veilleux-Lepage, "The Soldiers of Odin in Canada. The failure of transnational ideology," in *Vigilantism against Migrants and Minorities*, Routledge Studies in Fascism and the Far Right, eds. Tore Bjørgo and Miroslav Mareš, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019): 272–285. The Quebec chapter of SOO Canada, the authors nonetheless note, maintained ties with SOO Finland even after its mother chapter had severed them.
- 10 Tommi Kotonen, "Proscribing the Nordic Resistance Movement in Finland: Analyzing the Process and its Outcome," *Journal for Deradicalization* 29 (Winter 2021/2022): 184–189, <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/533/321>.
- 11 Jacob Aasland Ravndal, "The Emergence of Transnational Street Militancy: A Comparative Case Study of the Nordic Resistance Movement and Generation Identity," *Journal for Deradicalization* 25 (Winter 2020/21): 11–13, <https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/85203/2/407-1289-1-PB.pdf>.
- 12 See, for example, Pietro Castelli Gattinara and Andrea L. P. Pirro, "The far right as social movement," *European Societies* 21, no. 4 (2019): 447-462, DOI: 10.1080/14616696.2018.1494301.
- 13 Donatella della Porta, *Social movements, political violence, and the state: a comparative analysis of Italy and Germany*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1995), 107.
- 14 Sarah A. Soule and Brayden G King, "Competition and Resource Partitioning in Three Social Movement Industries," *American Journal of Sociology* 113, no. 6 (2008): 1572, 1593, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/587152>.
- 15 Brian J. Phillips, "Do 90 Percent of Terrorist Groups Last Less than a Year? Updating the Conventional Wisdom." *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 31, no. 6 (2019): 1255–1265, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2017.1361411>.
- 16 Referred to in Joshua Freilich, Steven Chermak, and David Caspi, "Critical Events in the Life Trajectories of Domestic Extremist White Supremacist Groups," *Criminology & Public Policy* 8, no. 3 (August 2009): 510.
- 17 Freilich, Chermak, and Caspi, "Critical Events."

18 Michael Suttmoeller, Steven Chermak, and Joshua D. Freilich, "The Influence of External and Internal Correlates on the Organizational Death of Domestic Far-Right Extremist Groups," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 38, no. 9 (2015): 734–758, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2015.1038106>.

19 Michael Suttmoeller, Steven M. Chermak, and Joshua D. Freilich, "Is More Violent Better? The Impact of Group Participation in Violence on Group Longevity for Far-Right Extremist Groups," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 41, no. 5 (2018): 365–387, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2017.1290429>; Michael Suttmoeller, Steven M. Chermak, and Joshua D. Freilich, "Only the Bad Die Young: The Correlates of Organizational Death for Far-Right Extremist Groups," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 39, no. 6 (2016): 477–499, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2015.1116269>.

20 Freilich, Chermak, and Caspi, "Critical Events," 497.

21 Ibid., 516.

22 Suttmoeller, Chermak and Freilich, "The Influence," 743–745.

23 Ibid., 748.

24 Ibid., 745–748.

25 Suttmoeller et al. focus on the United States – a political system that differs from the Finnish one in several respects. Whereas their study uses the presidential voting history in different US states as one indicator of political vulnerability, a corresponding administrative division into states let alone a political system dominated by two parties does not exist in Finland. This indicator could therefore not be replicated in our study. The lack of an administrative division into states with governments matching those of the US model also made it impossible to employ the level of liberalism or conservatism in state governments as an indicator in our study. We accordingly chose to look at the general take of the Finnish political establishment towards SOO and the NRM when discussing vulnerability. Certain data used by Suttmoeller et al. were also lacking for Finland. While their study employs racial heterogeneity in US counties as a measure of social change, Finland does not gather such data. There was, however, a major shift concerning the influx on non-Westerners into Finland during the years covered by our study. This took place in the autumn of 2015, when Finland received a record-breaking number of asylum seekers from such countries as Iraq and Afghanistan. We used this event as a means of assessing how social change impacted SOO and the NRM. A further category of data lacking for Finland was the overall number of RWE groups in different locations. It was, in other words, impossible to use group density as a measure of competition in a way reminiscent to that of Suttmoeller et al. We therefore reflected on the general nature of competition between SOO and the NRM on the one hand, and other Finnish RWE groups on the other.

26 Finland lacks RWE groups with a predominantly religious ideology. While some groups may occasionally employ Christianity as an identity marker to separate the majority population from people of a non-Western background, the authors of this study are not aware of domestic RWE organisations that would prioritise Christianity as a key component of their ideology. Similarly, while some members of the RWE scene express interest in paganism, no group has thus far prioritised such a worldview in its ideology. Finnish RWE groups are either political, as in the case of SOO and the NRM, or youth/subcultural as in the case of small, local skinhead organisations. The latter, however, seldom leave traces in open sources and therefore largely lie beyond our reach. We therefore excluded a discussion on the ideological leanings of SOO and the NRM as a possible indicator of their longevity.

27 Freilich, Chermak, and Caspi, "Critical Events," 513–514. We included more general instability and ideological incoherence, with internal cohesion and ideological clarity pointed out as factors of significance to success in Freilich, Chermak, and Caspi, "Critical Events" also. While organisational age is not analysed by Suttmoeller et al. as an independent factor, it is mentioned by them as a possible indicator of the ability to survive and therefore merited more extensive discussion in our research. See Suttmoeller et al., "The Influence," 742.

28 Freilich, Chermak, and Caspi, "Critical Events," 518–519.

29 See especially Kotonen, "The Soldiers of Odin Finland"; Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikehäntä*; Sallamaa and Malkki, "Ethnocultural and Racial Ambiguities."

30 On qualitative thematic analysis, see Victoria Clarke, Virginia Braun, and Nikki Hayfield, "Thematic analysis," in *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, ed. Jonathan A. Smith (SAGE Publications Ltd., 2015): 222–248.

31 Besides the quantitative study "The Influence" by Suttmoeller, Chermak, and Freilich, and the qualitative analysis "Critical Events" by Freilich, Chermak, and Caspi, the ethnographic approach of Sabine Volk also demonstrates the importance of these factors. See Sabine Volk, "Explaining PEGIDA's 'strange survival': an ethnographic approach to far-right protest rituals," *Political Research Exchange* 4, no. 1 (2022): 1–22, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2474736X.2022.2136036>.

32 On "externalist" and "internalist" approaches, see Pietro Castelli Gattinara, "The study of the far right and its three E's: why scholarship must go beyond Eurocentrism, Electoralism and Externalism," *French Politics* 18 (2020): 314–333, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41253-020-00124-8>.

33 Cf. Volk. "Explaining PEGIDA's 'strange survival.'"

34 The evolution of the Soldiers of Odin Finland is outlined in Kotonen, "The Soldiers of Odin Finland." See also Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 32–39.

35 Kotonen, "The Soldiers of Odin Finland," 245–246; Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 32–33, 35–37.

36 Finnish Register of Associations, association number 216.621 (Soldiers of Odin ry).

37 Sara Rigatelli, "Henkilökuva: Kemin katujen pikkukingi – kuinka Mika Ranta tuli perustaneeksi Soldiers of Odinin," *Yle*, May 7, 2016, <https://yle.fi/a/3-8822027>.

38 The category of supporters was previously also used, although this system does not seem to exist anymore.

39 "Tietoa meistä," Soldiers of Odin, <https://soldiersofodin.fi/tietoa-meista/>.

40 Kotonen, "The Soldiers of Odin Finland."

41 See "Labour Force Survey," *Statistics Finland*, <https://stat.fi/en/statistics/tyti#graphs>; "Työttömyys kasvoi vuonna 2015," *Tilastokeskus*, April 12, 2016, [https://www.stat.fi/til/tyti/2015/13/tyti\\_2015\\_13\\_2016-04-12\\_tie\\_001\\_fi.html](https://www.stat.fi/til/tyti/2015/13/tyti_2015_13_2016-04-12_tie_001_fi.html); "Työllisyys ja työttömyys vuonna 2016," *Tilastokeskus*, April 12, 2017, [https://www.stat.fi/til/tyti/2016/13/tyti\\_2016\\_13\\_2017-04-12\\_kat\\_002\\_fi.html](https://www.stat.fi/til/tyti/2016/13/tyti_2016_13_2017-04-12_kat_002_fi.html).

42 On the profiles and employment of SOO leaders, see Kotonen, "The Soldiers of Odin Finland."

43 In some cases, chapters were founded in cities with refugee centers, but there is no clear pattern here either. Sometimes chapters were, in fact, founded after the local center had already closed. Cf. Maahanmuuttovirasto, "Vastaanottokeskuksista vähennetään vajaat 6 000 majoituspaikkaa," *Migri.fi*, May 30, 2016. <https://migri.fi/-/vastaanottokeskuksista-vahennetaan-vajaat-6-000-majoituspaikkaa>.

44 Tommi Kotonen, "Smörgåsbord of Vigilantism in Finland: Motivations, Competition and Strategies," Paper presented at ECPR General Conference in Wrocław, University of Wrocław, September 4-7, 2019.

45 Kotonen, "The Soldiers of Odin Finland."

46 "Soldiers of Odineilla riittää siivottavaa. Tampereen kerhotila vandalisoitu," *Takku.net*, May 25, 2016, <https://takku.net/article.php/20160525190242210>.

47 Sara Rigatelli, "Soldiers of Odinin johto yllyttää salaisissa Facebook-viesteissä: 'Hakattaa jokainen joka nojaa vasemmalle'" *Yle*, June 10, 2016, <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-8941509>; regarding anonymous patrols, see also interview with a SOO chapter leader, November 29, 2017.

48 Facebook message by SOO vice-chairman, September 17, 2016.

49 Salla-Maaria Laaksonen, Joonas Koivukoski, and Merja Porttikivi, "Clowning around a polarized issue: Rhetorical strategies and communicative outcomes of a political parody performance by Loldiers of Odin," *New Media & Society* 24, no. 8 (2022): 1912-1931, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444821989621>.

50 "Heinolan Odinien vetäjä kerhon kaatumisesta: Partiointi alkoi koetella jäsenten parisuhdetta," *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat*, May 26, 2016, <https://www.ess.fi/paikalliset/240372>; Harri Aalto, "Soldiers of Odinin toiminta lopahti Porissa – harkitsee paikkakunnan vaihtoa," *Satakunnan Kansa*, May 20, 2016, <https://www.satakunnankansa.fi/satakunta/art-2000007138135.html>.

51 STT, "Soldiers of Odin vastaa: 'Alamme järjestää enemmän tapahtumia ja marsseja,'" *Keskisuomalainen*, November 6, 2016, <https://www.ksml.fi/paikalliset/2536761>.

52 Della Porta, *Social movements*, 162.

53 Matias Vainio, "Soldiers of Odin. Suomalaisen fasismin uusin aalto?" (Master thesis, University of Joensuu, 2017).

54 Keijo Salokangas, "Soldiers of Odin aktivoitui jälleen Itä-Suomessa – poliisi tyrmää: Tarpeetonta ja rassistista toimintaa," *Yle*, August 24, 2017, <https://yle.fi/a/3-9794877>; see also the expanded political programme of SOO, published, e.g., by SOO Helsinki, Facebook, June 8, 2017.

55 See Gardell, "Pop-up vigilantism."

56 Rigatelli, "Soldiers of Odinin johto yllyttää"; "Soldiers of Odinin rivit harvenevat ja ärhäköityvät - Supo huolestunut," *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat*, July 4, 2016, <https://www.ess.fi/art2283647>.

57 Della Porta, *Social movements*, 134.

58 Esa Koivuranta, "Katupartiot herättäneet ristiriitaisia kommentteja – näin hallitus on ottanut kantaa," *Yle*, January 13, 2016, <https://yle.fi/a/3-8592738>; Esa Koivuranta, "SDP:n Rinne: Yksityiset katupartiot voivat lisätä turvallisuuden tunnetta," *Yle*, January 13, 2016, <https://yle.fi/a/3-8592166>.

59 Tommi Kotonen, "Local Dynamics of Vigilantism – Anti-Immigrant Street Patrol Groups and the Finns Party

- in Local Context,” Paper presented at ECPR General Conference in Hamburg, Universität Hamburg, August 22-25, 2018.
- 60 Interview with a Finns Party member, August 3, 2018.
- 61 Interview with a SOO chapter leader November 29, 2017.
- 62 Observing e.g. their VKontakte pages, it seems that especially after 2019 several members have held openly national socialist views, although this may also be a result of a lack of moderation on that platform.
- 63 Volk, “Explaining PEGIDA’s ‘strange survival,’” 13.
- 64 See e.g. Jouni Nikula, “Kokkolalainen Yrsa Slotte hämmästyi joulukuisena lauantai-iltana törmätessään Soldiers of Odinin katupartioon,” *Keskipohjanmaa*, January 22, 2021, <https://www.keskipohjanmaa.fi/uutinen/609378>.
- 65 See Kotonen, “The Soldiers of Odin Finland.”
- 66 Tommi Kotonen, “Simone: Soldiers of Odin lähikuvassa,” *Politiikasta.fi*, August 16, 2018, <https://politiikasta.fi/simone-soldiers-of-odin-lahikuvassa/>.
- 67 Field notes June 7, 2018; the general mood also comes through in several patrol videos, and group spirit was emphasised in calls for patrolling as well; see SOO Helsinki, Facebook October 4, 2016 and August 24, 2016. Cf. also Volk, “Explaining PEGIDA’s ‘strange survival.’”
- 68 Cf. Gardell, “Pop-up vigilantism”; Bjørge and Gjelsvik, “Sheep in wolf’s clothing?”
- 69 Ostrobothnia District Court November 24, 2017, Verdict in case R17/441; see also “Heinolan Odinin vetäjä kerhon kaatumisesta.”
- 70 See e.g. North Karelia District Court August 1, 2017, Verdict in case 717/731.
- 71 See e.g., Imatra Police Station, Pre-trial investigation file 5620/R/4495/16.
- 72 See, for example, undated SOO leaflet “Muslimit on ongelma” (Muslims are the problem).
- 73 Factional splits relatively common especially during the first year. See Kotonen, “Smörgåsbord of Vigilantism in Finland”.
- 74 Kotonen, “The Soldiers of Odin Finland,” 251.
- 75 Rigatelli, “Soldiers of Odinin johto yllyttää.”
- 76 STT, “Soldiers of Odin vastaa.” <https://www.ksml.fi/paikalliset/2536761>
- 77 Interview with a SOO chapter leader November 29, 2017.
- 78 Interview with a SOO chapter leader November 29, 2017; T3, “Streetpatrol-katupartio on kriisissä jo ennen partioinnin aloittamista – ei kilpailijaksi Soldiers of Odinille,” *MV-lehti*, January 30, 2016, <https://mvlehti.net/2016/01/30/streetpatrol-katupartio-on-kriisissa-jo-ennen-partioinnin-aloittamista-ei-kilpailijaksi-soldiers-of-odinille/>.
- 79 Leader of SOO Turku, Facebook May 29, 2017.
- 80 Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 39, 43, 46; Magnus Ranstorp, Filip Ahlin, and Magnus Normark, “Kapitel 5. Nordiska motståndsrörelsen – den samlande kraften inom den nationalsocialistiska miljön i Norden,” in *Från Nordiska motståndsrörelsen till alternativhögern. En studie om den svenska radikalnationalistiska miljön*, eds. Magnus Ranstorp and Filip Ahlin (Försvarshögskolan, Centrum för Assymmetriska Hot- och Terrorismstudier, 2020), 192, <https://fhs.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1461644/FULLTEXT02.pdf>.
- 81 Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 40; Toimitus, “Pohjoismainen valtuusto,” *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, November 13, 2015, <https://www.vastarinta.com/pohjoismainen-valtuusto>.
- 82 Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 39–41; Pohjoismainen Vastarintaliike, “Pohjoismainen Vastarintaliike Suomessa 10 vuotta!” *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, December 30, 2018, <https://www.vastarinta.com/pohjoismainen-vastarintaliike-suomessa-10-vuotta>.
- 83 Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 40–41; Petri Manssila, “Vastarintaliike ei sulje pois omaa puoluetta – Supo: Ei eroa 1930-luvun kansallissosialismista,” *Iltasanomat*, August 30, 2018, <https://www.is.fi/kotimaa/art-2000005808818.html>.
- 84 Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 40–41; Esa Holappa. *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön* (Helsinki: Into, 2016), 173; Suomen Vastarintaliike, “Uusi Koti ja ensimmäinen valtuustokokous,” *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, October 27, 2015, <https://www.vastarinta.com/uusi-koti-ja-ensimmainen-valtuustokokous>.
- 85 “Työllisten määrä oli vuonna 2008 ennätyskellisen suuri,” *Statistics Finland*, July 6, 2009, [https://www.tilastokeskus.fi/til/tyti/2008/tyti\\_2008\\_2009-07-06\\_tie\\_001.html](https://www.tilastokeskus.fi/til/tyti/2008/tyti_2008_2009-07-06_tie_001.html).
- 86 “Työvoimatilastoja 60 vuotta,” *Statistics Finland*, December 3, 2019, <https://tilastokeskus.fi/til/tyti/2018/16/>



tyti\_2018\_16\_2019-12-03\_tie\_001.fi.html; Suojelupoliisi, "Asiantuntijalausunto Pohjoismaisesta Vastarintaliikkeestä," Dnro 89/2017, 1.

87 While most of the key regional centres of population where the group had a presence during 2018, its final whole year of active operations, featured among those Finnish cities and counties with a higher-than-average percentage of low-income residents, not all members of the local cells lived in those cities. Helsinki, which is characterised by Holappa as hosting the largest local cell of the NRM from the beginning onwards, also featured among those Finnish cities and counties with a lower-than-average percentage of low-income residents both in 2008 and 2018, although even here it should be remembered that not all members of the cell necessarily lived in the city. It should be emphasised that the authors of this study do not hold comprehensive data on all members of the NRM and their places of residence, further complicating the task of assessing the impact of local economic factors. See Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 40, for a list of the local cells of the Finnish chapter in 2018. The largest regional population centre for the Pirkanmaa cell was Tampere. For figures on the percentage of low-income residents in Finnish cities and counties for 2008 and 2018, see *Statistics Finland*, "Asuntoväestön pienituloisuus ja pitkittynyt pienituloisuus kunnittain, 1995-2021," [https://pxdata.stat.fi/PxWeb/pxweb/fi/StatFin/StatFin\\_tjt/statfin\\_tjt\\_pxt\\_127y.px/table/tableViewLayout1/](https://pxdata.stat.fi/PxWeb/pxweb/fi/StatFin/StatFin_tjt/statfin_tjt_pxt_127y.px/table/tableViewLayout1/). For an example of members of the Oulu cell living outside the city, see "Aktivismia Pohjois-Suomessa," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, November 27, 2014, <https://www.vastarinta.com/aktivismia-pohjois-suomessa>.

88 "Aktivismia Pohjois-Suomessa"; "Aktivismia Eurassa ja Raumalla," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, August 4, 2017, <https://www.vastarinta.com/aktivismia-eurassa-ja-raumalla>. See also the previous endnote.

89 Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 46–51; Maria Pöysti, "Runebergin päivän toimintaa Turussa," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, February 11, 2016, <https://www.vastarinta.com/runebergin-paivan-toimintaa-turussa>; Toimitus, "Horst Wessel – paikalla!" *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, February 26, 2017, <https://www.vastarinta.com/horst-wessel-paikalla-2>; "Aktivismia Pirkanmaalla," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, May 25, 2016, <https://www.vastarinta.com/aktivismia-pirkanmaalla-138>; Vastarintaliike, "Tampereen mielenosoitus ja kansallismielinen yhtenäisyys," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, October 23, 2017, <https://www.vastarinta.com/tampereen-mielenosoitus-ja-kansallismielinen-yhtenaisyys>. The group carried out several thousands of such activities during its existence with an emphasis on the spreading of propaganda. The activism reports and more extensive descriptions of certain activities can be accessed through "Taisteluraportti – Kansallinen Vastarinta," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, Web Archives snapshot for November 8, 2011, <https://web.archive.org/web/20111108215332/http://patriootti.com:80/taisteluraportti/>; "Artikkelikirjasto," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, Web Archives snapshot for November 3, 2011, <https://web.archive.org/web/20111103182609/http://patriootti.com/artikkelikirjasto>; "Aktivismiraportit," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, <https://www.vastarinta.com/category/raportit/>; "Artikkelit," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, [www.vastarinta.com/artikkelit/](http://www.vastarinta.com/artikkelit/).

90 "Sionistinen FDL yrittää levittäytyä?" *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, February 13, 2013, <https://www.vastarinta.com/sionistinen-fdl-yrittää-levittäytyä/>.

91 Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 9–12.

92 *Ibid.*, 15, 57–58.

93 Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 167–168.

94 STT, "Suomen Sisun jäsenmäärä kasvaa pakolaiskriisin myötä," *Länsi-Suomi*, September 27, 2015, <https://ls24.fi/stt/suomen-sisun-jasenmaara-kasvaa-pakolaiskriisin-myota>.

95 Jesse Torniaainen, "Vallankumous nyt heti?" *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, November 25, 2014, <https://www.vastarinta.com/vallankumous-nyt-heti>. Holappa does note, though, that meagre growth was a problem during the organisation's early years, with the Finnish chapter comprising a mere 22 members and ten support members by the time that he resigned from its leadership in 2012. The amount of active members had, however, more than quadrupled by 2018. It should also be noted that the NRM did not accept all prospective members even during the early phase of slow growth – some were rejected as untrustworthy. See Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 167–169.

96 "Liity jäseneksi," *Suomen Sisun*, Web Archives snapshot August 29, 2015, <https://web.archive.org/web/20150829121205/http://suomensisu.fi/liity-jaseneksi/>; Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 169; Interview with a former NRM member, November 17, 2022.

97 Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikehdintä*, 48; "Vastarintaliikkeen Discord-kanava suljettiin," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, February 28, 2018, <https://www.vastarinta.com/vastarintaliikkeen-discord-kanava-suljettiin/>; "Kansallinen Vastarinta," *Facebook*. On the impact of the internet and social media on extremist organisations, see, for example, Luke Bertram. "Terrorism, the Internet and the Social Media Advantage: Exploring how terrorist organisations exploit aspects of the internet, social media and how these same platforms could be used to counter-violent extremism," *Journal for Deradicalization* 7 (Summer 2016): 225–252, <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/63/58>; *Rise of the Far Right: Technologies of Recruitment and Mobilization*, eds. Melody Devries, Judith Bessant, and Rob Watts (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021).

98 Videos published through the YouTube channel "Vastarintamedia" were available during the writing of Salla-

maa's *Ulkoparlamentaarin*en äärioikeistoliikehäntä in 2018 but have since been removed.

99 Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 161; "PVL:n verkkokaupassa suuri tietovuoto: asiakastiedot levisivät julkisuuteen," *Varisverkosto*, July 27, 2017, <https://varisverkosto.com/2017/07/pvln-verkkokaupassa-suuri-tietovuoto-asiakastiedot-levisivat-julkisuuteen/>; "Antifasistinen hakkeriryhmä jatkaa PVL:n nolaamista," *Varisverkosto*, September 9, 2017, <https://varisverkosto.com/2017/09/antifasistinen-hakkeriryhma-jatkaa-pvln-nolaamista/>.

100 Juuso Tahvanainen, "Leikkiä tulella," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, October 2, 2012, <https://www.vastarinta.com/leikkia-tulella/>.

101 Daniel Sallamaa and Tommi Kotonen, "The case against the Nordic Resistance Movement in Finland: an overview and some explanations," *Right Now!* November 2, 2020, <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/news-and-events/right-now/2020/the-case-against-the-nordic-resistance-movement.html>.

102 Ibid; Niko Ranta, "Asema-auktion pahoinpitely: Jesse Torniaisen tuomio koveni – hovioikeus katsoi teon motiivin olleen rasistinen," *Ilta-Sanomat*, January 26, 2018, <https://www.is.fi/kotimaa/art-2000005539437.html>.

103 Ranta, "Asema-auktion pahoinpitely"; Sallamaa and Kotonen, "The case against the Nordic Resistance Movement"; STT, "Poliisihallitus nostaa kanteen Pohjoismaisen vastarintaliikkeen lakkauttamiseksi," *Turun Sanomat*, December 22, 2016, <https://www.ts.fi/uutiset/3140700>.

104 Vastarintaliike, "Vastarintaliikkeen kieltokanne ja poliisin politisoituminen," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, March 2, 2017, <https://www.vastarinta.com/vastarintaliikkeen-kieltokanne-poliisin-asianajajana-monikulttuurisuuskiikkoilija/>; Vastarintaliike, "Marssimme sananvapauden puolesta Tampereella 21.10.!" *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, September 20, 2017, <https://www.vastarinta.com/marssimme-sananvapauden-puolesta-tampereella-21-10/>.

105 STT, "Kielletyn uusnatsijärjestön toimintaa jatkettiin toisen nimen alla, sanoo käräjäoikeus – neljälle sakkoja," *Yle*, December 30, 2022, <https://yle.fi/a/74-20010848>.

106 Kotonen, "Proscribing the Nordic Resistance Movement," 184-189.

107 Cf. Marko Hietikko, "Näin toimii Suomen Vastarintaliike," *Yle*, May 15, 2016, <https://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2016/05/15/nain-toimii-suomen-vastarintaliike>.

108 Ibid.; Juuso Tahvanainen, "Suoraa puhetta maahanmuuttajarikollisuudesta - video lisätty!" *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, November 18, 2012, <https://www.vastarinta.com/suoraa-puhetta-maahanmuuttajarikollisuudesta>.

109 Hietikko, "Näin toimii"; Interview with a former NRM member, November 17, 2022.

110 Jyväskylä Police Department, Pre-trial investigation file 5680/R/60247/15, 7-10.

111 Ibid., 3; Finnish criminal code, chapter 17, section 4, <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1889/18890039001>.

112 "Uutiset," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, Web Archive snapshot for August 26, 2015, <https://web.archive.org/web/20150826024053/http://www.patriootti.com/uutiset/>; "Artikkelit," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, Web Archives snapshot for August 20, 2015, <https://web.archive.org/web/20150820235104/http://www.patriootti.com/kansallinen-vastarinta/artikkelit/>.

113 "Kansallinen Vastarinta," *Facebook*, August 2, 2015; "Kansallinen Vastarinta," *Facebook*, August 1, 2015.

114 "Aktivismiraportit," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, Web Archives snapshot for September 11, 2015, <https://web.archive.org/web/20150911220806/http://www.patriootti.com/vastarintaliike/taisteluraportit/>.

115 See Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin*en äärioikeistoliikehäntä, for a description of how various actors mobilised during the autumn of 2015.

116 See, for example, "Vastaanottokeskusaktivismia Helsingissä," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, August 26, 2015, <https://www.vastarinta.com/vastaanottokeskusaktivismia-helsingissa>; Oulun aktivistiryhmä, "Sanginsuun pakolaiskiistan parhaat palat," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, August 27, 2015, <https://www.vastarinta.com/sanginsuun-pakolaiskiistan-parhaat-palat>.

117 See, for example, "Aktivismia Oulussa," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, December 19, 2015, <https://www.vastarinta.com/aktivismia-oulussa-63>.

118 The assessment of the group's activity for March–July and August–December 2015 is based upon activism reports and articles that comment on the NRM's offline activities during the two periods in question. The reports and articles can be accessed through "Aktivismiraportit"; "Artikkelit," *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, <https://www.vastarinta.com/artikkelit/>. For the founding of the Lahti cell see "Vastarintaliikkeellä nyt aktivistiryhmä Lahdessa!" *Kansallinen Vastarinta*, December 14, 2015, <https://www.vastarinta.com/vastarintaliikkeella-nyt-aktivistiryhma-lahdessa>.

119 STT, "Antti Rinne Keski-suomalaisessa: Suomen Vastarintaliike ehkä syytä lakkauttaa," *Ilta-Sanomat*, August 12, 2015, <https://www.is.fi/kotimaa/art-2000000974908.html>; Antti Pilke, "Orpo kieltäisi väkivaltaiset äärijär-



jestöt – 'Olen syvästi huolissani Suomesta'" *Yle*, September 19, 2016, <https://yle.fi/a/3-9177554>; Matti Tuominen, "Sipilä Yllä SVL:stä: 'Ei sillä ole olemassaolon oikeutusta'" *Ilta-Sanomat*, August 3, 2015, <https://www.is.fi/kotimaa/art-2000000971089.html>.

120 Elisa Tikkanen, "Perussuomalaisten Okkonen: Uusnatsihakemus oli tyhmäilyä," *MTV Uutiset*, November 6, 2011, <https://www.mtvuutiset.fi/artikkeli/perussuomalaisten-okkonen-uusnatsihakemus-oli-tyhmailya/1936144>.

121 Petri Jääskeläinen, "Leiri herätti kohun, ampumista harjoiteltiin tunnettujen henkilöiden kuviin – tampere-laispoliitikot käyvät kiivasta keskustelua," *Iltalehti*, July 11, 2019, <https://www.iltalehti.fi/kotimaa/a/bcf51cd1-8f41-44eb-8528-f37959a54503>.

122 Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikkeitä*, 53.

123 Sisu estimated in late 2015 that the number of its members had surpassed 2000 while Mika Ranta claimed in late 2016 that the organisation had up to 500 members. See "Suomen Sisun jäsenmäärä kasvaa pakolaiskriisin myötä"; STT, "Soldiers of Odin vastaa."

124 Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 167, 171-173. A similar score sheet system was used by the SMR. See Marko Hietikko, "Miehet, jotka johtavat natsiliikettä" *Yle*, May 15, 2016, <https://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2016/05/15/miehet-jotka-johtavat-natsiliiketta>.

125 Rigatelli, "Soldiers of Odinin johto yllyttää."

126 Suojelupoliisi, "Asiantuntijalausunto Pohjoismaisesta Vastarintaliikkeestä," 2.

127 Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 156–157, 174. The webstore appears to have been active from at least the spring of 2011 onwards. See "Kadulle.com – Tervetuloa," *Kadulle.com*, Web Archives snapshot for April 25, 2012, <http://web.archive.org/web/20120425064346/http://www.kadulle.com/>.

128 Sallamaa, *Ulkoparlamentaarin äärioikeistoliikkeitä*, 41.

129 The head of the department store chain was proactive in allowing the publication of material produced by the NRM in the company's free newspaper *Magneettimedia*, thus providing the group with a free means of reaching a vast number of Finns. Control of the publication was also later transferred to Pohjoinen Perinne. It was also possible to order items sold by the department store chain through the webstore of the NRM, although there is some ambiguity over how such items ended up with the group. See *Ibid.*, 53–54; Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 176; Marko-Oskari Lehtonen, "Kärkkäinen toimittaa tarvikkeita uusnatseille - Kirvesvalmistaja järkyttyi yhteistyöstä: 'Eihän tällainen voi jatkua,'" *Iltalehti*, January 24, 2017, <https://www.iltalehti.fi/uutiset/a/201701232200058326>.

130 Hietikko, "Näin toimii Suomen Vastarintaliike."

131 Turku Court of Appeals, Verdict in case S 18/7, attachment V11, the balance sheet and income statement of Pohjoinen Perinne ry (2018), 325.

132 Kotonen, "Proscribing the Nordic Resistance Movement," 188.

133 Holappa, *Minä perustin uusnatsijärjestön*, 109–112.

134 *Ibid.*, 111.

135 *Ibid.*, 181.

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# About

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