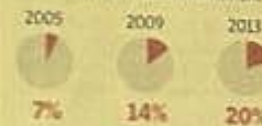


WORLD NEWS

**Generational Shift**

Young Germans have increasingly been voting for fringe parties...

Germans under 30 who voted for a party not represented in Parliament



...and are lending support to euro-skeptic Alternative for Germany.

Voters for the party by age in the 2013 national election



Source: Forschungsgruppe Wahlen



Young members of Alternative for Germany, including (from left to right) Udo Stein, Jan Czada and Markus Frohnmaler, attend the party's convention in Aschaffenburg on Saturday.

# German Youth Buoy Anti-Euro Party

*Discontent Over Country's Role in Bailouts Poised to Help Propel Upstart Into European Parliament*

By ANTON TROLANOVSKI

ASCHAFFENBURG, Germany—As the upstart anti-euro party Alternative for Germany prepares its first bid for European Parliament, it is benefiting from a more distant view of European history shared by younger Germans such as Torsten Heinrich.

"My father said the EU seizes peace for us," the 31-year-old chief of the party's youth organization said. "This, of course, completely ignores the fact that we have neighboring countries in the EU that we haven't at war with for 200 years, as Switzerland."

His suggest that support a younger generation of Germans could help propel the party over the 3% vote threshold for seats in the European Parliament, which would solidify the party's status as the most popular right-of-center upstart in German politics in a survey by the pollster published Sunday found garnering 7% support among Germans for the May election, more than the share of

votes it garnered in national parliamentary elections in September.

Despite its socially conservative platform, the party has polled strongest among young people—a group for which the lessons of World War II and the symbolism of the European Union as a bulwark of peace are far more abstract than for older German voters. While a plurality of Germans younger than 30 still view the EU positively, discontent with the European project has struck a chord among youth who want to rekindle German patriotism despite the stain of the Nazi era.

"We Germans have some things to be proud of," said André Müller, 17, from southwest Germany. "We have 2,000 years of history, and yet everything gets reduced to those 12 years."

Mr. Müller was among the several dozen, predominantly male, youth supporters of the Alternative for Germany who took part in the party's convention over the weekend in the southwest German city of Aschaffenburg. In interviews on the sidelines of the convention, many of the young people voiced

frustration with a mainstream political and media establishment that, they said, was quick to equate their criticism of Muslim immigration and European integration with far-right ideology.

The Alternative for Germany's leaders—largely older conservatives—have sought to capitalize on those frustrations. Party

**The lessons of World War II and postwar European integration are more abstract among younger people.**

leader Bernd Lucke, a 51-year-old economist, on Saturday unveiled the party's slogan for the European election as "Courage for Germany," a tweak to its previous motto, "Courage for truth." Bernd Kölmel, a 55-year-old who was elected by delegates to be No. 3 on the party list for the European vote, said in his speech that Germany was "the only country in the world in

which you have to think about when you are allowed" to show the national flag.

"Young people ask about things that didn't used to be questioned," said Alexander Gauland, a 72-year-old top party official. Mr. Gauland has published articles in recent months in some of Germany's top newspapers, arguing among other things that Chancellor Angela Merkel's willingness to risk German taxpayer money to rescue struggling southern European countries was a way of turning "our bad conscience into the paymaster of Europe."

The Alternative for Germany's traction underlines discontent with established German politics, particularly among the younger generation. In the national election in September, 20% of the under-30 vote went to parties not represented in parliament, up from 14% in 2009 and just 7% in 2005, according to polling organization Forschungsgruppe Wahlen e.V.

About 6% of voters younger than 30 cast their ballot for the Alternative for Germany, compared with 4% of people 60 and older. The party, known by its

German initials AfD, has more "likes" on Facebook than any other German party.

For years, political groups to the right of Ms. Merkel's Christian Democratic Union and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union, were widely considered taboo in Germany. But many conservatives have been frustrated by the CDU's move to the left under Ms. Merkel. Younger politicians have criticized Ms. Merkel's new coalition government with the left-of-center Social Democrats as spending too much on new retirement benefits and sticking future generations with the bill.

That has provided an opening for the AfD, which was founded early last year. The party is initially focused on one demand: ending the European currency union—but has since broadened its scope to touch on issues such as immigration, gay marriage and fiscal conservatism.

"None of the parties has been representing the interests of the German people," said Stein, a 30-year-old textile salesman who ordered white t-shirts for young supporters with the AfD logo printed on the co