



2024/3

Far right Violence and Terrorism

MONTHLY REPORT

**Analysis of Far-Right Violence and Terrorism
March 2024**

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Introduction

In March 2024, the global landscape was marked by an alarming presence of terrorism linked to extreme right-wing ideologies. This analysis underscores the paramount significance of this issue in the contemporary world order.

Terrorism, irrespective of its ideological roots, has long posed a grave threat to international peace and security. Recent times, however, have witnessed a distinct shift in this threat landscape. The ascent of extreme right-wing terrorism has introduced a new layer of complexity to the global security equation.

This report aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of extreme right-wing terrorism in March 2024, offering insights into its evolution, and current manifestations. By dissecting the trends, causative factors, and ramifications of this phenomenon, our objective is to foster awareness and inform policymaking while fostering international collaboration to counter this growing menace.

MEXICO

US Citizen Wanted by FBI for White Supremacist Gang Links Captured in Sonora

Authorities in Sonora have apprehended David D. Young, alias "Khaos," a US citizen sought by the FBI for his ties to the Ghostface Gangsters Gang (GFG), known for their criminal activities and white supremacist ideology. Young, 43, was arrested in Hermosillo by agents of the Criminal Investigation Agency (AMIC) while walking down a street in the Solidaridad neighborhood (1).

The Ghostface Gangsters Gang, founded around 1998 in Georgia, has been involved in a series of serious crimes, including violent homicides and drug trafficking. US authorities have conducted operations to capture its members, describing the gang as one of the fastest-growing in the country. Young faces charges of conspiracy, distribution, sale, and possession of narcotics and has been handed over to immigration authorities for deportation through the Dennis DeConcini Border Port in Nogales. While it has not been revealed whether he received assistance from criminal groups in Sonora, his capture highlights international cooperation in combating organized crime and extremist ideologies

UNITED STATES

Missouri Man Arrested on Vandalism Charges Linked to White Supremacy

Frankie Rizzello Jr., a 20-year-old resident of Chesterfield, Missouri, was arrested on March 9, 2024, on two felony charges related to property damage motivated by discrimination, one based on religion and the other on race. The charges stem from incidents in 2023 where Rizzello allegedly spray-painted a church and an Asian restaurant with graffiti (2).

The ADL Center on Extremism (COE) identified Rizzello as the perpetrator behind various white supremacist activities in the St. Louis metropolitan area. Through extensive monitoring of online platforms, COE uncovered Rizzello's identity as a white supremacist and the administrator of the Telegram channel "NS Hooligans." Rizzello used this channel to boast about and celebrate acts of white supremacist and antisemitic vandalism. He also posted violent rhetoric advocating for racially motivated violence, including threats against individuals and communities. Charging documents revealed that Rizzello allegedly armed himself with a rifle when confronted by law enforcement officers and had searched online for information regarding the penalty for killing a police officer.

[1] (Valero, 2024)

[2] (Center on Extremism, 2024)



Neo-Nazi Leader Arrested Again After Court Overturns Dismissal

On March 9, 2024, the violent neo-Nazi, initially granted freedom when a federal indictment against him was dismissed by a US district court judge in California, was swiftly rearrested less than 12 hours later by order of appellate judges (3).

Robert Rundo, known for his leadership in the now-defunct white nationalist group Rise Above Movement (RAM), faced charges related to his involvement in violent clashes with anti-fascist protesters in California in 2017. Despite arguments from his defense claiming self-defense, ample evidence suggested Rundo and RAM members engaged in premeditated violence and targeted attacks.

Anchorage Teacher Placed on Leave Following Viral Social Media Post

An Anchorage high school teacher was placed on administrative leave after a contentious social media post by the account Libs of TikTok, which accused the teacher of inappropriate attire and identified them as nonbinary (4). The post, shared widely and garnering nearly 10,000 shares, led to threats against the teacher and the school principal, prompting involvement from the Anchorage Police Department. Libs of TikTok, known for its far-right stance and targeting of LGBTQ+ individuals, has a substantial online presence and has previously been linked to incidents such as bomb threats and online harassment.

Dimond High School's principal addressed the situation in a message to families, denouncing the social media posts as malicious and harassing. The teacher, unnamed by the school district, was placed on administrative leave pending an investigation into the matter. Despite requests for further information, the school district refrained from providing additional details due to the sensitive nature of the personnel issue, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a safe and inclusive learning environment.

[3] (Winston, 2024)

[4] (Berman, 2024)

Image Credit: Shtuni / Tweeter

Reddit and YouTube Ordered to Face Lawsuits Over Alleged Support of White Supremacist

A judge in New York state has ordered Reddit and YouTube, a Google subsidiary, to face lawsuits accusing them of aiding a self-professed white supremacist who killed 10 black people in a 2022 grocery store shooting in Buffalo, New York (5). Judge Paula Feroletto of Erie County Supreme Court ruled that 25 plaintiffs could attempt to prove that the social media platforms were designed to create addiction and radicalize users, allegedly providing Payton Gendron with the knowledge and training for his racially motivated mass shooting at Tops Friendly Markets.

The plaintiffs include employees and customers who witnessed the May 14, 2022 shooting, as well as the son of one of the deceased. Gendron was 18 years old at the time. Reddit and YouTube argued for dismissal, claiming they merely hosted third-party content and were not liable under federal law regulating such content, Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, or under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. In response, Reddit stated that hate and violence have no place on its platform, and it continuously evaluates ways to remove such content. YouTube expressed disagreement with Feroletto's decision and intends to appeal, expressing condolences to the victims' families and highlighting its efforts to remove extremist behavior while cooperating with law enforcement.

White Supremacist Gang Member Escapes During Hospital Attack

A member of a white supremacist gang from an Idaho prison and an accomplice remained at large. After the accomplice staged a brazen attack overnight to free the inmate while he was being transported from a Boise hospital, said police. The suspected shooter was identified as Nicholas Umphenour, and a warrant was issued for his arrest on two counts of aggravated assault against authorities and one count of aiding an escape, said police.

The attack occurred at 2:15 a.m. when Idaho Department of Correction officers were preparing to take Meade back to prison from the hospital. Three correctional officers were shot, two allegedly by Umphenour and one by responding police, during the ambush in the ambulance bay of St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center. Meade, described as a 31-year-old member of a white supremacist gang, was serving a 20-year sentence for shooting a sheriff's sergeant during a high-speed pursuit in 2017 (6). The incident unfolded after Meade was taken to the hospital at 9:35 p.m. Tuesday due to self-harming behavior, and medical staff determined he needed emergency care.

[5] (Stempel, 2024)

[6] (Washington Hispanic, 2024)

CAIR Condemns White Supremacist Demonstration in New Hampshire

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) has strongly denounced a recent white supremacist demonstration held in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Alleged members of a neo-Nazi white supremacist organization were reported to have appeared wearing masks and brandishing flags in front of the North Church in Portsmouth on March 9. While police stated they did not engage with the group, CAIR emphasized that hate groups will not be allowed to intimidate communities in New Hampshire or anywhere else with their displays of bigotry.

CAIR's National Communications Manager, Ismail Allison, stated, "We condemn this hate demonstration and stand in solidarity with the people of Portsmouth and all those targeted by racist hate" (7). He further emphasized that CAIR and the American Muslim community are united in solidarity with all individuals combating antisemitism, systemic anti-Black racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, white supremacy, and all other forms of bigotry.

GERMANY

Italian Football Fan Arrested and Fined for Nazi Salute Before Bayern-Lazio Match

An Italian football fan, among approximately 100 Lazio supporters who sang fascist songs at the same beer hall where Adolf Hitler founded his party, was arrested and fined for making the Nazi salute. Michael Marienwald, a spokesperson for the Munich police, informed that the 18-year-old Italian received a four-digit fine after police were called to the Hofbräuhaus beer hall (8).

Marienwald stated that the police are seeking further action against other individuals after a large group of Lazio supporters was recorded at the beer hall chanting about the Blackshirts, the paramilitary wing of the Italian Fascist Party. In a video published by the newspaper La Repubblica, the fans ended the song by shouting "Duce! Duce! Duce!" in reference to the former Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, an ally of Hitler. The fans appeared to make a fascist salute.

[7] (Allison, 2024)

[8] (Associated Press, 2024)

Image Credits: (AP Foto/Matthias Schrader)

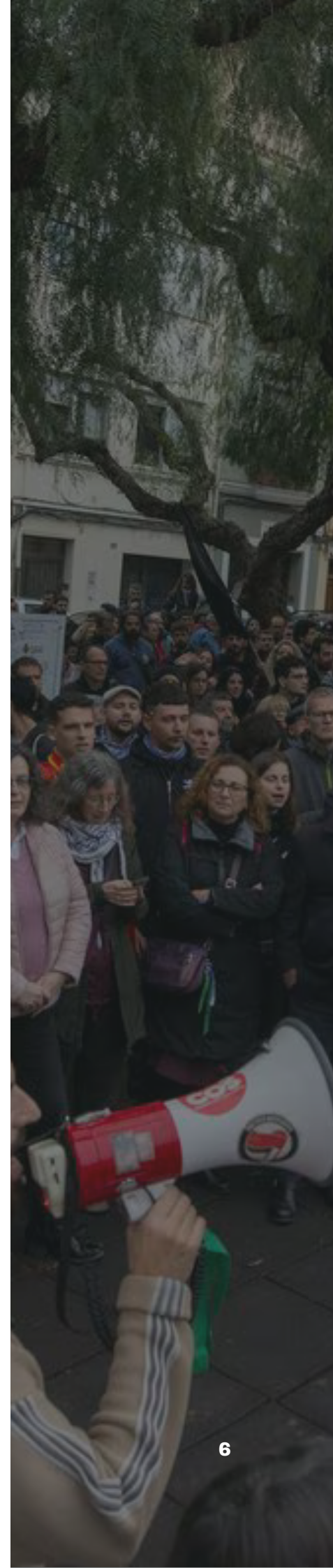
SPAIN

Judge Sends Three of Eight Arrested for Assault on Antifascist Center in Castellón to Prison

Following a group assault on an antifascist collective in Castellón during the Magdalena festivities, a judge has ordered three out of eight detained individuals to be imprisoned without bail while releasing the other five on provisional terms. The case, initially open for attempted homicide, injuries, public disorder, and hate crime, stemmed from an attack by about thirty individuals associated with the far right, resulting in severe injuries to a 32-year-old man. Despite calls to condemn the attack in a plenary session of Les Corts, Vox's refusal led to the rejection of an institutional declaration, while the collective denounced a surge in tension and hatred from the institutional sphere and accused the councilor for Security of Castelló of fueling the aggression (9).

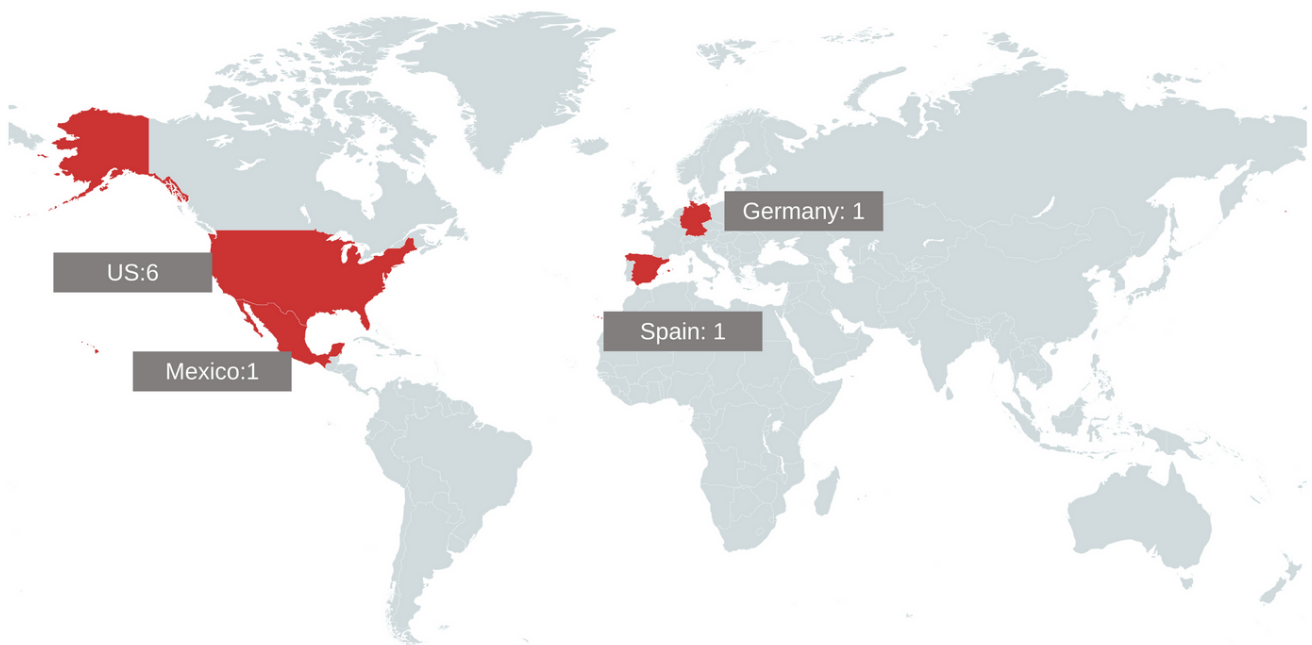
The incident, which occurred on March 2, involved the assailants wielding sticks and bars as they targeted the antifascist center during a series of concerts organized as part of the Magdalena Insurrecta celebrations. Eyewitnesses reported that the group assaulted a Vila-real resident, leaving him gravely injured and necessitating his admission to the ICU for three days. The release of the five suspects on provisional terms, coupled with the refusal to condemn the attack in the plenary session, has sparked further controversy, with the antifascist collective reiterating their commitment to resisting fascism and condemning what they perceive as a deliberate attempt to escalate tension and intimidate their community.

[9] (Pitarch, 2024)



Graphical Analysis of Far-Right Terrorism in March 2024

Countries affected by incidents linked to terrorism and right-wing extremist violence in March 2024



Source: Own elaboration

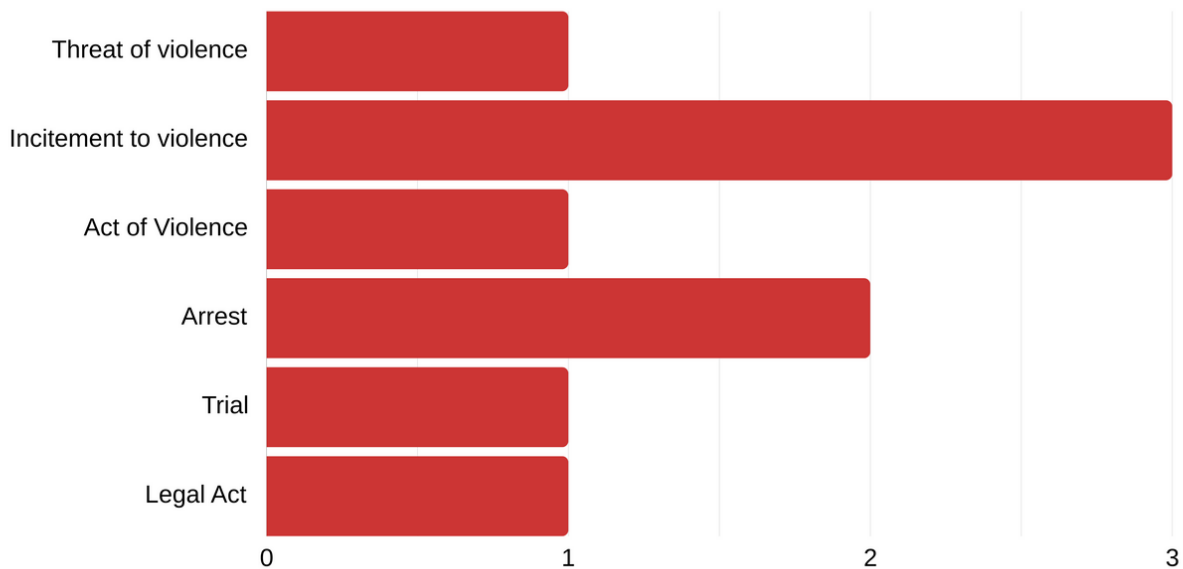
In March 2024, the global landscape of far-right terrorism witnessed a concerning context, marked by 9 attacks spanning four different countries. Among these incidents, a notable occurrence unfolded in the United States, spotlighting the nexus between online platforms and extremism. Reddit and YouTube were ordered to face lawsuits over alleged support of white supremacist ideologies, shedding light on the role of digital spaces in facilitating radicalization and dissemination of hate.

These developments underscore the persistent challenge posed by right-wing extremism, not only in the United States but also across various regions. The interconnected nature of modern communication platforms highlights the need for comprehensive strategies to counter extremist narratives and prevent the spread of violence. The correlation between such sentiments and the radicalization process emphasizes the importance of addressing underlying socio-political tensions and implementing effective online counter-narrative strategies.

In March 2024, there has been a notable increase in the incitement of violence compared to the other number of reported violent acts associated with extreme right-wing ideologies. One particularly intriguing legal case emerged. The Robert Undo legal case not only perplexed legal observers but also brought attention to the complexities of prosecuting violent far-right militants. This case underscores the significance of early intervention by law enforcement to thwart organized violence orchestrated by extremist groups. Rundo's rapid rearrest highlights the urgency with which authorities perceive his potential threat to public safety, considering his extensive history of evading arrest and ties to international neo-Nazi networks.

The prevalence of incitement to violence in online spaces has become particularly concerning. This trend emphasizes the critical importance of addressing the dissemination of extremist content online and implementing effective measures to counteract the spread of harmful rhetoric while balancing the principles of free speech and online privacy.

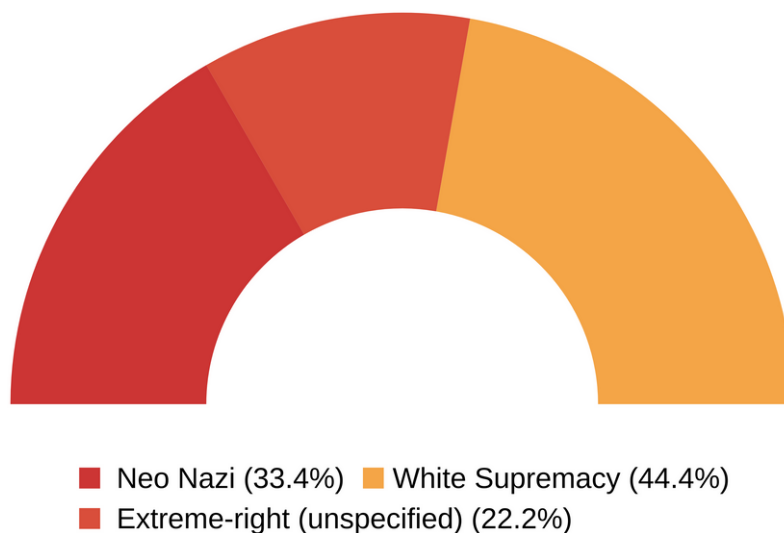
Type of violent incident linked to the extreme right in March 2024



Source: Own elaboration



Ideology of terrorism and right-wing extremist violence in March 2024



Source: Own elaboration



Throughout March 2024, there has been a notable decline in the proliferation of ideologies directly associated with acts of violence within the far-right extremist landscape. However, the focus continues to be on Neo-Nazi and white supremacy ideologies, indicating the persistence of extreme right-wing terrorism.

The continued prominence of these ideologies underscores the enduring nature of far-right extremism, with the movement still rooted in racial hatred and supremacist ideologies. Efforts to counter and prevent the spread of such extremist beliefs remain crucial in safeguarding communities from the harmful impact of violence and hatred propagated by far-right groups.

White Supremacist Propaganda Reaches Historic Levels in 2023

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) released its annual assessment revealing a surge in white supremacist propaganda distribution across the United States in 2023. With a total of 7,567 incidents, marking a 12% increase from the previous year, the ADL documented an average of about 20 incidents per day, the highest level since tracking began in 2017. Antisemitic propaganda saw a significant 30% increase, largely attributed to groups like Patriot Front incorporating antisemitic phrases. Additionally, anti-LGBTQ+ propaganda by white supremacists surged by 141%. While three groups—Patriot Front, National Justice Party (NJP), and Goyim Defense League (GDL)—were responsible for 92% of the activity, propaganda was reported in every U.S. state except Hawaii and Alaska (10).

The escalation in hate rhetoric coincided with events such as the Hamas attack on Israel, which white supremacist groups exploited to advance their agenda. Despite concerns about rising hate activity, law enforcement balances monitoring with respect for First Amendment rights. ADL-New England interim director Rabbi Ron Fish highlighted the connection between rising anti-immigrant bias and the vulnerability of targeted communities to hate speech.





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