

Expert: German neo-Nazi threat growing

by UPI

BERLIN -- The threat of illicit neo-Nazi activity in Germany is increasing despite the financial struggles of the National Democratic Party, an expert says.

Der Spiegel said the political party that has been tabbed an extremist political group by Germany's domestic intelligence agency is mired in financial difficulties as a result of large fines imposed against it due to accounting irregularities.

Despite those financial issues, neo-Nazi followers are increasing in strength throughout Germany, said Hajo Funke, a professor at Berlin's Free University.

"The neo-Nazi scene, both inside and outside the NPD, is becoming stronger, not as a nationwide electoral force but in its influence on racist attitudes and violence," the analyst said. "There are places I wouldn't advise anyone who looks foreign to go without protection."

Funke's claim appears to be supported by a recent government-commissioned survey that found that 14.4 percent of more than 20,000 teenagers surveyed have highly xenophobic attitudes, Der Spiegel said.

An additional 26.2 percent of the 15-year-old respondents in the survey, whose margin of error was not reported, were found to have fairly xenophobic attitudes.

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