

Far right activists target campuses...

Who are Generation Identity?

UCU
University and College Union



A factsheet produced by Stand Up To Racism and the University and College Union

This report has been written by activists from the University College Union (UCU)

Generation Identity (GI) are a small, but well-organised group of far-right activists in the UK and Ireland who are part of a network with branches across Europe.

They emerged from the French Nouvelle Droite (New Right) in the early 2000s and are led by Martin Sellner, an Austrian activist.

Sellner's group shot to prominence for organising attacks on refugees, including rushing the stage during a play performed by refugee actors at the University of Vienna in 2016 and throwing fake blood over the performers.

They also raised over £150,000 to charter a ship to harass NGOs patrolling the Mediterranean, rescuing migrants and refugees in peril.

Sellner himself has been accused of having links with Brenton Tarrant, the neo-Nazi terrorist who



GI are keen to rebrand the far right

massacred 50 people at a mosque in New Zealand.

GI are well-connected with the US alt-right. For example, Sellner's partner, Brittany Pettibone, is an US alt-right vlogger and conspiracy theorist.

Although GI in the UK and Ireland have a tiny number of supporters – their first 'national' demonstration in 2018 attracted

only 40 people – they have become increasingly active on university campuses.

At least 24 universities around the UK have seen some form of GI activity, ranging from stickering to elaborate 'stunts' such as pouring red dye in a fountain in Bristol and blaring out the infamous 'Rivers of Blood' speech by racist Tory MP Enoch Powell.

What do GI stand for?

GI claim to be 'non-violent' and their slick media campaigns are designed to differentiate them from the traditional image of Nazi street thugs.

In reality, they want to create mass support for ideas which can only be implemented through huge increases in state racism and violence against migrants and refugees.

According to GI's theorists the 'European ethnocultural identity' is under threat from migration and the emergence of a multicultural society. This is code for white supremacy.

GI activists spout Islamophobic conspiracy theories about a 'great replacement' of what they imagine to be white, Christian Europeans by Muslims. They want to see the living conditions and democratic rights for Europe's non-white communities degraded to the extent that people will "voluntarily" leave. For those that refuse, there is then the final option of forced "repatriation".

Unsurprisingly, GI have been building links with British fascist groups and individuals, including Tommy Robinson, and were exposed in 2018 as having recruited a member of the banned Nazi terror group National Action.

What do they do?

GI have taken part in far right marches across Europe. On campus, their activities have ranged from 'stunts' to banner drops, poster, stickering (with racist slogans) to holding 'study group' sessions and social media campaigns.

Their activists target student union and trade union leaders for abuse. In December 2018 GI activists stood in hazmat suits outside the University of Manchester next to barrels of "toxic waste" haranguing passers-by about "ethnomasochism" after SU diversity officer Riddi Visu spoke out against the group's Islamophobic posters on campus.

Riddi was also abused by GI supporters on Facebook. In March 2019 UCU vice-president Nita Sanghera, who has spoken on many



A GI torchlit march in Vienna

university campuses as part of a tour organised by Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) and UCU, was abused on Twitter by GI supporters.

What can we do?

Our campuses and colleges should be free from any racism. Staff and students should be able to learn and live without fear from verbal or physical abuse of any kind.

The volume of racist harassment and incidents on British campuses has had a huge impact on BAME students. It prompted the Equality and Human Rights Commission to launch an inquiry late last year.

The rise of institutional racism in society has given confidence to racists and the far right to target campuses and colleges to try to recruit young people to their violent and poisonous ideas.

But GI are not the only group responsible for a rise in racism on campus. Abusive stunts have taken place at 'white T-shirt socials' organised by some student societies, where participants wrote Islamophobic, misogynistic and antisemitic comments, including Holocaust denial.

To combat the rise of groups like GI, we need to unite students and staff in anti-racist campaigns.

This can begin with small initiatives, such as petitions, taking a selfie with a group message such as, "No Nazis on our campus", using social media, or doing a campus solidarity walkabout taking down posters or stickers in a group, are a good place to start.

For example, when far right activists formed a campus-based 'Traditionalist Society' at Lancaster University, the UCU branch was able to organise a brilliant campaign by uniting staff and students, using petitions, protests and meetings on campus.


Similar successful campaigns have taken place at Exeter, Newcastle, Dundee, Bristol and many other places. We have to drive back these racist and far right ideas by organising collectively in universities and colleges. We need to bring together the largest numbers of staff and students to oppose these poisonous and divisive ideas.

The campus tour organised by SUTR and UCU last year saw hundreds attend workshops and debates with faith groups, MPs and community organisations.


It was an important opportunity to discuss how we can best unite our forces against those who seek to divide us. We have to continue this work, and allow no place for these dangerous ideas to spread.

Can you set up a Stand Up To Racism group where you are?


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