

OppAttune Winter Academy

Being Political in Divisive Times

26 – 28th November 2025,
Auditorium of Colégio da Trindade,
House of Jurisprudence and Legal Institute
(Faculty of Law),
University of Coimbra.

Thursday, 25 September 2025

Dear colleagues in supporting democracy ...

... and working to reduce anti-democratic and “everyday extremist” tendencies

Invitation to Being Political in Divisive Times OppAttune Winter Academy

I am writing to engage your interest in attending the OppAttune Winter Academy. This two and a half-day event hosted by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies (CEIS20) of the University of Coimbra (Portugal) will bring together a range of specialists including CSO, NGO practitioners, policymakers, journalist and civil servants, engaged in multi-level governance of the extremism. The core challenge driving this academy is to support citizens in how to be political in divisive times.

Across Europe citizens are facing a challenge of having more direct access to means of political expression via social media platforms. Equally political actors use hybrid online/offline mechanisms to mobilise citizens across borders into polarised oppositional worldviews.

The academy is structured to tackle rising **everyday extremism** (defined below on page 2), as well as populism and polarisation. It seeks to build citizen’s democratic capacity.

Specify, to operate within oppositional political environments, in particular the ability to detect and reject extreme narratives without resorting to hostile actions towards others or equally resolving oppositional challenges through building a political consensus. OppAttune arose from the conviction that oppositional thinking and actions are vital to healthy democratic resilience. Our aim is to contribute to evidence based policymaking to limit the spread of these narratives and their normalisation into politics. OppAttune has contributed findings to the consultation phase of the European Democracy Shield initiative, and we will discuss this at the academy.

The academy opens with keynote speakers and showcases of OppAttune methods, tools and interactives for gauging and limiting **everyday extremism**. We would welcome a dialogue on how OppAttune, its tools and its approach can be developed further with your expertise.

The academy is restricted to 50 attendees from across Europe to ensure a productive dialogue and sustainable actions in local, national, and transitional context.

Our invitation to you relates specifically to your recent **activities in Germany’s democracy programs**, in relation to various addressees, as young people, adults and policy makers.

This is a non-profit event. Please kindly note we cannot cover expenses for travel to this academy; however, we have ensured that the academy will be free and have covered all registration fees for attendees. All attendees will be able to speak at the event, and their participation and logos will be listed in the programme and all communications before and after the event.

Please let us know whether you can attend by: **27th October 2025**

Dr. **Harald Weinböck**, Cultures Interactive e.V.

What is Everyday Extremism?

Everyday Extremism is when hostile political views are expressed or in acted with the desire to limit the democratic rights of others in both online and offline spaces. These extreme narratives and behaviours become a part of a person's everyday understanding of a particular issue, typically polarising ones e.g. immigration, free speech, climate crisis, sovereignty, etc. Within OppAttune we have revelled how these actions Are underpinned by oppositional worldviews, which sometimes suggests incompatible cultures.

Everyday Extremism is often shared in online spaces as common sense thinking in the form of entertainment (e.g. humorous memes, popular hashtags, etc.) to disguise the extremist subtext. As such, the content may appear as low intensity expressions of extreme thinking (e.g. subtle dehumanising language against political opponents, conspiracy theories, disinformation) which routinely diffuses into mainstream discourse.

OppAttune researchers, across 15 countries, found that **Everyday Extremism** collectively contribute to the erosion of trust and reduces democratic resilience.

For further information on the organisation of the academy, please contact Alex Pekalski (ap4448@open.ac.uk)

If you would like to know more about being political in divisive times, see: [Being political in divisive times](#) | [BPS](#) and [OppAttune](#) | [Countering Oppositional Political Extremism](#) | [Open University](#)