

deutschland-kurier.org

A conservative, pro-AfD, anti-immigration website covering German and international politics. The site has published misleading claims and does not run corrections.



Proceed with caution: This website fails to meet several basic standards of credibility and transparency.

Score: 57/100

Ownership and Financing

The website is owned by Conservare Communication GmbH, a Hamburg-based consulting company. The company's CEO and sole shareholder is David Bendels, who is also Deutschland Kurier's editor-in-chief.

Until late 2018, the site was owned by the Association for the Preservation of the Rule of Law and Civil Liberties (Verein zur Erhaltung der Rechtsstaatlichkeit und bürgerlichen Freiheiten), a political nonprofit founded and chaired by Bendels that supports candidates from far-right party Alternative for Germany (AfD).

Bendels was a politician with Germany's Christian Social Union (CSU) until 2016, when he left the CSU after the party barred him from speaking at an AfD event. Bendels subsequently addressed AfD campaign events in 2016 and 2017.

The site does not run advertisements. Bendels told Die Zeit in May 2017 that the paper was funded through donations from "14,000 supporters."

- ✓ **Does not repeatedly publish false content (22 points)**
- ✗ **Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)**
- ✗ **Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)**
- ✓ **Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)**
- ✓ **Avoids deceptive headlines (10)**
- ✗ **Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)**
- ✓ **Clearly labels advertising (7.5)**
- ✓ **Reveals who's in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)**
- ✗ **The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information (5)**

Content

Deutschland Kurier describes itself as "Conservative. Libertarian. Independent." ("Konservativ. Freiheitlich. Unabhängig.") On the About Us page, the site states that it reports on "topics that are normally hushed up or only marginally discussed" by mainstream media. "Our experienced editors no longer accept the left-wing slide of the media landscape and the dictates of political correctness," the site states.

Deutschland-Kurier.org covers German and international politics and business, including the European Union, immigration, and national security. Its

Criteria are listed in order of importance.

[More information.](#)

political coverage focuses on the AfD and consistently supports AfD policies, often citing party leaders.

In a dedicated section titled Media Criticism, the site extensively covers and critiques left-wing and establishment media organizations. The site publishes several regular columns, including three written by prominent AfD politicians Petr Bystron, Maximilian Krah, and Nicolaus Fest.

Typical articles have run under headlines including "AfD party maintains leadership duo: Weidel and Gauland re-elected as group chairmen with large majority" ("AfD-Fraktion hält an Führungsduo fest: Weidel und Gauland mit großer Mehrheit als Fraktionsvorsitzende wiedergewählt"); "Who is actually behind the organized climate marches?: The child soldiers of Soros & Co." ("Wer steckt eigentlich hinter den generalstabsmäßig durchorganisierten Klima-Aufmärschen?: Die Kindersoldaten von Soros & Co."); and "'Something's brewing': Sebastian Kurz warns of a new wave of refugees" ("Da braut sich was zusammen': Sebastian Kurz warnt vor neuer Flüchtlingswelle").

Credibility

Articles on Deutschland-Kurier.org sometimes feature firsthand interviews, often with AfD politicians. Articles primarily rely on content from other news sites, including reputable outlets such as Welt and FAZ. However, the site at times publishes articles based on coverage from sites that NewsGuard has found to publish false content, such as the German edition of Epoch Times and JournalistenWatch. The site itself has published unsubstantiated and false claims about refugees, climate change, and the Wuhan coronavirus outbreak in 2020.

For example, a February 2020 article titled "Secret report by the German government warns: Migrants can cause corona[virus] epidemic in Germany!" ("Geheimerbericht der Bundesregierung warnt: Migranten können Corona-Epidemie in Deutschland auslösen!"), claimed that a "secret report from the Federal Ministry of Health ... warns of a coronavirus epidemic by African

migrants." The article claimed that African migrants were bringing the coronavirus to Germany, stating, "Migrants 'rescued' in the Mediterranean bring the disease en masse to Germany, where the virus then spreads rapidly in their shelters - a scenario of apocalyptic proportions!" The article cited an unnamed government official as the source for its claims.

In fact, at the time that this article was published, no cases of coronavirus had been confirmed in Africa, let alone any credible reports about African immigrants bringing the virus to Germany, according to the investigative nonprofit newsroom Correctiv. A spokesperson for the Federal Ministry of Health told Correctiv that "such press coverage is fictitious and without any factual basis."

In July 2019, the site published "Turkey reportedly revokes EU 'refugee agreement' - Slovenia sends soldiers to the border: will the horror summer of 2015 return?" ("Türkei kündigt angeblich EU-'Flüchtlingsabkommen' auf – Slowenien schickt Soldaten an die Grenze: Kehrt der Horror-Sommer 2015 zurück?"). The article claimed that Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Cavusoglu had said in an interview that Turkey had terminated a 2016 refugee agreement between the EU and Turkey that aimed to decrease the numbers of asylum seekers in the EU.

Investigative newsroom Correctiv examined the claim about Cavusoglu and found it to be false.

According to a full transcript of Cavusoglu's speech published by Correctiv and reviewed by NewsGuard, Cavusoglu in fact referred to the suspension of a different agreement — a readmission agreement that originated prior to the EU-Turkey refugee agreement. Cavusoglu did not make any statements about the refugee agreement, and the European Commission and Federal Foreign Office confirmed to Correctiv that the agreement had not been revoked by Turkey.

A June 2019 article, titled "Fact check: The big business of climate hysteria" ("Faktencheck: Das große Geschäft mit der Klima-Hysterie") falsely claimed that carbon dioxide levels were not rising and not contributing to rising temperatures or climate change. "The CO₂ problem has about as much to do with so-called climate change as the birth rate has to do with the stork," the article stated, adding, "The greenhouse theses regarding CO₂ have long been disproved."

In fact, multiple scientific studies and government agencies have concluded that carbon dioxide levels are rising, in part due to activities by humans. A 2019 U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration study found that "Carbon dioxide levels today are higher than at any point in at least the past 800,000 years," and that those levels are "responsible for about two-thirds of the total energy imbalance that is causing Earth's temperature to rise."

Because Deutschland-Kurier.org has published multiple inaccurate, misleading, or unsourced claims, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not gather and present information responsibly.

Because NewsGuard did not find that the site publishes false information on a regular, ongoing basis, NewsGuard has determined that the site meets its standard for not repeatedly publishing false information.

Deutschland-Kurier.org provides dedicated sections for opinionated content and discloses its conservative orientation. Therefore, NewsGuard has determined that the site handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

Deutschland-Kurier.org does not articulate a corrections policy, and NewsGuard did not find corrections on the site.

The site did not respond to two NewsGuard emails and a phone message inquiring about the articles cited above, its reporting standards, and the lack of corrections.

Transparency

The Imprint (Impressum) page discloses the site's ownership by Conservare Communication GmbH. The Editorial Office (Redaktion) page names David Bendels as the site's owner and editor-in-chief.

However, Deutschland-Kurier.org does not disclose that Bendels serves as the chairman of the Association for the Preservation of the Rule of Law and Civil Liberties, the political nonprofit that initially published Deutschland Kurrier and advocates for AfD candidates and policies. The site also does not disclose its sources of funding. These factors have led NewsGuard to determine that Deutschland-Kurier.org does not meet the standard for disclosing the site's ownership or financing, including positions held by its principals that might pose a conflict of interest.

The site does not run advertisements.

Articles typically do not name the writer and sometimes only provide the author's initials. The site provides biographical information for its columnists, but no contact or biographical information is offered for most authors — which does not meet NewsGuard's standard for providing information about content creators.

Deutschland-Kurier did not respond to two NewsGuard emails and a phone message inquiring about the site's insufficient ownership disclosure and the lack of disclosure about content creators.

History

Deutschland Kurrier was founded in July 2017. Until January 2019, it also had a print edition.

Media reports have frequently speculated about Deutschland Kurrier's connection to the AfD, often suggesting either that the site is funded by the AfD or that the site is helping to fund the party. The site denies that it has a financial relationship with the party.

In 2018, Correctiv investigated the distribution of the free paper in Essen and Duisburg and concluded that "[AfD] party members, in consultation with party

officials" distributed the paper, and that this meant "the distribution would then be a party donation and the AfD would have to identify the donors." The AfD responded that if, in fact, AfD members had distributed the newspapers, "this was done privately and without any involvement on the part of AfD."

Amid speculation about how the site was being financed after it said it severed ties with the nonprofit, news outlets WDR, NDR, Süddeutsche Zeitung, and Tagesschau published claims in November 2018 that "a close confidant" of Munich billionaire August von Finck, or von Fink himself, may be funding the paper. Deutschland Kurier editor-in-chief Bendels told Tagesschau that these allegations were "outrageous speculations" and declined further comment.

Editor's Note: This Nutrition Label was updated on March 4, 2020.

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Send feedback to NewsGuard: [Click Here](#)

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