

Call for Applications

Trinational Study Trip to Thuringia for Journalism Students

Memory, History, and the Far Right in Germany

The year 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the liberation of Europe by Soviet and American troops, and the revelation of Nazi atrocities to the world. As we reach this milestone, we find ourselves at a crossroads: the voices of Holocaust survivors are fading, while populism and far-right extremism gain traction across Europe. How should we commemorate this history in a pluralistic society? Which moments and figures have we chosen to remember? And how can we effectively combat historical misinformation?

To explore these critical questions, the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Paris is organizing a **study trip from July 7 to July 12, 2025** to Thuringia. Once a stronghold of National Socialism from 1924 to 1945, Thuringia later became a border region of the GDR (German Democratic Republic) before experiencing massive deindustrialization and integration into the FRG (Federal Republic of Germany). Today, it stands as a microcosm of Germany's historical and political divides, with progressive-leaning cities contrasting sharply against rural areas where far-right sentiment is strong. In the 2024 state elections, the far-right AfD secured 32.8% of the vote, a figure that grew to 38.6% in the 2025 federal elections—almost double the national average of 20.8%.

Under Germany's federal system, the preservation of historical memory largely falls to the Länder. This raises urgent questions: How can National Socialist heritage and educational programs be safeguarded in an increasingly polarized landscape? How does the region's history—from the Weimar Republic to Buchenwald, from the GDR to the NSU 2.0—shape today's memory culture and what challenges arise in preserving historical truth amidst the resurgence of the far right in Germany?

Who Can Apply?

This study trip is open to **(student) journalists from Italy, France, and Germany** who are keen to engage with issues of historical memory, right-wing extremism, and the role of journalism in countering misinformation. We welcome applications from prospective journalists from universities and journalism schools of those three countries.

Format

A week-long study trip from **July 7 to July 12, 2025, taking place in Erfurt (July 7–9) and Weimar (July 9–12)**. The program includes discussions with experts and local activists, as well as visits to significant historical and cultural sites, such as museums and memorial sites—including the Buchenwald Concentration Camp.

Participants

Nine selected journalists from Italy, France, and Germany (three from each country)

Costs

All costs related to the study-trip (including transportation, hotels, meals and visits) will be covered by the Paris office of the Heinrich Böll Stiftung.

Objective and output

The study trip aims to provide participants with a **deeper understanding of the far-right movement** in Germany, both past and present, with a particular focus on the **Thuringia region**. Additionally, it will explore Germany's **culture of remembrance** and its role in addressing historical and contemporary challenges.

By the end of the program, participants will translate their insights into a creative output, producing either an **article, podcast, or photo/collage report** reflecting on the key themes explored during the trip.

How to Apply

Interested candidates should submit their application to info@fr.boell.org with the subject line SURNAME Thuringia with the following documents:

- A CV (max. 2 pages without photo)
- A brief cover letter explaining your motivation and relevant experience (max. 500 words)

Deadline for applications: May 1st

For any questions and to submit your application, please contact: info@fr.boell.org

Join us in Thuringia to investigate the past, understand the present, and shape the future of historical memory in Europe!