

German Cyber Policy

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What drives German cyber policy?

1. Liberal Logic to strengthen cyber security by improving international cooperation,
2. Realist Logic to strengthen cyber security by gathering power and mastering the domain



Background/Historical Information

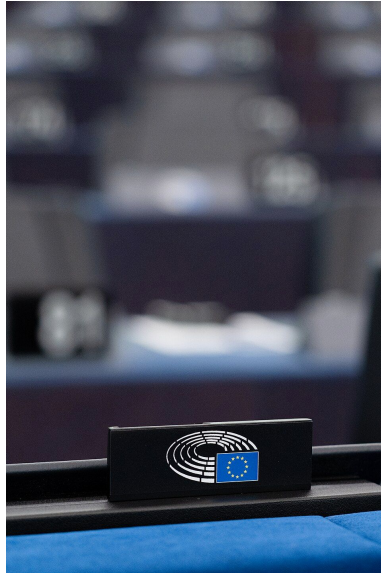
- The 1990's and the rise of the internet saw the first German interest in protecting its digital domain,
- 2005 was the first concrete action taken with the 'National Information Infrastructure Protection Plan'
- 2006, German Police are given expanded digital search powers,
- 2007, First military expedition into Cyberspace in order to protect its systems,
- 2012, Germany begins to lead an international push for EU and worldwide infrastructure protections,
- 2013, Edward Snowden shows the NSA has been spying on Germany, in response Germany moves to decouple its infrastructure from the US,
- 2014, It is revealed that the BND was working with the NSA,
- 2015, First reports of the use of exploits by German cyber forces,
- 2015 'IT Security Act' strengthened these protections,
- 2017, German Cyber and Information Domain Service first stood up,
- 2018, The Agency for Innovation in Cyber Security is created,
- 2024, CIDS becomes its own branch of the armed forces,
- 2024, NIS 2 implemented into German law.



Liberal Logic

What's behind this logic:

- German view of self,
- German integration with international systems,
- Organised by the Ministry of the Interior and Foreign Office,



Implications and Effects:

- Germany has been at the forefront of cyber regulations,
- Germany initially promised not to perform cyber attacks, calling for a 'culture of restraint,'
- Germany would have no offensive cyber capabilities.

Realist Logic

What's behind this logic:

- Terrorist Attacks, 9/11, Madrid 2004 and London 2005,
- Warfare has moved online but its effects can be physical,
- Organised by the Ministry of Defence,



Implications and Effects:

- Previously collaboration with foreign intelligence and military units,
- German 'Technical Sovereignty,'
- Germany has started to engage with cyber warfare,
- Why has Germany given up so much power to TNC's?



Can the two logics reconcile?

- So long as different government agencies control different part of cyber policy, it seems unlikely that the tension will fade.
- Reconciliation may not be necessary however, the realistic logic seems to dominate since 2014,
- This is only going to become more obvious as German militarism reappears.



Conclusion

- German cyber policy has varied over time. The early years saw a typically German liberal approach.
- However, this liberal logic was superseded in the early 2010's by a realist logic.
- This logic is getting more and more entrenched as militarism rises again.
- This logic far from complete, the dominance of TNCs shows that states have lost some level of control over Cyberspace.



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