

TOMIO OKAMURA

IMPACT: Tomio Okamura is a far-right Czech politician who founded the anti-elitist and anti-Muslim party, Freedom and Direct Democracy (Svoboda a přímá demokracie, SPD). He has made comments that promote anti-Muslim tropes and demonize Muslims and actively advocates for the Czech Republic to exit from the European Union. Following the 2024 European Parliament elections, Okamura joined the right-wing group, Europe of Sovereign Nations, which includes several political parties that support discriminatory policies targeting Muslims.

- Tomio Okamura was born in 1972 in Tokyo, Japan to a Japanese father and a Czech mother. He spent his childhood between the former Czechoslovakia and Japan. **Okamura has stated to have experienced racism and xenophobia his entire life, whether in Bohemia or his native Japan. He says people laughed at him in Japan, pointed at him on the street, and cursed him for being a “gaijin” (a non-Japanese).**
- **Okamura is a businessman.** He manages the travel agency Miki Travel and co-owns a wholesaler of Japanese foods, Japa. He acted as an investor in a reality TV show called “Dragons’ Den”, a show for entrepreneurs to pitch their ideas to a panel of judges. Since 2004, he has been working in the Association of Czech Travel Agencies and Agencies (AČCKA), where he holds the position of vice president.
- Okamura has authored several books, “Tomio Okamura – Český sen (“Tomio Okamura – The Czech Dream”)” in 2010, “Umění vládnout (“The Art of Governance”)” in 2012, and “Umění přímé demokracie (“The Art of Direct Democracy”)” in 2013.
- On **October 20, 2012, Okamura won a seat in the Czech Senate running for the first time as an independent.** Immediately following his election, Okamura announced his intention to stand in the 2013 presidential election but was unable to as he failed to collect the required number of signatures. **In 2013, he founded Dawn of Democracy, a party that promotes populism, anti-Muslim and anti-European Union policy that declined by 2015 and was finally dissolved in 2018.**
- He was elected to Parliament in 2013 along with other members of the Dawn party for a total of 14 seats and 6% of votes. **In 2012, Okamura used a slur when speaking about the Roma people.** He stated: “We write of the Workers’ Party that it is extremist, but what is it really? How is the opinion extreme that the Gypsies should establish their own state and the Czech Republic should support their emigration to the country of their ancestors?” In June 2013, Okamura called for all Roma to be deported from Czechia.
- In **2015, he founded the Freedom and Direct Democracy (Svoboda a přímá demokracie, SPD) party, which secured a total of 22 seats and 10% of votes. Okamura was reelected to Parliament in 2017 and again in 2021, securing 22 seats with 10% of votes and 20 seats with 9% of votes, respectively.**
- The **SPD party’s political platform supports a referendum for the Czech Republic to withdraw from the European Union. According to SPD, the EU is a “project of current European integration,” which includes “the controlled Islamization of Europe,” which it describes as “ongoing illegal immigration” and “the initial phase of the conflict” that “will ultimately threaten freedom, democracy and the very existence of the Czech Republic and our nation.” SPD’s platform also states: “We consistently reject the multicultural ideology that is the tool of Islamization.”**
- In **January 2015, Okamura marched in an anti-Islam protest in Prague’s Old Town Square. The protest was organized by the group “We Do Not Want Islam in the Czech Republic.” In October 2017, Okamura posted a video titled “Islam as Hitler’s Nazism” (“Islám jako hitlerovský nacismus”) on his website. In 2024, Okamura was fined for referring to a fellow deputy in parliament as a “modern-day Hitler.”**

- Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Okamura opposed the welcoming of Ukrainian refugees. In December 2022, Okamura claimed that "the widespread aid to Ukrainians by the current government is disproportionate to the aid to our socially vulnerable citizens." In 2024, he claimed that most crimes in the country were perpetrated by Ukrainians.
- **Okamura's YouTube channel was banned on July 24, 2020, by YouTube for posting content highlighting gross violence from migrants in Europe** which was against the terms of service that ban videos with violent or cruel images. According to a July 2020 piece in Expats CZ, **Okamura claimed that "YouTube had censored him since he disagreed with illegal migration, Islamisation and EU policies, and since he warned of what he perceived as dangers that these topics were bringing to the Czech Republic."** In 2022, "Okamura's appeal to the Supreme Court failed against the High Court verdict ordering him to apologize for the remark calling news server HlídacíPes.org fraudulent and a 'media cesspool.'" He published his apology to the Institute for Independent Journalism (Ústav nezávislé žurnalistiky), which runs the news server HlídacíPes.org, on his Facebook profile.
- **Okamura has been under the surveillance of the Department of Security Policy at the Czech Republic's Interior Ministry.** A report from 2012 mentioned Okamura, connecting him to the right-wing extremist group, Worker's Social Justice Party. The report stated that "Support for some of the publicly active persons criticizing the 'establishment' was reflected by the leadership of the Workers' Social Justice Party (Dělnická strana sociální spravedlnosti - DSSS), a party known for far-right extremism, who offered both Daniel Landa and Tomio Okamura their party's informal support. After [DSSS chair] T. Vandas withdrew his candidacy for the presidency, the offer of their support was made to Okamura."
- The Department of Security Policy's 2015 annual report also said: "Among the entities that are populist, anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim, there were also attempts to create coalitions or partnerships. The abovementioned BPI (Bloc against Islam) communicated with the Úsvit (Dawn) party, the ND (Národní demokracie - National Democracy) and then with Tomio Okamura, a member of the lower house" to highlight the rise of Okamura's affiliations with anti-Muslim and far-right extremist movements.
- In the **Department of Security Policy's annual report for the third quarter of 2016, the analysts at the ministry state that "a big part of the Islamophobic public has started preferring the Freedom and Direct Democracy party (established by Okamura in 2015)."**
- In 2020, the Department of Security Policy reported, "The chair of the SPD movement has also presented the opinion that the pandemic (the coronavirus) is being abused in western countries to introduce the euthanasia of senior citizens. The aim is meant to be, according to Okamura, their destruction as advocates of traditional values so they can be replaced by aggressive immigrant populations."
- In **2023 the Interior Ministry reported, "Most of the xenophobic groups which were formed in reaction to the migration crisis of 2014-2015 have already lost their importance or no longer exist. The only constant on that scene remains the Freedom and Direct Democracy movement.** In the period under review, it drew attention for its contacts with representatives of the Alternative für Deutschland movement, or rather with its youth organization, Junge Alternative. Germany's Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution has called that party a 'suspicious case' about right-wing extremism and has directly called its youth organization a right-wing extremist group."
- In the **European Parliament, Okamura's party SPD was part of the far-right and anti-Muslim group, Identity and Democracy (I&D), which existed from 2019 to 2024 and was the fourth-largest group in the European Parliament.** The group represented thirteen far-right parties with strong anti-Muslim agendas, including the Freedom Party of Austria, France's National Rally, Belgium's Vlaams Belang, and Italy's Lega.

- **Following the European Parliamentary elections in July 2024, Okamura's party became a member party of Europe of Sovereign Nations, which is also home to several other far-right political parties** including the [Alternative for Germany](#), the French Reconquest, the Hungarian Our Homeland Movement, the Polish New Hope, the Dutch Forum for Democracy, and the Slovak Republic Movement.
- **Okamura has made several comments on social media that promote anti-Muslim tropes and demonize Muslims.** In April 2021, Okamura made a [Facebook post](#) claiming the following, "According to the SPD movement, it is immigrants who have an obligation to adapt and assimilate, not the original inhabitants! Furthermore, this matter demonstrates the hateful nature of Islam. **We don't want our country to end up like the Islamized West, where Muslims dictate themselves and immigrants commit crime and terrorist attacks.**"
- In early **December 2024, Okamura posted on Facebook:** "The SPD movement clearly rejects immigration from African and Muslim countries, because the people in these countries have values incompatible with our values of civil freedom and democracy." In December 2024, he also posted on X: "Muslim and African immigrants in Europe are a ticking time bomb. The SPD advocates the deportation of illegal immigrants from Europe."
- **Following the 2024 fall of the Assad regime that ruled Syria, Okamura posted in early December 2024 on X:** "The time has come for the Syrian 'refugees' to return home from Europe. We have seen footage of Syrians in Western Europe celebrating the fall of Bashar al-Assad's secular regime and the victory of Islamic jihadists. **If they like the new rulers of Syria so much, they should not delay and should return home to Syria as soon as possible.** According to the German newspaper Bild, the lawyers also point out that the "refugees" no longer have the right to the additional protection on the basis of which they reside in Germany. In my opinion, they are not really refugees, but economic migrants. The real refugees are in Jordan and Turkey - close to their country and they want to go back. Thousands and thousands of kilometers are not traveled by someone who wants to save his life, but someone who wants to feel better. And this is the case of Syrians, who in the overwhelming majority reached Europe illegally. The SPD supports the deportation of illegal Muslim immigrants."