

RAXEN BULLETIN II
Germany

1. UPDATE ON POLICIES, INITIATIVES AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE

Debate On New Mosque in Cologne

At the end of May, within an official hearing, citizens and local politicians intensively discussed plans for the construction of a sizeable mosque in the city district of Ehrenfeld in Cologne. The Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB) currently operates a mosque on the site of a former factory in Ehrenfeld. The DITIB is planning to replace the old building by a fully fledged mosque with two minarets, as well as a cultural centre for the community. 2,000 Muslims would be able to pray in the new mosque. In the city council, most political parties voted in favour of the project. In mid-June, the radical right-wing citizens' movement and local political party Pro-Cologne (Pro Köln), which has long been fighting against the mosque, organised an anti-mosque demonstration – counteracted by pro-mosque supporters. The new mosque was controversially debated in German newspapers when the Jewish writer and Holocaust survivor Ralph Giordano sharply criticized the plans and declared the integration of Muslims in Germany to have failed.

http://www.stadtrevue.de/index_artikel.php3?tid=1335&bid=3&c=3&s=1 (05.07.2007)

<http://www.ksta.de/html/artikel/1176113436263.shtml> (05.07.2007)

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,489257,00.html> (05.07.2007)

New Integration Concept for Berlin

The Berlin state parliament passed a comprehensive integration concept in June 2007. The concept “Encouraging Diversity – Strengthening Cohesion” represents the new basis for the integration policies in Berlin until 2011. The general focus of the concept is on promoting equal opportunities and cultural diversity. The struggle against discrimination and right-wing extremist, racist and anti-Semitic developments constitutes one element. The two most significant activities of the Berlin Senate in this realm are:

(1) the instalment and activities of the new anti-discrimination body and

(2) the further development of the Berlin State programme against right-wing extremism, racism and anti-Semitism.

<http://www.berlin.de/lb/intmig/integrationskonzept.html> (03.07.2007)

Online Programme on Muslim Living Launched

On June 6, the Second German Television Channel (ZDF) broadcast the weekly online programme “Forum on Friday” for the first time. The new programme aims at reflecting the diverse aspects of Muslims living in Germany, imparting knowledge and initiating dialogue and discussion.

<http://forumamfreitag.zdf.de/ZDFde/inhalt/25/0,1872,5555481,00.html> (06.07.2007)

2. UPDATE ON LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS AND AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS

Brutal Attack Against a German of Ethiopian Origin Is to Go Unpunished

On June 15, two defendants accused of having savagely beaten a 37-year-old German of Ethiopian origin in Potsdam on Easter Sunday last year were acquitted due to a lack of evidence. Last year, just before the soccer World Cup, the incident triggered off a heated debate on racism and xenophobia in Germany. The attack left the victim in a coma for several days. He cannot remember the attack.

<http://www.spiegel.de/panorama/justiz/0,1518,488743,00.html> (05.07.2007)

http://www.expatica.com/actual/article.asp?channel_id=2&story_id=40957 (05.07.2007)

Recent Developments in the German Anti-Discrimination Landscape

The “Anti-Discrimination Association Germany” (advd) constitutes the first nation-wide umbrella association, which currently comprises ten independent NGO anti-discrimination organisations, migrant organisations and other active institutions. The aims of the association range from developing joint intervention strategies and minimum standards for anti-discrimination work to the collection and documentation of cases of ethnic discrimination and the publication of empirical studies on the actual scope and mechanism of discrimination in Germany.

In Baden-Wuerttemberg, the state-wide anti-discrimination network “mittendrinundaussenvor.de” was set up by the Protestant State Churches and the welfare organisation “Diakonie”. The newly established coordination office is in charge of establishing a state-wide network of organisations and offices which offer advice and support to victims of ethnic discrimination.

<http://www.antidiskriminierung.org/> (05.07.2007)

<http://www.mittendrinundaussenvor.de/impressum.htm> (05.07.2007)

Legal Advice for Victims of Discrimination

The recently established “Foundation Life without Racism” offers advice and support (including financial support) to victims of discrimination who are willing to take their cases to court. The main focus is on ethnic or visible minorities. With its assistance, the foundation pursues strategic litigation in order to clarify and enhance anti-discrimination provisions and to contribute to improving legal protection against discrimination. Furthermore, the foundation seeks to conduct awareness-raising activities by making the individual cases of discrimination public.

http://www.aric-nrw.de/de/docs/pdf/Flyer_LoRa.pdf (05.07.2007)

http://www.oegg.de/neu/images/stories/pm_lora_grndung_20_03.pdf (05.07.2007)

3. RESEARCH

Report on Right-Wing Extremist Incidents in Berlin

“The situation in Berlin. A shadow report on right-wing extremism, racism and discrimination” was published by five Berlin initiatives working against discrimination, right-wing extremism and racist violence. The compilation of contributions focuses on different facets of right-wing extremism in Berlin, ranging from anti-Islamic sentiments against the building of mosques to election campaign strategies of right-wing parties. A detailed chronicle of 148 right-wing, racist and anti-Semitic violent crimes which were committed in Berlin in 2006 is included.

<http://www.apabiz.de/publikation/Schattenbericht.pdf> (04.07.2007)

Study on the Interaction of Civil Society Structures and Right-Wing Extremism in Rural Areas

The study by the University of Leipzig entitled “Borders of democracy. Structures of the civil society against Nazis in rural areas” analyses the conditions for the development of a civil society which can effectively combat right-wing extremism. To explore the impact of political culture, two case studies of small towns in Germany were conducted, including interviews with members of the civil society and civil servants. According to the study, racist and anti-Semitic attitudes do not only exist among fringe groups, but also among broad sections of the population. The authors conclude that the lack of pluralism of opinion in rural areas supports right-wing extremist attitudes and structures. This description of the problem is followed by recommendations for policy makers at the national, federal and local levels as well as for grassroots organisations.

http://www.bnr.de/w/files/studien/re_laendlicher_raum.pdf (04.07.2007)

Report on the Media Image of the Islam

In eight contributions which are based on different methodological approaches, the image of Muslims in the media is analysed. It is shown that the prevailing manner of reporting Islamic topics is biased and tends to be discriminatory.

Jäger, S.; Halm, D. (eds.) 2007: *Mediale Barrieren. Rassismus als Integrationshindernis*, available at: <http://www.unrast-verlag.de/unrast.2.260.7.html> (05.07.2007)

4. Official / unofficial statistical data

Preliminary Figures by the Federal Ministry of the Interior

According to the preliminary figures based on the monthly parliamentary inquiries, in the first four months of 2007, 3,522 politically motivated (PMK) right-wing crimes were registered (2006: 3,489). The number of violent right-wing crimes rose from 180 in the first four months of 2006 to 214 in the comparable period of 2007 (+18.9%). The number of people who were injured as a result of these crimes increased significantly by 46.4% compared to the previous year (01-04/2006: 140; 01-04/2007: 205). 2,588 right-wing propaganda offences were registered between January and April 2007 (01-04/2006: 2,535).

Although 2,079 alleged criminals were identified and 278 people were temporarily arrested in the first four months of 2007, only four arrest warrants were issued (01-04/2006: 10).

The latest figures show a falling tendency concerning xenophobic crimes (-12.3%). In the first four months of 2007, 493 of all PMK right-wing crimes were categorised as xenophobic (01-04/2006: 562). The number of those xenophobic PMK crimes which were registered as violent crimes increased considerably by 40.8% from 71 (01-04/2006) to 100 (01-04/2007).

Politically motivated right-wing crimes (01-04/2007)

	Criminal acts			
	Total number		of which xenophobic criminal acts	
		of which violent crimes		<i>among those: violent crimes</i>
January	909	58	139	24
February	865	47	123	22
March	853	60	120	33
April	895	49	111	21
Total	3,522	214	493	100
Diff. in % to 01-04/2006	+0.9	+18.9	-12.3	+40.8

Source: BMI (preliminary data)

http://www.petrappau.de/16_bundestag/dok/down/2007_zf-rechtsextreme-straftaten.pdf (05.07.2007)

Chronicle of Anti-Semitic Incidents in 2006

The initiative "Anti-Fascist Press Archive" (apabiz) has compiled a chronicle of 120 anti-Semitic incidents in 2006; among those are 16 cases of desecration of graves and 49 other cases of defilement or damage to property. The list is not exhaustive.

http://www.apabiz.de/archiv/material/Chronologien/Antisemitismus_2006.pdf (05.07.2007)

5. Upcoming events

2–6 September: Autumn Academy 2007 on the National and International Protection of Human Rights by the German Institute for Human Rights, Berlin/Germany

The week-long public seminar provides an overview of the institutions and structures of human rights protection in Germany, Europe and the United Nations. Tools, measures and experiences of human rights work are focused in three thematic areas: human rights and protection against discrimination, human rights in intercultural dialogue, and combating international terrorism and national security. The course addresses members of NGOs, political foundations and parties, religious organisations, schools and universities as well as students and graduates of diverse disciplines. The number of participants is restricted to 25 people.

http://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/webcom/show_termine.php/ c-409/ nr-144/i.html

(03.07.2007)

1-3 October: Developing Strategies Against Discrimination. Further Training for NGOs and Trade Unions, Hattingen/Germany

The German Trade Union Federation has organised a seminar on anti-discrimination issues with the main emphasis on the EU directives and their implementation in German national law. It also aims at imparting action-oriented knowledge of recognising and dealing with discrimination. Members of NGOs and trade unions who are involved in the fight against discrimination can apply to participate until 27 July.

<http://www.de.migration-online.de/beitrag. aWQ9NTQ0Mg .html>

(03.07.2007)