

RAXEN BULLETIN IV
Germany

1. UPDATE ON POLICIES, INITIATIVES AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE

Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry Installed in Saxony-Anhalt to Investigate Police Behaviour

The Saxony-Anhalt State Parliament decided on 13 September 2007 that a parliamentary committee of inquiry (*Untersuchungsausschuss*) is to be installed which is commissioned to investigate the reaction of the police to several allegedly right-wing extremist crimes in Saxony-Anhalt. The committee has to examine six incidents and clarify whether the police have tackled these crimes “inappropriately” or even “failed to react entirely” (e.g. asylum seeker’s report of a neo-Nazi attack was not recorded). In one case, which received a great deal of media reaction, three police officers reported that the vice-president of their department had told them to “not see” every right-wing crime.

The opposition socialist parliamentary group *Linksfraktion* made a parliamentary motion to establish the committee of inquiry; the other democratic parliamentary groups, which would have preferred the ordinary parliamentary committee for the Interior to investigate the incidents, abstained. The State Minister of the Interior confirmed that the investigations will be fully supported; the *Linksfraktion* emphasised that this is not meant to defame the police.

[www.landtag.sachsen-anhalt.de/index.php?id=82&tx_exozetnews_news\[id\]=1108&cHash=ff65d1f495](http://www.landtag.sachsen-anhalt.de/index.php?id=82&tx_exozetnews_news[id]=1108&cHash=ff65d1f495) (10.10.2007);

www.landtag.sachsen-anhalt.de/index.php?id=91&tx_exozetgovernment_comission%5Bid%5D=21&cHash=bf7ad6958e (15.10.2007)

New Party *Pro NRW* Wants to Succeed by Fostering Islamophobic Resentments

In September 2007, the local right-wing organisation *Pro North-Rhine Westphalia (Pro NRW)* converted into a political party. On the occasion of its foundation conference *Pro NRW* published a press release announcing an Anti-Islam campaign all over North-Rhine Westphalia by mobilising against the construction of mosques, minarets and against muezzin’s calls. *Pro NRW* wants to participate in the next municipal elections in 2009 as well as in the next state elections of North-Rhine Westphalia in 2010.

http://www.pro-nrw.org/artikel/070910_parteitag.htm (15.10.2007)

2. UPDATE ON LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS AND AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS

Bill Aims at Introducing Hate Crime Concept into German Criminal Code

Saxony-Anhalt, Brandenburg and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania present a joint bill in the Upper House that aims to introduce hate crime principles into German criminal law. A new provision should be added to Section 46 (2) Criminal Code ('Principles for Determining the Penalty') which makes it mandatory to consider the perpetrator's hate crime motivation as an aggravating factor by the court (i.e. committed due to, amongst other, the victim's ethnicity, skin colour, religion). The bill also proposes to expand the legal possibilities of sentencing the perpetrator of a hate crime to imprisonment *without* probation.

Press release Saxony-Anhalt State Ministry of Justice No. 055/07 on 21.09.2007; Germany / Bundesrat (Upper House) / Plenary Protocol No. 836 (836th Plenary Session on 21.09.2007), pp.284-5

Petition Aims at Anchoring the Fight against Right-Wing Extremism in the State Constitution

The committee for Europe and Legal Affairs of the Mecklenburg-West Pomeranian State Parliament is currently examining a legal motion which originated from a state petition organised by the initiative *For a Cosmopolitan, Peaceful and Tolerant Mecklenburg West-Pomerania*. The petition, which had been signed by approximately 17,500 Mecklenburg West-Pomeranian citizens, aims to introduce a new provision into the State Constitution (Art. 10a) which explicitly bans right-wing extremist behaviour which intends to disturb the peaceful coexistence of the people and to revive the NS belief systems. It remains open for the time being whether and – if yes – with which alterations the amendment will be passed in State Parliament, where a two-third majority is necessary for constitutional amendments.

Press release of the Mecklenburg West-Pomerania State Parliament (SG 1/DL/2007-10-01) on 1.10.2007; www.volksinitiative-mv.de (04.10.2007)

Expert conference "Berlin – City of Diversity – against Discrimination" Promoted Anti-Discrimination Work in the German Capital

The conference was conducted by the Berlin State Senate Administration for Integration, Labour and Social Affairs on 8 October 2007, within the framework of the *European Year for Equal Opportunity for All*. The Senator for Integration presented an overview on the impact of the anti-discrimination legislation (AGG) more than one year after it came into force: The act has given a strong impetus for the struggle against discrimination in Berlin. According to the documentation of the newly founded specialised state body in Berlin, cases of discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin are ranking high in Berlin. The Senator also described a consistent anti-discrimination policy as an important element in the fight against right-wing extremism and announced the Senate's plan to develop an Action Plan against Discrimination.

www.berlin.de/landespressestelle/archiv/2007/10/08/86564/index.html (10.10.2007)

3. RESEARCH

Comprehensive Anthology ‘Right-wing extremism in Brandenburg. Handbook for Analysis, Prevention and Intervention’ Published by a Group of Experts of the Moses Medelssohn Centre in Potsdam

The book is divided in three parts, (1) analyses of right-wing extremism in the State of Brandenburg, (2) prevention and intervention measures and strategies and (3) a compilation and brief description of important organisations engaged against right-wing extremism. The most comprehensive section (2) contains numerous articles which shed light on various dimensions of the struggle against right-wing extremism and xenophobia – ranging from political and law enforcement intervention strategies to the role of municipalities and the civil society as well as educational approaches.

[www.mmz-](http://www.mmz-potsdam.de/content/publikationen/index.php?cid=3M1ruh13Eu8&catId=CAT420b7aa43fb86)

potsdam.de/content/publikationen/index.php?cid=3M1ruh13Eu8&catId=CAT420b7aa43fb86

(15.10.2007)

Research Report ‘Perceived Discrimination and (Re-)Ethnisation of Young Migrants’ released by the German Youth Institute (DJI)

The report is based on a quantitative longitudinal study conducted by the DJI. The researchers found a substantial association between perceived discrimination, tendencies of re-ethnisation and the transition into the apprenticeship/employment system.

Report: www.dji.de/dasdji/thema/0710/Text_Gesamt_Jacobs.pdf (15.10.2007)

Project information: www.dji.de/cgi-bin/projekte/output.php?projekt=777 (15.10.2007)

Joint Report of the City of Cologne, the Local Office of the Welfare Organisation Caritas and the Anti-Discrimination Office (ADB) Cologne

The report “*No, that does not exist here!*” *Discrimination in Cologne – no or an exception* (“Nein, das gibt’s hier nicht!” Diskriminierung in Köln – (k)ein Einzelfall) contains comprehensive background information on discrimination in Cologne, including statistical material and descriptions of individual cases. The information stems primarily from the counselling and support work provided by the ADB Cologne, Caritas and the Intercultural Department within the municipality. Furthermore, the cooperation between the three organisations and the local anti-discrimination work are described.

www.oegg.de/neu/images/stories/dsm-bericht2006-final3_klein.pdf (15.10.2007)

4. Official / unofficial statistical data

Preliminary Figures on Extreme Right-wing and Xenophobic Crimes

The preliminary official statistics on politically motivated (PMK) right-wing crimes, which are based on monthly parliamentary inquiries, show that 7,325 PMK right-wing crimes were registered by the police between January and August 2007; this represents a decrease by 8.4 per cent compared to the first eight months of the year 2006. The majority of these crimes (5,068) are categorised as propaganda offences. The number of PMK right-wing crimes which were registered as violent crimes (451) remained on the same level as in the previous year (452); however, the number of people injured as a result of these crimes rose significantly to 427 (I-VIII/2006: 325).

During the first eight months of 2007 1,019 of all PMK right-wing crimes were deemed to be xenophobic – a clear decrease of 25.5 per cent compared to the previous year (I-VIII/2006: 1,367). 193 of these xenophobic crimes were registered as violent crimes, 10.2 per cent less than in the comparable period of 2006. In 2007, 171 people were injured as a result of these crimes – 24 more than in the first eight months of the year 2006.

http://www.petrapau.de/16_bundestag/dok/down/2006_zf-rechtsextreme-straftaten.pdf (11.10.2007)

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Unofficial statistics for the first half year of 2007 in two Länder

The victim support organisations in Brandenburg and Saxony have released their semi-annual statistics on right-wing violent acts. The **Brandenburg**-based association *Opferperspektive* has registered 54 right-wing motivated attacks in the first six months of 2007; in the comparable period of 2006, 52 such acts were registered. The vast majority (51) of these acts were categorised as bodily harm (two cases of arson, one case of damaging property). 76 people were directly affected by these acts. Racism was registered as the main motive in 27 cases. *Opferperspektive* also updated its annual figures for 2006: the number of right-wing crimes now amounts to 139 (instead of 126 as stated in February 2007); in 50 cases racism has been assumed to be the prevailing motivation.

The two specialised victim support organisations *RAA Sachsen* and *AMAL* (both based in **Saxony**) presented their joint statistics on right-wing attacks for the first six months of 2007. The total but preliminary number of right-wing attacks in Saxony amounts to 139, which represents a strong increase compared to the same period of the previous year, when ‘only’ 81 such acts were registered. 241 people were directly affected by these attacks; only in 111 cases the victims reported the incident to the police. Regarding the motivation of the perpetrator(s), the two associations registered a racist motive in 28 cases of the 139 registered attacks (in 59 cases, the attack was directed against ‘non-right-wing’ people, in 36 cases against people who are engaged against right-wing extremism).

www.opferperspektive.de/Presse/638.html (11.10.2007)

www.amal-sachsen.de/news.php?article=479 (11.10.2007)

5. Upcoming events

9 November: “Living Together” (“Gut miteinander wohnen”)– Integration conference by the housing company GESOBAU AG, Berlin and the Schader Foundation, Darmstadt, Berlin/Germany

The conference aims at exploring recent developments concerning socio-spatial integration. Ideas, concepts and experiences of how to deal with diversity within housing districts shall be exchanged. Furthermore a change regarding the occupation of housing estates shall be promoted. The conference addresses practitioners from the housing economy, from politics or from municipal administrations.

<http://www.schader-stiftung.de/docs/09-flyer-integrationskonferenz.pdf> (15.10.2007)

16-18 November: “The General Equal Treatment Act: Protection against Discrimination?”, Bad Böll/Germany

The three-day workshop is organised by the trade unions IG Metall and Ver.di. The workshop aims at discussing the legal and practical possibilities of action provided by the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) – focussing in particular people with a migration background – and developing measures against discrimination. A special programme for young people will be offered.

<http://www.ev-akademie-boll.de/tagungen/details/430707.pdf> (15.10.2007)