

1. UPDATE ON POLICIES, INITIATIVES AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE

Reignited discussion on launching new attempt to ban the right-wing extremist party NPD

Within the framework of the nationwide campaign 'Prohibit NPD now!' (*NPD-Verbot jetzt!*), more than 170,000 people have signed a declaration urging the German Parliament to instigate new prohibition proceedings against the right-wing extremist party NPD (National Democratic Party of Germany). The campaign, which was launched on 26 January and ended on 9 November 2007, was organised by the largest and oldest anti-fascist association of Germany, the Association of the Victims of the Nazi Regime (VVN-BdA).

In late October 2007, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) decided on their federal party meeting in Hamburg to urge Parliament, the Government and the Upper House to come up with a new initiative to prohibit the NPD. This urge constitutes a core element of the party's motion on the struggle against right-wing extremism; this motion additionally encompassed an array of measures, such as promoting respective educational offers, installing expert units within the public prosecutors' offices and enhancing law enforcement.

Leading members of the conservative parties CDU and CSU as well as of the liberal party FDP and the Green Party have expressed their doubts regarding the chances for success of such prohibition proceedings due to procedural problems; hence they continue to disagree with the plan to initiate new proceedings. In 2003, the attempt to ban the NPD failed, in particular due to the embedding and engagement of intelligence agents within the NPD party.

www.npd-verbot-jetzt.de (21.11.2007)

http://parteitag.spd.de/servlet/PB/show/1728666/Antrag_Rechtsextremismus.pdf (21.11.2007)

www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,513573,00.html (21.11.2007)

www.gruene.de/cms/partei/dokbin/207/207541.npdverbotsantrag.pdf (27.11.2007)

Länder agreed on measures to tackle school drop-out

On the *Kultusministerkonferenz* [Standing Conference of the State Ministers for Education] in mid-October, the representatives of the *Länder* jointly announced a plan of action aiming to significantly reduce the number of school drop-outs within the next five years. The plan encompasses concrete support measures in particular for young students from socially disadvantaged families and those with a migrant background (e.g. language support measures). All-day schools and the cooperation between the school, entrepreneurs and other actors on the labour market should be enhanced; furthermore, specific assistance measures have been announced for those students who are at risk of failing to graduate from secondary school.

www.kmk.org/aktuell/319-KMK-TOP4-Handlungsrahmen_Schulabbrecher.pdf (21.11.2007)

www.kmk.org/aktuell/home1.htm (21.11.2007)

2. UPDATE ON LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS AND AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS

Anti-discrimination body ADS launched comprehensive website and started PR activities

The German Article 13 Equality Body *Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes* [Federal Anti-Discrimination Body; ADS], which was set up in August 2006, launched its website on 9 November 2007. The website targets primarily employers and those who are affected by discrimination on the grounds of ethnic background, religion or belief, sex, disability, age or sexual orientation. It offers not only comprehensive information on the new anti-discrimination legislation and other issues related to equal treatment, but also an online form which can be used by those who have experienced discrimination for lodging a complaint or for asking for counselling.

Furthermore, the ADS started its awareness raising activities and organised its first national conference on equal opportunities and anti-discrimination (*'Chancengleichheit als Mehrwert'*) on 29-30 November 2007.

www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de (23.11.2007)

ADS advisory committee installed

The ADS advisory committee was installed (according to § 30 General Equal Treatment Act, AGG) in mid October 2007. This committee is supposed to contribute to promoting the dialogue between relevant social groups and anti-discrimination organisations and give advice to the ADS; it is composed of 16 anti-discrimination experts and representatives of organisations engaged in the struggle against discrimination. Ms Barbara John, the former Berlin state commissioner for integration and foreigners, was appointed chairperson of the advisory committee.

www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de (23.11.2007)

3. RESEARCH

Essay on the (mis-)perception of Islam in Germany

The director of the German Institute for Human Rights, Heiner Bielefeldt, published a comprehensive essay on the public perception of Islam in Germany. The essay identifies motives and explanations for the rather negative and sceptical attitudes towards the Islamic faith in Germany; it presents core principles for a reasonable public debate and discusses the fine line between Islamophobia and criticism of Islam.

H. Bielefeld (2007) Das Islambild in Deutschland. Zum öffentlichen Umgang mit der Angst vor dem Islam, Berlin: DIMR

http://files.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/488/d70_v1_file_470f355e90c3e_IUS-040_E_Islam_RZ_WEB_ES.pdf (20.11.2007)

Report on limited access to health offers for undocumented migrants

The German Institute for Human Rights released a report on the restricted access to health offers for immigrants without legal documents in Germany. The report, which was compiled by the Federal Working Group Health/Illegality, offers a detailed description of the undocumented migrants' situation regarding the access to the health system and concludes with suggestions on how to improve the health situation of undocumented migrants.

Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte (ed.) (2007) Frauen, Männer und Kinder ohne Papiere in Deutschland. Ihr Recht auf Gesundheit. Bericht der Bundesarbeitsgruppe Gesundheit/Illegalität, Berlin: DIMR

http://files.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/437/IUS-041_B_AG_RZ_WEB_ES.pdf (20.11.2007)

Study on anti-Semitic attitudes among young people

The *Amadeu-Antonio* Foundation and the *Freudenberg* Foundation commissioned a research study on anti-Semitic attitudes among young people. Primarily based on 20 qualitative group discussions with students aged between 13 and 19, the researchers identified several specific contexts in which anti-Semitic statements occurred: besides Muslim youngsters and young people with a right-wing disposition, the researchers also found anti-Semitic stereotype among those who consider themselves 'non-anti-Semitic'. The empirical results have been analysed to develop practical suggestions for the educational work aiming to overcome anti-Semitic attitudes.

A. Scherr; B. Schäuble (2007) "Ich habe nichts gegen Juden, aber...". Ausgangsbedingungen und Perspektiven gesellschaftspolitischer Bildungsarbeit gegen Antisemitismus, Berlin: Amadeu-Antonio Stiftung

www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/w/files/pdfs/ich_habe_nichts_2.pdf (20.11.2007)

4. Official / unofficial statistical data

Preliminary police statistics on extreme right-wing and xenophobic crimes: January to September 2007

According to the preliminary official statistics, the police registered 8,284 politically motivated (PMK) right-wing crimes between January and September 2007; this represents a decrease by eight per cent compared to the respective figures of the previous year. The majority of these crimes are propaganda offences; however, 516 of these PMK right-wing crimes were registered as violent crimes, i.e. almost as many as in the comparable period in 2006, when 522 such violent crimes were counted. The number of people injured as a result of these violent acts, increased drastically in 2007 – by 26 per cent to 473 (1-9/2006: 375).

1,162 of these 8,284 extreme right-wing crimes the police deemed to be xenophobic, 25.1 per cent less than during the first nine months of 2006, when 1,551 such xenophobic right-wing crimes were registered. The number of xenophobic violent crimes decreased by 13.7 per cent to 220. However, more people were injured as a result of these attacks; the number grew from 170 (1-9/2006) to 191 during the first nine months in 2007.

www.petra-pau.de/16_bundestag/dok/down/2007_zf-rechtsextreme-straftaten.pdf (28.11.2007)

www.petrapau.de/16_bundestag/dok/down/2006_zf-rechtsextreme-straftaten.pdf (28.11.2007)

NOTE: According to the State Ministry for the Interior in Saxony-Anhalt, the State Criminal Office (LKA) applied amended registration criteria between late 2006 and early 2007. During this period crimes with a clearly right-wing extremist background were not registered as such if the police have not been able to identify any suspects. This has led to an underestimated number of politically motivated right-wing crimes in the police statistics of the state of Saxony-Anhalt and consequently also in the national statistics presented above. In mid November, the State Minister for the Interior in Saxony-Anhalt ordered to stop this registration practice; almost 200 registered offences are now being scrutinised by the police regarding their potential right-wing extremist background.

www.asp.sachsen-anhalt.de/presseapp/data/mi/2007/325_2007.htm (28.11.2007)

Anti-Semitic crimes

According to the preliminary police statistics, 716 anti-Semitic crimes were registered within the category ‘politically motivated crimes/right-wing’ during the first nine months of 2007. This represents a decrease by 30 such crimes compared to the respective time period of 2006 (- 4 per cent). The number of anti-Semitic crimes which were registered as violent crimes, however, increased from 15 in the first nine months of 2006 to 23 in the first nine months of 2007; 13 people were injured as a result of the anti-Semitic extreme right-wing crimes (1-9/2006: 8 people).

www.petra-pau.de/16_bundestag/dok/down/2007_zf_antisemitische_straftaten.pdf (28.11.2007)

www.petra-pau.de/16_bundestag/dok/down/2006_zf_antisemitische_straftaten.pdf (28.11.2007)

5. Upcoming events

4-6 December 2007: Migration and Health. Integration and Equal Opportunities in the Immigration Society, Freiburg

The German Red Cross (DRK) conducts a three-day expert conference on integration and health, which should shed light on current problems regarding the access in the active participation of migrants in the health sector. In presentation and forums, a particular emphasis is put on the discussion of concrete approaches and measures in the context of, among others, prevention, culturally sensitive therapy concepts, medical treatment of undocumented migrants.

www.drk-baden.de/index.php?/info_und_service/aktuelles/migration_und_gesundheit

(22.11.2007)

11-12 January 2008: Conference on Integration and Sports ('Zwischen Abgrenzung und Akzeptanz'), Bad Boll

The *Evangelische Akademie Bad Boll* organises a two-day conference on the potential impact and limits of sport as a catalyst for integration and peaceful coexistence in a culturally diverse society. The conference offers historical background information on minorities in sports as well as concrete integration projects from nowadays.

www.ev-akademie-boll.de/index.php?id=142&tagungsid=660808 (22.11.2007)

21-22 February 2008: Developing Strategies against Discrimination. Further Training for NGOs and Trade Unions, Hattingen

Organised by the *Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund* [German Association of Trade Unions, DGB], this two-day seminar targets in particular representatives of trade unions and NGOs that are active against discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin, age, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The seminars, which is part of the project 'Anti-Discrimination and Diversity Training' (funded by the EU Commission), deals with the European anti-discrimination directives, the implementation in German legislation (AGG) and strategies to incorporate anti-discrimination elements into the trade unions' and NGOs' work.

www.migration-online.de/beitrag_aWO9NTQ0Mg_.html (22.11.2007)