

RAXEN BULLETIN I  
Germany

**1. UPDATE ON POLICIES, INITIATIVES AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE**

**New Muslim umbrella organisation founded**

At the end of March, four large Islamic associations, namely the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB), the Islamic Council (IR), the Central Council of Muslims (ZMD) and the Association of Islamic Culture Centres (VIKZ) founded an umbrella organisation. The Co-ordination Council of Muslims in Germany (KRM), as it is termed, aims at becoming the official representative of the Islamic faith in Germany. As *the* Islamic representative organisation, the KRM claims the same legal privileges as the Catholic and Lutheran Churches and the Jewish community. However, the German Government stated that the KRM does not represent the Muslim community as a whole. Only 10 per cent of the estimated 3.3 million Muslims living in Germany are members of the associated organisations. Other Islamic groups criticised the conservative religious and ideological orientation of the KRM. Especially the indirect association of Milli Görüs (IGMG) and the Islamic Community in Germany (IGD) with the KRM has provoked criticism. The organisations are members of the IR and the ZMD, respectively. Both the IGMG and the IGD have been under long observation by Germany's domestic intelligence agency. The relationship between Islam and the German state is a crucial issue for the German Conference on Islam (DIK), whose plenum held its second meeting on May 2.

<http://dip.bundestag.de/btd/16/050/1605033.pdf> (24.05.2007)

[http://www.bmi.bund.de/Internet/Content/Common/Anlagen/Themen/Deutsche\\_Islam\\_Konferenz/Zeitung\\_2\\_DIK\\_en,templateId=raw,property=publicationFile.pdf/Zeitung\\_2\\_DIK\\_en.pdf](http://www.bmi.bund.de/Internet/Content/Common/Anlagen/Themen/Deutsche_Islam_Konferenz/Zeitung_2_DIK_en,templateId=raw,property=publicationFile.pdf/Zeitung_2_DIK_en.pdf) (24.05.2007)

**Expert hearing on amendments to German immigration law**

On May 21, one of two expert hearings on amendments to the German immigration law took place before the Committee on Internal Affairs of the German Bundestag. Especially the tougher conditions for family reunions have provoked a controversial public debate. According to some experts' opinions, the provision that foreign spouses wishing to immigrate to Germany must already have basic knowledge of the German language contributes to the common welfare and is appropriate. Others pointed out that this provision clearly discriminates against women from countries where language courses are hardly offered. Ruth Weinzierl from the German Institute for Human Rights (DIMR) strongly criticised the law. From her point of view, the bill does not implement the EU-directives sufficiently and does so only in a restrictive way.

[http://www.bundestag.de/aktuell/hib/2007/2007\\_135/02.html](http://www.bundestag.de/aktuell/hib/2007/2007_135/02.html) (24.05.2007)

## 2. UPDATE ON LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS AND AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS

### **Anti-Nazi swastikas legalised**

The Federal Court of Justice in Karlsruhe has ruled that the usage of crossed-out swastikas for anti-Nazi protests is not illegal. The verdict overturned a lower court decision against the owner of a mail-order internet site who had been convicted of reproducing Nazi symbols. He sold a range of anti-Nazi t-shirts, badges and stickers bearing crossed-out swastikas. According to §86a StGB, swastikas are banned as symbols of unconstitutional organisations. However, according to the decision of the Federal Court, the usage of Nazi-symbols is not covered by §86a StGB if the presentation of such symbols clearly and unambiguously carries an anti-Nazi message.

<http://juris.bundesgerichtshof.de/cgi-bin/rechtsprechung/document.py?Gericht=bgh&Art=pm&Datum=2007&Sort=3&nr=39202&pos=26&anz=62> (23.05.2007)

<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,2385967,00.html> (23.05.2007)

### **Nationwide campaign for diversity**

On May 10, the campaign 'For Diversity – Against Discrimination, Anti-Semitism and Anti-Ciganism', organised by the Regionale Arbeitsstellen (RAA) Berlin and Essen, the Amadeu Antonio Foundation and the Network School Without Racism – School With Courage, started in Berlin. On the occasion of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, the campaign informs people about the application of the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) which came into force in August 2006 aiming at implementing the EU Equality Directives. For this propose, a webpage has been launched and different activities at the local level will be conducted. The campaign focuses on youth initiatives against discrimination, further education on anti-Semitism for teachers and other multipliers, as well as on educational initiatives for Sinti and Roma. The campaign will end with an action day in Berlin on 7 November, 2007.

<http://www.kampagne-fuer-vielfalt.de> (23.05.2007)

### **Guidebook for young people who feel discriminated against**

The three anti-discrimination offices in Cologne, namely the Anti-Discrimination Office Cologne, the anti-discrimination office of the Caritas Association and the Intercultural Department of the City of Cologne, published a guidebook for young people who feel discriminated against in school, during internships, while looking for vocational education or in job interviews. The brochure explains the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG), illustrates what discrimination means, offers practical hints to young people on how to resist discrimination, and provides contact details for further support and advice.

<http://www.jubim.de/dissen/dmmn04.pdf> (24.05.2007)

### 3. RESEARCH

#### **Report on the situation of children from Roma refugee families in Germany**

In March 2007, the report – compiled by the Centre for Research on Anti-Semitism (ZfA) and commissioned by UNICEF Germany – was presented in the German Bundestag. The report focussed on Roma children who had immigrated with their families to Germany after 1990 as refugees. It summarises the results of case studies which were conducted in Hamburg, Berlin, Cologne, Münster and Frankfurt/Main in 2006. According to the study, the restricted residence permit status of refugees is the main reason for the disadvantaged situation of Roma children in the field of education, housing and health in Germany.

[http://www.unicef.de/fileadmin/content\\_media/presse/fotomaterial/Roma\\_Konferenz/UNICEF\\_STUDIE\\_Ergebnisse\\_Deutschland.pdf](http://www.unicef.de/fileadmin/content_media/presse/fotomaterial/Roma_Konferenz/UNICEF_STUDIE_Ergebnisse_Deutschland.pdf) (22.05.2007)

#### **Study measured anti-Semitic sentiments among the German population**

The report ‘Germans and Jews – United by their past, divided by their present?’ presents the results of approximately 2,500 telephone interviews conducted in Germany, Israel and the U.S. in January 2007. The aim of the representative survey was to describe the mutual perceptions of Germans, Israelis, and Jews living in the U.S. Amongst others, the study measures the extent of anti-Semitic sentiments among the German population. Therefore, the responses to five questions corresponding to typical anti-Jewish prejudices were analysed: 56 per cent of the German interviewees did not make any unambiguously anti-Semitic remarks in answering the relevant questions. 15 per cent made anti-Semitic remarks in the case of two or more questions. In comparison to the results of a survey conducted in 1991, the study identifies a slight decline in anti-Semitic feelings among the German population.

[http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/bst/de/media/xcms\\_bst\\_dms\\_28283\\_28284\\_2.pdf](http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/bst/de/media/xcms_bst_dms_28283_28284_2.pdf) (23.05.2007)

#### **Fundamental Rights Report 2007**

The way in which the state deals with foreigners and illegal migrants was criticised by the editors of the Fundamental Rights Report 2007. The annual report, published by nine civil rights organisations, presents significant cases of fundamental and human rights violations by the state authorities. In 42 short essays by 36 authors, the 2007 report especially highlights significant cases of state-run surveillance, infringements and discrimination. Susanne Dern analyses the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) and concludes that the German anti-discrimination law ignores binding European provisions. A chronology of cases in which executive or legislative authorities have somehow interfered with granted fundamental rights is attached in the annex.

[http://www.humanistische-union.de/presse/2007/pressedetail\\_2007/back/presse-2007/article/buergerrechtsorganisationen-kritisieren-missachtung-hoehstrichterlicher-urteile/](http://www.humanistische-union.de/presse/2007/pressedetail_2007/back/presse-2007/article/buergerrechtsorganisationen-kritisieren-missachtung-hoehstrichterlicher-urteile/) (25.05.2007)

#### 4. Official / unofficial statistical data

##### **Federal Report on the Protection of the Constitution 2006**

In 2006, 18,142 crimes were registered under general heading 'politically motivated – right wing (2005:15,914). The figures on politically motivated right-wing crimes with an extremist background in 2006 show an increase by 14.6 per cent compared to the previous year: In 2006, 17,597 extremist right-wing crimes were registered (2005: 15,361); 12,627 of the extremist right-wing crimes were propaganda offences (2005: 12,627) and 1,047 were violent crimes (2005: 958).

The number of violent crimes with a xenophobic background increased by 36.3 per cent in 2006: In 2006, 484 of the extremist right-wing crimes were registered as xenophobic and violent compared to 355 cases in 2005. In 2006, 1,636 of the right-wing extremist crimes had an anti-Semitic background (2005: 1,658); 43 of these anti-Semitic crimes were violent crimes (2005: 49).

[http://www.verfassungsschutz.de/download/de/publikationen/verfassungsschutzbericht/vsbericht\\_vorabfassung\\_2006/vsbericht\\_vorabfassung\\_2006.pdf](http://www.verfassungsschutz.de/download/de/publikationen/verfassungsschutzbericht/vsbericht_vorabfassung_2006/vsbericht_vorabfassung_2006.pdf) (24.05.2007)

##### **Preliminary figures by the Federal Ministry of the Interior**

The preliminary figures of politically motivated right-wing crimes in 2007 show a slight decrease in the first three months compared with the preliminary figures of the previous year. In 2006, 2,675 extreme right-wing crimes were registered; 2,627 in 2007. The total number of registered right-wing crimes with a xenophobic background decreased by 11 per cent, while the number of xenophobic violent crimes increased significantly by 71.7 per cent compared to the previous year. In 2006, 46 xenophobic right-wing violent crimes were registered in comparison to 79 in 2007. According to preliminary figures of the first quarter of 2007, 242 crimes with an anti-Semitic background were registered within the category 'politically motivated crimes/right-wing'. This shows an increase of 10 such crimes (+4.3 per cent) compared to the same period in 2006 (232). Among the 242 anti-Semitic crimes, 8 were violent crimes, and 9 people were injured (first quarter 2006: 0).

[www.petra-pau.de/16\\_bundestag/dok/down/2007\\_zf-rechtsextreme-straftaten.pdf](http://www.petra-pau.de/16_bundestag/dok/down/2007_zf-rechtsextreme-straftaten.pdf) (24.05.2007)

[http://www.petra-pau.de/16\\_bundestag/dok/down/antwort\\_ka\\_16\\_5175.pdf](http://www.petra-pau.de/16_bundestag/dok/down/antwort_ka_16_5175.pdf) (24.05.2007)

[http://www.petrapau.de/16\\_bundestag/dok/down/2006\\_zf\\_antisemitische\\_straftaten.pdf](http://www.petrapau.de/16_bundestag/dok/down/2006_zf_antisemitische_straftaten.pdf) (25.05.2007)

##### **Unofficial statistics on right-wing and racist violence in East Germany**

In 2006, nine victim support organisations in the eastern states and Berlin documented 819 acts of right-wing motivated violence (2005: 694); 282 of them with a primarily racist motivation (2005: 210). In 2006, the victim support organisations gave advice to 1,454 clients (2005:1020); 1,068 of them were victims of extreme right-wing violence (2005:794) and at least 394 of them refugees, migrants or *Spätaussiedler* (ethnic German migrants).

<http://www.opferperspektive.de/Home/611.html> (03.04.2007)

## 5. Upcoming events

Present any major upcoming event of national or international importance (indicating name, date, place, organisers, and web-link).

**14-15 June: Congress by the federal states Baden-Württemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate under the EYEO, Mannheim/Germany**

Experts from municipalities, politics, companies, public and non-public institutions, volunteers and commissioners in the field of anti-discrimination will discuss innovative approaches and successful examples of promoting integration in different areas such as migration, gender, people with disabilities and elderly employees.

<http://www.jum.baden-wuerttemberg.de/servlet/PB/show/1207656/Kongress%20Vielfalt%20Mannheim%20Juni%202007.pdf> (25.05.2007)

**13 July: Transatlantic expert workshop on anti-discrimination policies in Germany and the U.S.: emphasis on local level, Munich/Germany**

The workshop organised by the European Forum for Migration Studies in cooperation with the City of Munich and supported by the German Marshall Fund of the United States brings together about 40 experts from both sides of the Atlantic to discuss anti-discrimination policies, affirmative action and diversity management as elements of a comprehensive local integration policy.

[http://web.uni-bamberg.de/~ba6ef3/taggmf\\_e.htm](http://web.uni-bamberg.de/~ba6ef3/taggmf_e.htm) (25.05.2007)