



Edition 143– April 2016

## **Good News: Refugee ID Card**

The intolerable chaos in the registration of asylum seekers in Berlin that had been happening up until recently is slowly getting better organized. Berlin was the first state to introduce its own document for refugees, which stores the fingerprint and other personal data, among other things. Asylum seekers throughout Germany will be receiving this special pass from the end of May on.

Registration should now work faster. Anyone who arrives in Berlin is now usually registered within 24 hours. The large backlog of unregistered refugees has been reduced substantially. However not all problems have been eliminated--for example the regular payments for food for refugees.

- **Thank God for the progress made in registration of refugees**

## **News from the BER Airport**

Karsten Mühlenfeld has been the CEO of the airport company for a year now. His work has been associated with significantly fewer headlines than his predecessors Black and Mehdorn. He has a team set up in which everyone knows exactly what his job is. It was very important for him to encourage the employees. "Construction sites hurt," he said in an interview.

The largest problem still not solved is the smoke exhaust system. The authorities (Dahme-Spreewald) continue to make further requirements. On April 22 during the next meeting of the supervisory board, Mühlenfeld will announce if the airport can be opened in 2017.

### **Prayer:**

- **Thank God for the work of the manager and all other on-site workers**
- **Pray that the recent problems with the smoke exhaust system can be solved**
- **Pray the construction can be completed in 2017**

## **Myfest takes place in different form**

The Myfest was filed in the form of three political meetings. After years where the Myfest was celebrated mainly with loud music and food stalls, the political issues are now in the foreground once again.

The police have confirmed that they have accepted the Myfest as a so-called meeting (Versammlung), that is, a political rally as opposed to a public event. A number of legal and security issues are still open. Thus, the district SO36 and especially the Oranienstrasse is filled with events. Nevertheless organizers of the traditional radical leftist 6pm demonstration want to use their old route through the Oranienstrasse. "We will sue for our right to demonstrate if necessary," said the organizers.

### **Prayer:**

- **Pray for a non-violent May Day in Berlin**
- **Pray for wisdom for the police and that their measures will lead to de-escalation**
- **Pray that the 6pm demonstration will get a route outside of the Myfest.**

## **Anti-Semitic Incidents**

More and more Jews are being attacked because of their Jewish caps (kippah). The numbers of memorials being smeared and incidents of anti-Semitic shouting at rallies are increasing. The official Anti-Semitism Observation Committee reported an increase in such incidents by more than 30% over the previous year. Most Jews hide now their kippahs under a baseball cap and do not wear Stars of David in public places.

In Berlin, as in the whole of Germany, it is becoming increasingly clear that Muslims who come from Arab cultures are living out the widespread instilled hatred of Israel here. Teachers in schools are not sufficiently prepared to confront this hatred effectively. The Ministry of Education needs to develop a concept.

Jews in Berlin view the sharp increase in the numbers of refugees from Arab cultures very critically. There is an increasing tendency among Jews who no longer want to hide their identity on the streets to emigrate to Israel. The Jewish Agency has an office in Berlin which assists with the formalities for emigration.

### **Prayer:**

- **Pray for the protection of Jewish residents**
- **Pray that an educational concept can be developed to help teachers deal with Muslim anti-Semitism**

- **Pray that anti-Semitic incidents can be discovered beforehand and prevented**

### ***The McKinsey-Diwell Case***

The end of September the McKinsey consultants began work to optimize the registration of refugees at the LaGeSo which hitherto had been disastrous. Initially the company worked pro bono (free). Later 238,000€ were to be paid for drawing up integration plans. Ex-Secretary Lutz Diwell (SPD) is accused of profiting from the deal. The contract was made – supposedly because of time pressure – without a tender between Christmas and the New Year.

After much criticism McKinsey has stopped working at the LaGeSo. On March 23, Björn Böhning, who is in charge of the Senate Chancellery, had to answer questions before the Internal Affairs Committee of the Lower House. He refused to accept any responsibility. A number of questions remained open. The investigation will continue after the Easter holidays.

#### **Prayer:**

- **Pray for a complete investigation of the case**
- **Pray for more transparency in the Senate**
- **Pray that the case does not paralyze the political situation or the work of the Lageso**

### ***Protection for Christian Refugees***

Verbal and physical attacks against Christians in refugee housing continue to happen weekly. There have even been death threats. More than one hundred cases have been reported. Security forces, which often have an Islamic background, look away or even take part in aggressive behavior towards Christians. So far, the Senate still has not presented a concept to improve the protection of Christians. The Ecumenical Council suggested that the number of Christians in each housing unit be increased to at least 10%, but this has not been put into practice.

#### **Prayer:**

- **Pray that God will protect and preserve our brothers and sisters in Christ**
- **Pray for the development of a sustainable safety concept**
- **Pray that Berliners will take Christian refugees into their homes and churches**

### ***Keeping On: Pray for Protection from Terrorism***

According to Berlin's Senator of the Interior Frank Henkel (CDU), no parallel Islamic societies exist in the capital like those in the Brussels district of Molenbeek. Although there are "known meeting places and mosque associations where Muslims meet, we

do not have Islamists strongholds like Molenbeek." However it is quite a challenge because the "relevant group of people is growing dynamically."

According to Henkel, the main Salafist scene is in the districts of Neukölln or Wedding. Currently around 710 people have been identified as Salafists, of which approximately half are considered to be "violence-oriented". Henkel thinks that the "fight against terror" in Germany is currently working "quite well", but is sharply increasing the responsibilities of the police and home security. The biggest current problem of the Berlin authorities is the approximately 50 returnees from war zones in Iraq and Syria... Of course, Berlin is on the list of possible terrorist targets.

In February Berlin's State Protection Chef Palenda spoke of knowledge that the Islamic State has a "European-wide attack agenda targeted to all major European cities." An 'abstract high risk' continues in Berlin. (Der Tagesspiegel 3/24)

#### **Prayer:**

- **Thank God that our city has so far been spared from terrorist attacks**
- **Pray for God's protection over the city and the country**
- **Pray for effective prevention work and early detection**
- **Pray for cooperation between security authorities at the federal and European level**

#### ***Dates***

- April 13, 6pm: **Prayer for city politicians** in front of the Rote Rathaus

Prayer events and worship service take place on May 1 with the motto "Peace to Those Near and Far—Prayer for a Peaceful May 1, 2016". Postcards are available as of April 1 and can be ordered through the Together for Berlin office. Plans include:

- **Prayer Service May 1, 2pm:** Gemeinde Gospel Believers International, St. Simeon-Kirche, Wasertorstr. 21 A, 10969 Berlin
- **April 30, 8pm – May 1 midnight BURN – 28 hours of praise** in the Gebetskeller Kreuzberg  
More info: [www.gebetskeller-kreuzberg.de](http://www.gebetskeller-kreuzberg.de)
- **May 1 12 noon, 4pm and 8pm Intercersory Prayer** at Gebetskeller Kreuzberg
- **On-site prayer on the streets:** As in past years small teams will again be on the streets praying before and during the demonstrations. Those desiring to take part can find more information here: [info@gfberlin.de](mailto:info@gfberlin.de)