



Edition 147 – September 2016

Good News:

Economics Senator Cornelia Yzer has initiated an exchange program between the start-up scene in Berlin and Tel Aviv, Israel. The start-ups will move to the other city for a few weeks where they will use free Co-working spaces. The exchange program will be free for both sides and is designed to help start-ups make new contacts. Berlin has been a magnet for Israelis for quite some time. Such exchange programs are good for both sides. The Israeli start-up scene is known for being extremely creative and successful.

- **Thank God for this exchange and for the development of creative ideas**

Elections in Berlin

In mid-August, 4 weeks before the election, the current mayor Müller decided that he is unwilling to form a coalition with the CDU after the election. He would prefer to form a coalition with the Greens. However, a majority will not be able to be reached with just a single coalition partner, so it would likely end up being SPD, Left and Greens in a coalition. This announcement makes it difficult for voters. It might mean that some will not even want to vote at all.

The extent to which this statement will have a positive or negative effect remains unclear. Together for Berlin's prayer forum is inviting people to increased prayer before the election (see dates).

Prayer

- **Pray that many citizens will participate in the election**
- **Pray for the post-election coalition negotiations — that content which will serve the city in the coming years will be recognized**
- **Pray that God-fearing candidates who seek the best for the city will be elected**

Berlin's Administration

Many complain about how slowly the Berlin administration works – whereby it varies greatly from district to district. The difficulties cannot be resolved simply by hiring more staff. In this digital age modern computer technology is necessary. The Information technology service center Berlin (ITDZ),

which was established in 2005, is connected via a fiber optic network with the administrative offices. There are an additional 70 IT departments, which all use their own hardware and software. These systems are often not compatible with the systems of the administrative offices. This created a problem in preparing for the elections.

During the next seven years uniform standards will be applied by all administrative offices, and they will be converted to digital record keeping. Ines Fieder, the head of the ITDZ, needs a lot of social and professional skill to guide this massive change. It will also be important for the administration offices and also the staff of the other 70 IT departments and the government employees to cooperate with one another.

Prayer

- **Thank God for this project and those who are already working to accomplish it**
- **Pray that God will give all those involved the will to cooperate**
- **Pray for wisdom for the leadership (Ines Fieder) and for the success of the project**

New Agency for Refugees

The State Office of Health and Welfare (La-GESO), which was previously in charge of asylum seekers, was no match for the huge increase in refugees and often made negative headlines. The beginning of August a new separate State Agency for Refugees (LAF) was formed under the direction of Claudia Langeheine, a lawyer who is known as competent, assertive, and warm.

One goal is to optimize and accelerate processes. For instance, a single agent will accompany the same refugees throughout the whole process. In addition, the agency is divided into four regional divisions to ensure better client service.

One challenge that the LAF can solve only with the help of the population is the accommodation of the refugees. Since there is not enough available housing, more apartments are being sought, as well as families and people in shared flats (WG) who are willing to have refugees live with them for one to two years and help them get integrated. The Agency will pay the rent.

Anyone who can offer housing space can contact the Berlin housing initiatives: www.nestwerkberlin.de

Prayer:

- **Pray for wisdom, right priorities, and success for Frau Langeheine and her team**
- **Pray for efficient improvement in the processes**
- **Pray that many residents in Berlin will offer accommodation for refugees**

Tensions in the Turkish Community

There are about 200,000 people with a Turkish immigrant background living in Berlin. That's about 6% of the population of Berlin. Thus, the Turks are the largest non-European ethnic immigrant group in Berlin. However, it is not a homogeneous group, since it is made up of various ethnic groups, including a large number of Kurds.

Previous tensions within Turkish society have often spread to Berlin. The foiled military coup has now added new tensions. In Berlin there is a strong group of nationalist AKP supporters (the party of President Erdogan). According to estimates this is offset by an equally strong group of Kurds and Alevi. Numerous Gülen's supporters live in Berlin. Gülen, whom Erdogan accuses of masterminding the uprising, is a cleric living in the USA. Gülen's supporters are now also being threatened in Berlin.

Prayer

- **Pray for a peaceful co-existence of Turks in Berlin**
- **Pray for wisdom for the police and politicians in dealing with the new conflicts**
- **Pray for protection for all whose freedom of speech is being threatened**

March for Life

The 12th March for Life in Berlin will take place on September 17 directly in front of the House of Representatives. The motto is: "Yes to life. For a Europe without abortion and euthanasia! Everyone is equally valuable, regardless of characteristics and outward circumstances."

The number of participants has been growing since the beginning. This year, 37 special buses will bring people to Berlin to participate in this silent call for unconditional right to life.

Opponents are using the motto to call for a counter-demonstration: "Your silence is worthless. Celebrate feminism instead!" Their Facebook event page is calling for people to block and sabotage the March for Life following their own anti-fascist and queer feminist demonstration. As of August 20, 158 people said they would attend the event, and 208 expressed interest. In addition, two other counter-demonstrations have been scheduled.

We want to surround the March for Life in prayer (see dates).

Prayer:

- **Pray that many will take part in the march and that the call for life will go out and be heard in politics and society**
- **Pray for protection and that all will go well for the march and for wisdom for the police**
- **That Christians will be testimony of God's love to the counter-demonstrators**

Keeping On: Education

School will start on September 5 at the nearly 800 general schools in Berlin. The student numbers increased more than expected, and there is an acute shortage of teachers. Berlin is at the bottom of the list of comparative education in all of Germany, but this is also strongly influenced by the social background of students.

We continue to pray for good education of pupils in Berlin.

Dates:

Prayer for Berlin's elections before election day:

- **August 31, 6-9pm** House of Prayer „Rund um die Uhr“, Dolomitenstr. 87, 13187 Berlin-Pankow
- **September 7, 6-7pm** at the House of Representatives (Abgeordnetenhaus)
- **September 14, 6-7pm** at the Rote Rathaus
- **September 15, 8-10pm** in Gemeinde auf dem Weg, Waidmannsluster Damm 7c-e, 13507 Berlin

Prayer for the *March for Life*:

- **September 16, 6-7:30pm** Begins at the Platz der Republik and ends on August-Bebel-Platz
- **September 17, 11:30pm** on the Platz der Republik parallel to the march

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