



Edition 152 – March 2017

Good News: More Money for Short-ages in the Public Service Sector

Trade unions and federal states have reached a compromise for public service workers. Massive warning strikes in Berlin preceded this decision. As of January 1, employees received a 2% increase, with at least 75 Euros more pay. This minimum amount ensures lower-paid employees a higher percent salary increase. Overall, the wage increase is 4.35% over a two-year period. From December, 2017 onwards, Berlin state employees will receive a further 1.5%. This brings Berlin back up to the level of other federal states. Nearly every second teacher in the capital is employed - thus over 10,000 people benefit from the increase. Teachers are urgently being sought in Berlin. The trade unions also dealt with improvements for employees in day care, nursing and social work, sectors which are also experiencing shortages.

- **Thank God for the wage compromise**
- **Pray for new, committed employees in the teaching and social professions**

Senator of the Economy Ramona Pop

The new Senate has been in office since December, 2016. We are presenting the senators who are new to the government in a small series..

Ramona Pop, 39, Alliance 90 / The Greens is Senator for Economy, Energy and Enterprises in the new Senate. As Mayor, she is also the Deputy Prime Minister. She comes from a family of Banater Swabia, a German Catholic minority in Romania and has lived in Münster / Westphalia since 1988. She studied Political Science there and at the Freie Universität Berlin. She has been a member of the Greens party since 1997. Since 2001, she has been a member of the House of Representatives of Berlin, was vice-chairman of the Greens parliamentary group and the labor market policy spokesperson for 2006-2009, and chairman of the parliamentary group in 2009-2016. In the 2016 election, she won a direct mandate in Berlin-Mitte. She is part of the realo wing (pragmatic wing) of her party and is concerned about equality and fairness.

What is less known is that she was the only one in the new Senate besides the Governing Mayor, to take the oath of office including the phrase "so help me God". At an event in 2015 organized by the diocesan council, the lay representative of the archdiocese of Berlin, she said that people are searching for values and fellowship. But she doesn't want to see the involvement of churches

limited only to the discussion about values, but also to work with refugees, social work, the protection of Sundays and ecology. (Day of the Lord, Kath. Week-time, April 30, 2015)

Ramona Pop describes her role as Senator as follows: (Der Tagesspiegel February 2, 2017) "We need to bring climate protection and economic dynamics together. I am negotiating openly and intensively with all those involved. And many companies have already recognized that they can write very good "black figures" with "green" ideas. The companies are often already farther along than most people think ... We have to address topics concerning the future such as digitization ... Our municipal utility company should produce renewable energy and then also distribute it. We want to unleash the utility company to play a powerful part in the energy turnaround."

PRAYER:

- **Pray that Frau Pop as a "woman of peace" will contribute to the success of the work of the Senate**
- **Pray for God's favour on those involved in the economy and innovation for the good of the city**
- **Pray that Ramona Pop will succeed in implementing Christian values in her office**

Radical Mosque closed

The Mosque "Fussilet 33" in the Perleberger Straße in Berlin's district Moabit apparently closed itself before being forced to close. But now the police must observe where they will move to. Whether there is a replacement location is currently still open. On February 28, the Berlin administration announced the prohibition against the Mosque Association since the February 15. Anis Amri, the assassin of the Breitscheid-platz, had been hanging out there, as well as a number of other so-called threats to public safety. Five board members and supporters are now being prosecuted on suspicion of terror. Amri was a Tunisian, but the mosque was mainly a meeting place for radical-Islamic Chechens from Berlin and Brandenburg. He is said to have accompanied Chechen fighters from Germany to Syria and paid for air tickets for them. Some Chechens in Berlin and Brandenburg have been among the Islamic threats to public safety who are under observation by the police.

PRAYER:

- **Thank God that the meeting place has been closed**
- **Pray for vigilance and protection against all who plan attacks**
- **Pray for appropriate measures to dry up the Islamist scene**

Police need Blessing and Protection

It has been repeatedly reported that policemen are being treated disrespectfully. A new federal law is designed to provide better protection for police by punishing assaults more severely. Police are also understaffed. Police officers often have to work for many weeks in a row without a day off – in shifts of ten or twelve hours – and so the families often suffer. The average age of officers is almost 50. Many will retire in the coming years. Because of the high stress level, they are often sick. The city is growing by about 40,000 inhabitants per year – but the number of police is not growing. For many years, more and more jobs had been eliminated, so that now the bottleneck cannot be overcome even by hiring new people.

PRAYER:

- **Thank God for the work of the police**
- **Pray that God will bless their work and protect them from physical and verbal attacks**
- **Pray that plans can be made which will provide relief for policemen**

New Attorney General

Since November 2015, the office of the Berlin General Public Prosecutor, which is also important in view of the threat of terrorism, has been advertised as vacant. A five-member selection committee has now selected Margarete Koppers as the Vice President of the Police instead of her competitor Susanne Hoffmann, who is the department head in the Brandenburg Ministry of Justice. This recommendation is highly controversial because the selection committee was exchanged after the establishment of the new Justice Minister Dirk Behrendt. Thus, the CDU parliamentary group in the Berlin parliament has called for access to the files concerning the new commission. Koppers was the temporary police chief and was quite successful in that role. Prior to that, she was chairman of a large criminal court for many years, but she has no experience as a prosecutor. Furthermore, because of a long illness, she has not gone to any job interview.

PRAYER:

- **Pray that the processes will become transparent and that the inconsistencies will be clarified**
- **Pray that the Attorney General's office will remain politically independent and will soon be filled by the person God desires**

New BER-Technical Manager

Without advance notice, management hired Christoph Bretschneider as the BER supervisor. Disappointment in the work of the former technical manager Jörg Mark had arisen when new events began to question an opening in 2018, but this decision was not made in accordance with the presidential committee and involves high severance costs.

PRAYER:

- **Pray for wisdom and success for Bretschneider for a quick completion**
- **Pray for good collaboration between management and shareholders**

Dynamissio-Kongress in Berlin

The conference for evangelism and church growth, organized by an alliance of evangelistic associations, will be held in Berlin March 23-25. Full-time staff and volunteers from various Lutheran churches and free churches, parachurch organizations and associations are invited. The conference is designed to encourage and equip people to share their faith, to help churches to take the initiative to encounter people, and to help live people out the gospel in their own lives. The plenary sessions will take place in the Velodrome. In addition, there are over 100 forums and seminars, as well as numerous projects in Berlin which will provide information about their work. An overview is available at: <http://dynamissio.de>.

PRAYER:

- **Pray that evangelistic fire will be ignited**
- **Pray for inspiring experiences for congress participants from Berlin and beyond**

Keeping On: Security package

The "prevention and security package" passed by the Senate after the terrorist attack at Breitscheidplatz is still only on paper. Fixed timetables are missing, for instance, for the long overdue modernization of police and rescue forces. There will not be any additional personnel for Berlin security authorities in the foreseeable future.

- **Let's pray that specific next steps to make the city safer will be introduced quickly – but above all for God's protection!**

Dates:

- **March 1-April 16 „Fasting and Prayer for our Country“** <http://40tagebetenundfasten.de>
- **March 4, 11am-4pm Day of Prayer for North Korea**, Alte Nazarethkirche Leopoldplatz
- **March 15, 6-7pm: Prayer for city politicians** at the Rote Rathaus
- **March 31, 5-7 pm: Prayer for the Kotti**, Adalbertstraße 97, in the Gebetskeller