



Edition 153 – April 2017

Good News: Declining Crime Rate

The crime rate in Berlin has fallen slightly in 2016. There were 689 cases less than in 2015 - although Berlin grew by about 60,000 inhabitants. Above all, the number of burglaries and robberies decreased slightly. However, pickpocketing and bicycle theft are increasing – and such cases are hardly ever solved. Politically motivated crime is also increasing. Nevertheless, the overall rate of solved cases has declined from 50% ten years ago to 42% today - partly due to the increase in "petty crimes".

Prayer:

- **Thank God for the decline in crime rate**
- **Pray for effective measures against theft and other forms of crimes**
- **Pray that the police will be increasingly successful in solving crimes**

Assisting Unemployed Young People

About 10% of all pupils in Berlin drop out of school without finishing. These young people should also be given the opportunity to find a place in the working world. They often need special support. Although the Hauptschule was abolished in Berlin, this did not lead to a better education. In the meantime, there are once again some secondary schools where problems are accumulating. In secondary schools, the class size is considerably larger than in primary schools, and the students cannot be looked after so intensively. A real breakthrough has not yet been achieved. Therefore, unemployed young people should be especially supported. There are financial resources available. Since the number of employees in Berlin is rising in general, even weaker young people would have an opportunity on the labor market if they were specifically assisted.

Prayer:

- **Pray for a successful assistance for young people who have dropped out of school**
- **Pray that ways to improve school education can be discovered**

The Gender Star

An increasing number of district administrations are using a so-called "gender-neutral language". This is supposed to lead to linguistic equal treatment for men and women. However, since some are of the opinion

that there are other gender forms between male and female, it is likely that this will be difficult. Nevertheless, the government is not afraid to move forward with new ways of language. Already in the red-red-green coalition agreement, the new Senate has consistently used the "gender star". Take the German word for "residents", for example. In the coalition agreement, it was written "Einwohner*innen" (the first part indicates male residents, the second female). When read aloud, there is a pause in the middle. The procedure is now taking on dictatorial features however. In the districts of Mitte and Lichtenberg, it has been suggested that all documents must contain gender-neutral language, that is, all possible sexes must be taken into account. This is even to apply to official requests made to the district. Print publications without such gender-neutral language would simply no longer to be dealt with. This is now to be decided by the district parliaments. What is happening is that gendered language is forcing the underlying worldview on us. Those who turn against it can soon no longer express themselves officially. It is no longer just about men and women being treated equally - a very legitimate concern. It is now about the implementation of a certain ideology with which human beings are viewed. This takes hold in all areas. Particularly in the area of education, this ideological view is strongly being put into practice. Educators are encouraged to address pupils according to the sexual identity the pupils themselves have chosen and to name them as such.

(Source: Berliner Zeitung vom 25./26.2.2017)

Prayer:

- **Pray that there will be public resistance to the use of this type of language to convey a certain ideology**
- **Pray that democratic life remains possible without making everyone subject to a language constraint**
- **Pray that positive ways can be found to treat men and women equally**

Acid Attacks Against Women

Since December, 2016 there have already been six attacks using a skin-irritating fluid on women in Berlin. In at least one case, it was battery acid. Each time, the perpetrator was on a bicycle at night and abruptly sprayed the liquid in the direction of the face of a pedestrian. Some of the women had to be treated in the

hospital. Whether it was the same offender and whether hatred of women is the motive could not be determined by the police yet. After the last attack in Prenzlauer Berg, a special five-person investigation team was set up. A medium-sized man between the ages of 35 and 45 is being sought. Ten tips have already been given to the police by the public.

Prayer:

- **Pray for mental and physical healing for the affected women**
- **Pray that the police will be successful in apprehending the perpetrator(s) and for protection against further attacks**

Turkish Constitutional Reform in Berlin

On April 16, 2017, Turkey will vote on the controversial constitutional reform. All Turks living outside of Turkey may vote from March 27 to April 9. This applies to 139,000 people in Berlin. They will be allowed to vote at the Turkish Consulate at Heerstraße. The ballots will then be sent to Turkey and counted there. These ballots from abroad could tip the scales, since a close outcome of the referendum among voters within Turkey is expected. The entire opposition in the Berlin Senate has applied for a ban on Turkish election campaigning in the capital. The Federal Government opted for general toleration in order to portray the values of freedom that we so greatly appreciate. At times, the Turkish government voluntarily renounced electoral campaigns in Germany. The Berlin police are prepared to secure protests outside the consulate premises in order to ensure freedom of assembly.

Prayer:

- **Pray for social peace between representatives of both opinions**
- **Pray that inner-Turkish confrontations will not be exported into our city**
- **Pray that justice and freedom will win in Turkey**

Senator of Justice Dirk Behrendt

Dirk Behrendt, 45, from the Greens party is another new member of the Berlin Senate. He grew up in Reinickendorf and graduated from high school in the Märkisches Viertel. After receiving his law degree and doctorate, he has been serving at various courts in Berlin. From 2006 to 2016 he was a directly elected representative in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (in the latest election, he received more than 49% of the vote). In the Berlin parliament, Behrendt frequently attacked the right-wing politicians and those concerned with domestic affairs, particularly those from the CDU. This

has brought him respect, even among from the competition. According to the coalition agreement, he will now strive to bring about faster court proceedings, as well as better provision for personnel for the courts and penal institutions. His special concerns are the planned (scientifically accompanied) acceptance of cannabis consumption and the planned expansion of the "Rainbow City" with a more widely accepted variety of all forms of sexual life. At the moment, Behrendt is being criticized for the allegedly unclear application procedure of the possible new General Attorney General, a post which has been vacant for quite some time.

Prayer:

- **Pray for ideology-free work of the Senator as much as possible, in order to improve the effectiveness of the justice system**
- **Pray for justifiably medical and legally responsible regulations for cannabis use**
- **Pray for success in the fight against problems in prisons**
- **Pray for successful cooperation in the Senate for the good of the city**

Keeping On

Many situations that are important to us cannot be presented in detail in every prayer newsletter. For this reason, here is a short reminder.

Prayer:

- **Pray for good integration of the refugees and the effective protection of Christian refugees**
- **Pray for quicker further construction of the BER under the leadership of the new managing director E. Lütke Daldrup**
- **Pray for protection from terrorist attacks and timely discovery of planned attacks**

Dates:

- **April 12, 6-7 pm: Prayer for City Politicians** at the Rote Rathaus
- **April 28, 5-7 pm: Prayer for the Kotti**, Adalbertstraße 97, in the prayer basement at the Kottbusser Tor
- **May 1 all day: Prayer Events for a peaceful May 1:** 75 hours BURN – Praise and Prayer – Saturday, April 29 9am until Tuesday, May 2 12:00. More information: www.Gebetskeller-kreuzberg.de
On May 1, special intercessory prayer at midnight, 12:00, 4:00, and 8:00 pm. During the 6pm Demo, which often led to violence, onsite prayer. Infos from the office of GfB (Together for Berlin): 030-23003403