



Edition 168 – October 2018

## **Good News: Berlin is growing slower**

Berlin continues to grow, but not as dynamically as in previous years. This is good news given the acute housing shortage. The population increased by an average of almost 50,000 people a year from 2011 to 2016, in 2017 there was an increase of only 38,665 (Statistical Office Berlin-Brandenburg). At this rate of growth, Berlin will probably not reach more than four million inhabitants before 2030. Since the fall of the wall, there has been the same trend: the population of Berlin with a German passport is shrinking; the proportion of foreigners had risen to 17.6 percent at the end of last year. 193 (!) nationalities are now represented in Berlin. (Tagesspiegel 9/18)

- **Thank God for this population development and for the coexistence of the nations**

## **Acute: Security Situation during the State Visit of Erdogan**

From **September 27 to 29** the Turkish President Erdogan will be on a state visit to Berlin. He is known to be controversial because of his autocratic rule and disregard of fundamental rights. Numerous demonstrations against the visit are registered, partly with potential for violence. Interior Senator Andreas Geisel (SPD) said: "These are difficult days that will push us to the limits of our capacity." During the state visit, the highest security level applies. As usual, the Berlin police will have reinforcements from other federal states and from the Federal Police, also because in the following days there are more large-scale operations of the police during the top match of the Bundesliga Hertha Berlin against Bayern Munich and because of the celebrations around October 3rd.

### **Prayer**

- **Pray for God's special protection over the city during these days**
- **Pray for non-violent demos and good police tactics**

## **"Only with you" - 28 Years Unity**

The 28th day of German Re-unification will be celebrated in the capital in original settings of this historically unique process, which is still a miracle of God in

the midst of our history and city. **ONLY WITH YOU** - this is the motto for the Day of German Unity. Since 1991, central celebrations for October 3rd have been organized in the federal state which has Federal Council Presidency, which changes annually. In 2018 it is Berlin. The celebration will take place from October 1 to 3 around the Brandenburg Gate and in front of the Reichstag, where unified Germany began in 1990. Together with many hundreds of partners, a colourful programme will be offered on three days. In addition to political bodies, museums and foundations, volunteer projects, initiatives and associations will also be on the spot. Unfortunately (as far as known) no own programme contributions of the churches and Christian organisations came about. But at the opening there is an ecumenical service in the Berlin Cathedral. Info: <https://www.tag-der-deutschen-einheit.berlin.de/>

### **Prayer**

- **Thank God for the miracle of unity and freedom, even after 28 years**
- **Pray that courage and hope for the future will grow out of grateful remembrance**

## **Prayer for Schools**

We regularly report on specific prayer requests that affect our more than 700 schools in Berlin. It is clear: schools need prayer! An initiative of various prayer initiatives calls for every school in Germany to be surrounded by prayer of a church. According to information from "Moms in Prayer", parent prayer groups for 11 schools in Berlin are known. So there is "still room for improvement".

### **Prayer:**

- **Pray for more prayer sponsorships for schools**
- **Pray for prayer support, especially for Christian teachers in hotspot schools**

## **More unfit teachers**

There is a shortage of teachers in the capital. Berlin not only has a deficit in new teachers, but there is also a massive loss of teachers by premature retirement due to illness or disability. There has been a failure to train sufficient new teachers on time. Also, teaching in Berlin is not very attractive because there is a lack of the possibility to become a civil servant.

### Prayer

- **Pray for more places at universities for education majors and the opportunity to become civil servants**
- **Pray for the protection of teachers from excessive demand and burnout**

### **More Protection for Cyclists**

So far, ten cyclists have died in road traffic in Berlin this year, most of them by turning trucks. For a long time, the installation of so-called turn-assistants in trucks has been required, but that has so far failed due to technical problems and allegedly too high costs, and there is still no national or European legislation for it. The Berliner Stadtreinigung (BSR) is now setting a good example. Already 46 newly ordered garbage trucks are to be equipped with a turn-assistant. In addition, different systems will be tested by the end of the year - for example, with radar and 360-degree cameras. The other municipal companies in Berlin are to follow.

### Prayer

- **Pray that the number of trucks with turn-assistants would rise rapidly**
- **Pray that turn-assistants would soon be obligatory**
- **Pray for the protection of cyclists in traffic**

### **Care-givers from Albania and Mexico**

Around 2,600 care-givers are missing in Berlin. In an attempt to tackle the shortage of skilled workers, the Charité University Hospital has been seeking care-givers and nurses from Albania since 2017. Over 75 Albanian employees have since been obtained through this program. Nursing is a field of study at the university level in Albania - as in many other countries. But before the care-givers are allowed to work in Germany, they still have to do additional training, learn German and pass the appropriate exams. Each year, 60 new nurses will come in the future. From the point of view of the Nursing Director, the program is so good that she intends to get nurses from Mexico soon, despite copious bureaucratic hurdles. (rbb 24, 9/25.)

### Prayer

- **Pray for further creative ideas to solve the problem of the nursing crisis**
- **Pray for good integration of the foreign care-givers**

### **Razor Blades on Playground**

Several times in the past weeks dangerous objects were found on the playground at Arnimplatz in Prenzlauer Berg. The playground was repeatedly

blocked off and cleaned. Since razor blades were once again found, the playground is closed again. The district office has commissioned a cleaning company to clean the sand this week in the deeper layers. In recent weeks, in addition to the razor blades, broken glass and needles have been found in the sand. The police are investigating for attempted assault. Just a week ago, a woman injured herself in the playground with a needle in her foot as she played with her children in the sand. At the beginning of August, thumbtacks were found on the playground. City council Vollrad Kuhn suspects that the perpetrators may be local residents who feel disturbed by the children. Pankow's district mayor Sören Benn condemned the acts in the "Berliner Morgenpost" as "antisocial behaviour". Anyone who does this should move away. (Tagesspiegel 9/17)

### Prayer

- **Pray for rapid investigative success**
- **Pray for more child friendliness among residents**
- **Pray that God brings the hearts of the perpetrators to repentance**

### **Keeping On: Clan Crime**

Following the brutal murder of a clan member on Sept. 10, clashes between hostile Arab-born family clans continue to take place. The inner committee of the Berlin Parliament is now dealing with the topic and is looking for ways to put an end to the machinations of the clans. The mayor of Neukölln complains that "extreme brutality endangers social peace", and that, as Hikel added, problems arise because the rest of the population lumps all Arab fellow-citizens into the same group and considers them all to be criminal. Some ideas are being examined such as the exchange of information between the authorities, by applications for welfare, the registration of businesses or in tax investigation. Taking away custody of children from these families is also being discussed

### Prayer

- **Pray that all legal options will be fully exploited**
- **Pray that social peace will not be endangered**
- **Pray for wisdom and good cooperation between the responsible authorities**

### **Dates**

**Prayer for City Politicians: Oct. 10, 6pm, in front of the Rotes Rathaus**

**„Moms in Prayer“ Informational meeting: Oct. 138, 10:00-12:30, Mavuno Berlin, Billy-Wilder-Promenade**

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