



Press Review on Asylum Policy, October 2017

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Since it's simply less work to just copy-paste them,
dates follow the German notification (dd.mm.yy)

News:

View to Europe and the World

- In the middle of October, 6060 people were rescued by SOS Méditerranée and brought to Palermo. Seven missions in 36 hours were required. Italian government states that the number of people escaping from Tunisia to Lampedusa or Sicily has tripled. The number of people coming from Algeria to Sardinia has doubled. 25 % less people escaped from Libya to Italy. 108,400 people reached Italy ever since the beginning of the year. 2,775 people dies trying it. In sum, 143,000 people reached Europe via the Mediterranean.
<http://www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/zeitgeschehen/2017-10/mittelmeer-fluechtlinge-aquarius-rettung>
(13.10.17)
- Almost a million people of the Muslim Rohingya minority have escaped from Burma to Bangladesh now. US State Department considers sanctions against single persons or army units within Burma administration. On a summit, international community provided 290 million Euro. UNHCR says that until February 370 million Euro are required to provide the needed.
<http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/rohingya-fluechtlingskrise-usa-kuendigen-sanktionen-gegen-burma-an-a-1174352.html> (24.10.17)
<http://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2017-10/vereint-nationen-rohingya-fluechtlinge> (23.10.17)
- Again, a terror attack was committed in Kabul. At least five people died and 23 got injured (more information: see below).
<http://www.zeit.de/politik/2017-10/afghanistan-kabul-anschlag-diplomatenviertel-tote> (31.10.17)
- Amnesty International has published a report on the security situation in Afghanistan. The NGO clearly speaks out against deportations to the country and named the report "Forced back to Danger". No region in the country would be safe. The recognition quotes of the people seeking protection should reflect this. Amnesty has documented the cases of people who escaped Afghanistan as kids, who do not know the country anymore and were yet deported. A father, deported from Norway, was kidnapped and murdered, shortly after. In the past year, 11,500 people were killed or injured in Afghanistan. In the first six months of 2017, 5,200 people were affected.
<http://www.migazin.de/2017/10/05/amnesty-international-bundesregierung-lebensgefahr-asylbewerber/> (05.10.17)

- The situation on the islands of the Aegean has been becoming ever more critical, claims Doctors without Borders. Only in September, 2,200 people have reached Lesbos island. In Camp Moria, 5,000 people are living. Its capacity actually is 1,800. On October 8th, a four year old girl died there. Doctors without Borders state a psycho-social emergency. 50 % would have experienced violence in Turkey, 25 % in Greece. Suicide attempts and self-injuries have increased by 60 %. Additionally, the Higher Administrative Court of Greece ruled that people of Syrian citizenship can be deported to Turkey now as well. Thereby, they also remain on the islands, waiting for deportation and not being transferred to Greek mainland. <http://www.taz.de/Fluechtlinge-in-Griechenland/!5452023/> (10.10.17)

Federal, State and Municipality Level

- "Zendegi - No Deportations to Afghanistan" organized a protest camp on Leipzig Augustusplatz from Saturday to Tuesday this week. The occasion: yesterday's deportation to Afghanistan from Leipzig / Halle airport. It was enforced despite of one of the bloodiest weeks that ever happened in Afghanistan. Due to a couple of attacks committed by Taliban and IS, around 250 people died. At the same time, the Federal Ministry for Traffic warned airlines and pilots to approach Kabul airport. Rocket attacks are supposed to be expected. Around 150 people demonstrated at Leipzig airport against deportations to a country that is not safe - as even official statements confirm. Nevertheless, the head of the Conference of the Ministers of the Interior and Saxon office holder Markus Ulbig called the deportation "binding". In the end, the plane departed with 14 people. A lawyer succeeded in letting BAMF check the second asylum request for one of her clients.
- Interview in LIZ with Alireza Alizade from Zendegi about the deportation, the situation in Afghanistan, an asylum system that reduces people to their nationality and hope: <https://www.liz.de/politik/sachsen/2017/10/Interview-zu-Abschiebungen-nach-Afghanistan-%E2%80%9ELeben-wie-in-einem-Gefahrenis%E2%80%9C-195449> (23.10.17)
- Report by MDR protest camp on Leipzig Augustusplatz (Zendegi mentioned): <http://www.mdr.de/sachsen/leipzig/protest-gegen-abschiebung-100.html> (23.10.17)
MDR with quotes from Bavarian Refugee Council on people who were deported from Bavaria as well as from Zendegi and Juliane Nagel: <http://www.mdr.de/nachrichten/politik/regional/abschiebeflieger-nach-afghanistan-100.html> (24.10.17)
On the attacks in Afghanistan: <http://de.euronews.com/2017/10/22/blutige-woche-in-afghanistan> (22.10.17)
On Ulbig: <http://www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/zeitgeschehen/2017-10/afghanistan-abschiebungen-leipzig-demonstrationen> (24.10.17)
- 22 people of Syrian citizenship have requested "voluntary return" between January and August of that year. <http://www.zeit.de/news/2017-10/14/deutschland-auch-syrische-fluechtlinge-verlassen-deutschland-freiwillig-14010603> (14.10.17)
- According to the response of the Federal Government to a minor inquiry by the Left party, 300 family members could move from Greece to their relatives in Germany, being recognized as refugees. Only, 5,000 are eligible for family reunification between both countries this year already. Left party criticizes this as "illegal tricks". http://www.deutschlandfunk.de/fluechtlinge-bundesregierung-verzoegert-laut-bericht.1939.de.html?drn:news_id=801006 (07.10.17)
- Diakonie and Caritas call upon the parties of a potential Jamaica coalition, not to extend suspension of family reunification beyond March 2018. The current ruling is disastrous under humanitarian and integration aspects. Consequences become apparent daily. Again and again, family members would break down in the counseling centers of the welfare organizations. Especially unaccompanied minors do not feel able to handle the challenges they face. <http://www.dnn.de/Nachrichten/Politik/Wohlfahrtsverbande-fordern-Familiennachzug-fuer-Fluechtlinge> (20.10.17)

- The number of people seeking protection from Maghreb countries has decreased that year. 1,662 people of Moroccan citizenship requested asylum, 4,156 in the previous year. Recognition quote increased marginally: from 3,6 % to 6,25 %.
 - For Algeria: 2016: 3,761 requesting, recognition quote: 2,7 %; 2017: 1,529, 3,6 %
 - For Tunisia: 2016: 975, 0,8 %; 2017: 326, 2,6 %

http://www.migazin.de/2017/10/11/weniger-asylbewerber-maghreb-staaten-schutzquote/?utm_source=wysija&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=MIGAZIN+Newsletter (11.10.17)
- Refugees of Turkish citizenship accuse BAMF employees of handing over information on identity, place of residence and state of asylum procedure to Turkish media. There they are termed as "terrorists". BAMF officially does not know about these cases. More than 600 people from Turkish army and diplomatic service have requested asylum ever since July 2016.

<http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/tuerkei-bamf-mitarbeiter-sollen-tuerkische-asylbewerber-bespitzt-haben/20455958.html> (14.10.17)
- Saxon government agreed upon a fixed abode for recognized refugees. By that instrument, refugees need to stay in the counties or cities they were distributed to. County Council remains skeptical, the ruling would have "appellative character", it does not seem controllable. The tightened housing market in Dresden and Leipzig is brought up as a reason for fixed abode. Only, fixed abode for refugees won't be a solution for the problems, huge cities face. It's a false solution that discriminates institutionally.

<http://www.mdr.de/sachsen/landesregierung-ueber-wohnsitzaufgabe-fuer-fluechtlinge-einig-100.html> (11.10.17)
- In Leipzig county, another family was separated. The mother jumped out of the window in panic when police stood in front of the door. Father and three kids were deported to Georgia, only dressed in their pyjamas. One of the kids uses a wheel chair. Due to its epilepsy, the family came to Germany. Here they could get the hardly needed medics. Now, the mother wants to "voluntarily" follow her family to Georgia.

<http://www.mdr.de/sachsen/leipzig/familientrennung-durch-abschiebung-bei-leipzig-100.html> (06.10.17)

Joint press release by Bon Courage e.V. and SFR e.V.: <http://www.saechsischer-fluechtlingsrat.de/de/2017/10/05/noch-eine-familientrennung/>
- And a third family became the target of Saxon Ministry of the Interior. A mother and her eight kids were deported to Kosovo. Saxon Hardship Commission had already granted a residence permit to the family, including the father. Only, a court in Montenegro sentenced him with four months of jail for a crime, he allegedly committed six years ago. The father was not present in court and could not defend himself. Germany delivered the man to Montenegro. Saxon Ministry of the Interior then withdrew the residence permits for the whole family. This is a legally questionable proceeding: individuals receive residence permits, not collectives such as families. Christian Schönfeld from Diakonie and member of Hardship commission, raised those doubts towards the Ministry of the Interior, other members as well did not agree. Only, the ministry of the interior made facts before Hardship Commission was able to discuss the issue. The family is in Kosovo now.

<http://www.sz-online.de/nachrichten/abgeschoben-mit-acht-kindern-3799580.html> (20.10.17)

<http://www.dnn.de/Dresden/Lokales/Mutter-mit-acht-Kindern-abgeschoben> (19.10.17)

Press Release by SFR e.V.: <http://www.saechsischer-fluechtlingsrat.de/de/2017/10/19/pm-innenministerium-erschuettert-vertrauen-in-haertefallkommission-und-petitionsausschuss/> (19.10.17)
- Suddenly there is high media interest towards the alternative documents, issued instead of the "Duldung" in Saxony. *LIZ* calls them "official arbitrariness", *taz* states that there are different interpretations of the term deportation and *ze:tt*, calls the documents "Fantasy papers". Indeed, residence law does not know "Grenzübertrittsbescheinigungen,

Identitätsbescheinigungen“ or whatever. They are a sheer invention by Saxon administration. The “Duldung” needs to be issued. That’s the legal interpretation of SFR and further NGOs in Leipzig, such as Refugee Law Clinic or Initiativkreis Menschen-Würdig. Without a Duldung, participation in the public sphere is not possible at all, likewise proving someone’s identity.

<https://ze.tt/wie-saechsische-behoerden-gefluechtete-mit-fantasiepapieren-abspeisen/> (12.10.17)

<http://www.taz.de/!5455013/> (13.10.17)

<https://www.l-iz.de/politik/sachsen/2017/10/Wie-auch-Leipzigs-Auslaenderbehoerde-Menschen-im-Abschiebestatus-die-Duldung-entzieht-und-Papiere-ohne-Rechtsgrundlage-andreht-194424> (14.10.17)

- Whoever is in the asylum procedure or in “Duldung” in Dresden, should not be advised to start working in the future. That sounds crazy but might be a consequence out of a possible City Council’s decision. Rental costs are supposed to increase up to 600 Euros whenever people from these groups live in collective accommodations or municipal apartments. Until now, costs are 340 Euro. According to the city, it had to invest 40 million Euro for “accommodation support” of refugees, even though it is the state’s task. Hence, costs need to be rolled of to refugees apparently. According to the city’s estimations, 150 people could be affected – their job might become a debt trap. The way to vocational training might be closed, already started trainings might be interrupted. The city’s financial committee already voted against the plans of Social Mayor Kris Kaufmann.

<http://www.sz-online.de/nachrichten/fluechtlinge-sollen-mehr-fuer-unterkuenfte-bezahlen-3806350.html> (30.10.17)

Press release by SFR e.V.: <http://www.saechsischer-fluechtlingsrat.de/de/2017/10/17/pm-dresden-exorbitante-mieten-zu-lasten-gefluechteter/> (17.10.17)

Background and Opinion

- Ugandan State Minister for Refugees, Musa Ecweru, speaks out against isolation and closed borders in *SPON* interview. His country has already received 1.3 million refugees, a hunger crisis seems likely. But Uganda would never reject only one person and send her*him back to war, to South Sudan for example. Citizens and refugees would starve jointly, as “brothers and sisters”. In June, Ugandan government organized a crisis summit in its capital, signaling that it would need two billion dollar in order to handle the challenge. International community donated 358 million dollar. Ecweru criticized EU asylum policy with emphasis. The number of received refugees would be a “drop in the bucket”, deals with warlords and militias no solution. The receiving countries in Africa should be supported much more by EU. He also accuses EU-member states to mix asylum policy and terrorism. In Uganda, politicians would carefully separate both issues.
<http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/ugandas-fluechtlingsminister-die-zeit-der-mauern-ist-vorbei-a-1168645.html> (04.10.17)
- An article by *Le Monde diplomatique*, published in *taz*, discusses legal ways of escape and migration. A chance was missed in March when European Court rejected humanitarian visa. Only those on EU territory or at its borders are allowed to request asylum. Human rights organizations would call that “asylum darwinism”. Only those who make it on the lethal escape routes could refer to their human right to asylum. Danish Centre for Human Rights as well as the Spanish party Podemos support the idea of asylum requests being issued in the embassies of EU member states. An EU wide ruling would not be necessary, member states could do that by themselves – which they do not. Instead, “Hot Spots” and “receiving camps” are created at the borders. There, people are supposed to request asylum, far away from European public. There are even Mini-Hotspots, says the author Arne Semsrott. Every Non-European airport would be one, actually. There, airlines would decide already who is eligible for immigrating to EU. Whenever people are carried who do

not have the required documents, the companies need to fly them back. A clear violation of Geneva Refugee Convention.

Resettlement programs should be loved by governments, actually. There they can decide who comes and how many come. But even those programs, that need to be critically accompanied, do not work or procedures take way too long.

The public focuses on the emergency savings in the Mediterranean. Emergency savings are only necessary because legal ways of escape and migration are missing. But even here, EU member states fall in the NGOs backs.

Furthermore, mixing asylum and migration policies with security policies is disastrous, says the author. "Illegal migration" is criminalized and its prevention equalized with preventing terror.

<http://www.taz.de/!5454209/> (12.10.17)

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