



European Union:

German government needs support from Paris

The new federal government in Germany is pushing for a more humane refugee policy, while France is demanding the exact opposite.

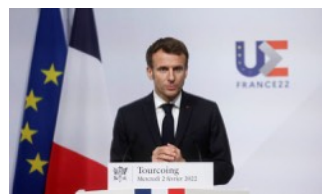
Shortly after being sworn in, the new German Minister of the Interior, Nancy Faeser, made clear that she did not want to continue the refugee policy of her predecessor Seehofer. She spoke of a "new spirit" in asylum policy.



The German government wants to end the dying in the Mediterranean, strengthen legal immigration into the EU and push back illegal migration. A "coalition of member states willing to take in" must lead the way in taking on refugees. Faeser is looking for ways "with the French in particular" so that other states "follow the good example".

At the informal meeting of EU justice and interior ministers in Lille, however, the discussion was about a much tougher approach to asylum policy.

Germany is sticking closely to France in migration policy. However, under the French EU Council Presidency, security and the protection of the EU's external borders could move to the fore, while humanity takes a back seat. Macron is in the middle of the election campaign, so in France he can



score less with humanitarian gestures than with toughness and control.

The message: unrestricted freedom of movement in the Schengen area can only be granted once the EU has control over the borders. In order to be able to react more quickly in crises, Macron also called for the introduction of a "Schengen Council", analogous to the Euro Group, in which the ministers involved meet. Macron found unanimous approval for this, and the Council is to meet for the first time on March 3rd.

On the fringes of the meeting in Lille, there was also clear criticism of the plans of the German interior minister. "We need stronger, more robust external border protection," said Austria's Interior Minister Gerhard Karner. In contrast to Faeser, he described the states that advocate this as a "coalition of the reasonable".

For Faeser, the question of whether France's demands for a new, tougher border regime is linked to commitments by at least some EU states to accept refugees is likely to be crucial. According to the German proposal, those who reject this can also show solidarity by making payments. France had so far refused to pay money instead of accepting refugees.

Germany:

Former Ditib official convicted

The former Ditib boss of the German city of Göttingen, Mustafa Keskin, has been sentenced to probation for anti-Semitic online posts. He should also pay a fine for his statements.

Between 2015 and 2021, the former official of the German-Turkish Mosque Association had spread at least five messages on social networks and the Internet containing insults against Jews and Armenians together with conspiracy theories. This was announced by the district court of Göttingen.

The court imposed a ten-month prison sentence, suspended for two years. Keskin is also required to pay a lump sum of €1,200 in installments of €75 to a charitable organization.

Among other things, Keskin had shared a post showing Pope Francis and the Turkish right-wing extremist Mehmet Ali Ağca. Ağca had severely injured Pope John Paul II in an assassination attempt in 1981. Because Francis recognizes the genocide of the Armenians as a historical reality, he shouldn't be surprised if someone shoots him in the head, the text of the article said.

The news had become public through research by the socialist youth association „Die Falken“. Keskin then resigned in February 2021. As the local Ditib chairman in Göttingen, he had campaigned for interreligious dialogue and was involved, among other things, in the round table of the Abrahamic religions in Göttingen.

The mosque association Ditib has long been politically controversial. Many federal

and state politicians consider it strongly influenced by the conservative AKP government of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Critics have been

calling for detachment from the Turkish government and the religious authority Diyanet in Ankara since 2016.

Ditib hit the headlines in particular in 2016, when imams in Germany apparently spied on their believers on behalf of the Turkish government.



Sweden:

The influence of political Islam in politics and society

A report published by the Swedish Office for Civil Protection and Crisis Management (MSB) on a possible threat to civil society posed by the Muslim Brotherhood has met with firm criticism from Swedish Islam researchers. The report concluded that various Muslim organizations in Sweden that have ties to the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood movement are trying to build a parallel society.



The reasoning is based on the observation that in Sweden the public discourse on the relationship between Muslims and the majority society is very "fuzzy". In particular, there is no clear conceptual demarcation between "Islamic", i.e. what merely refers to the practice of religion as such, and "Islamist", which describes the political goals of Muslim communities.

The Muslim Brotherhood is trying to gain a foothold in Sweden through organizations that are advanced but controlled by it, with a system that is not based on the principles of a liberal social order and the strict separation of church and state.

For its politically motivated work, the Muslim Brotherhood skilfully exploits the weaknesses and contradictions in the Swedish concept for shaping a multicultural society. The intellectual Swedish elite's penchant for political correctness makes it very easy for political Islam, striving for more influence, to dismiss any criticism of its illiberal substance as "racist" or "Islamophobic". This creates the paradox that a political direction, itself in contrast to important values for the Swedish self-image such as tolerance, freedom of expression

and freedom of religion, uses the toolbox of free society to undermine it.

The fact that the report was dismissed by the Young Muslims of Sweden (SUM) as a "racist conspiracy theory" fits into the pattern of the buzzword discussion described. And the fact that SUM was deprived of the state subsidy by the Swedish Youth Welfare Office in 2017 because of "lack of respect for the democratic idea" also says something. The youth organization of the right-wing nationalist Sweden Democrats was also affected by the same measure.

organizations, they are "exposed to Islamophobic hostilities" and there is "a real threat in the form of physical attacks against their facilities".

In its decision, the data protection authority has now stated that the fundamental right to freedom of science and opinion in the case of the "Islam Map" is to be given greater weight than the right of the MJÖ to secrecy of their personal data. The map provides a contribution to a debate of general interest, since issues relating to Islam are regularly the subject of media coverage.

Austria:

Data protection authority rejects protest by Muslim Youth Organization

The publication of locations and information about Islamic associations and mosques on the "Islam Map" of the „Documentation Center for Political Islam“ has not violated the right to secrecy or the right to information of the Muslim Youth of Austria (MJÖ). In this case, freedom of science and freedom of expression outweigh the secrecy of personal data, according to a recent decision by the data protection authority.

The locations of over 600 Islamic associations and mosques in Austria can be called up on the controversial "Islam Map"

and users can use various criteria to search for facilities. According to the MJÖ's complaint, some data not generally accessible, such



as the private addresses of club members or officials, are also disclosed. However, some of the complainants have a particular interest in secrecy because, as Muslim youth