

IYSSE secures representation in Humboldt University student parliament for 10th time with record result of 7.7 percent and 5 seats

IYSSE Humboldt University
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The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) achieved its best-ever result in the elections to the student parliament at Berlin's Humboldt University (HU). The IYSSE will enter the student parliament for the 10th time in a row with five deputies.

The IYSSE received 211 votes and thus achieved 7.7 percent of the vote. This amounts to a more than quadrupling of its vote compared to the last elections and a more than doubling of its proportional share, due to a sharp increase in voter turnout. In 2023, the IYSSE received 47 votes (2.7 percent). The IYSSE's vote increase was the largest among all lists that stood for election.

The IYSSE received 13 percent of the vote at Campus Nord, where many medical and biology students study. In the small, decentralized polling station of the Institute of Islamic Theology, the IYSSE received every vote cast.

The IYSSE is thus the fifth-strongest group in parliament, winning more votes than the student organisation of the Christian Democratic Union (RCDS, 5.2 percent) and the student organisation of the Free Democrats, one of the three parties in the federal coalition government, (LHG, 6.4 percent). The Jusos, the youth group of the Social Democrats, received 10.3 percent, while Grünboldt (Greens) took 13.7 percent. The largest group is the non-partisan and programmatically amorphous Left List with 32.2 percent. Die Linke.SDS, the student association of the collapsing Left Party, did not stand for election.

The increase in votes for the IYSSE was attained in the face of repression on the part of university management. They initially banned the IYSSE's election events and then only approved them with severe restrictions. In addition, the IYSSE's posters were torn down by university employees and right-wing groups. The Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Verfassungsschutz, Germany's main domestic spy agency) included the IYSSE in its report shortly before the election. In the reactionary tradition of Germany's anti-socialist laws, it denounced the IYSSE as a

left-wing extremist and anti-constitutional organisation.

The political significance of the IYSSE's strong election result extends beyond the Humboldt University campus. At HU, the extremely acute situation in Germany and internationally finds concentrated expression. While the ruling class is risking nuclear war in the war against Russia, returning to the methods of genocide in Gaza and militarising society to achieve its geostrategic interests, it is employing repressive measures against anyone who opposes imperialist militarism.

Left-wing cultural centers are closed when they criticize the genocide in Gaza, students are attacked when they protest against the war, and professors who speak out against police violence are threatened with the cancellation of research funds. The government is implementing its war policy with unrestrained brutality and establishing a police state.

At Humboldt University, this is finding particularly sharp expression. In April, a peaceful and legal demonstration in front of the HU main building was assaulted by the police in close cooperation with university management. When the students occupied the Institute of Social Sciences in May, the police beat them unconscious, mistreated a journalist, and arrested a lawyer who was on-site in a professional capacity. Investigations were even opened against members of the student council (RefRat), although they had come to the occupied institute as mediators, together with the university president.

As a result, events on the topics of genocide, antisemitism and war were only allowed to take place under the strictest conditions. For example, at the IYSSE election events, every participant was checked and searched by security guards. Anyone who could not present a student ID card was rejected at the entrance. Even a district representative of the Left Party, Rüdiger Deissler, was not admitted to the event despite providing appropriate evidence. Other critical student groups were also affected by the procedure.

The election result at HU shows that this policy confronts broad opposition and that many students are not intimidated. Taken together, the student organisations of all parties represented in the Bundestag received only 35.6 percent of the votes. Almost all other lists had sharply criticized the deploying of the police against students during the election campaign.

The enormous opposition finds its most conscious expression in the vote for the IYSSE. It was the only election list to condemn the genocide in Gaza and the war against Russia. The IYSSE election statement declared:

We students cannot win alone. The only social force capable of ending the genocide and defending democratic rights is the international working class, the great majority that creates all the wealth of society. As the youth organisation of the Fourth International, we stand for the unification of workers across all national, religious, and ethnic boundaries in the struggle against capitalism and war.

The brutal violence against opponents of war shows that it is pointless to appeal to the government. A world war can only be prevented if capitalism is overthrown and replaced by a socialist society in which the needs of working people come before the interests of profit.

The IYSSE already put forward this perspective at a rally in front of the HU main building last December, which was organized in cooperation with other student groups and to which 300 students came. Shortly thereafter, the IYSSE invited the editor-in-chief of the *World Socialist Web Site*, David North, to HU who delivered a lecture placing the genocide in Gaza in its historical context and confronted the nationalist ideology of Zionism with the perspective of international socialism. The lecture was viewed over 10,000 times on YouTube and also published in German in the volume *Die Logik des Zionismus (The Logic of Zionism)* by Mehring Verlag.

Shortly before the election, the IYSSE organised two events at the University's main lecture theatre. In the first, titled "How to continue the fight against genocide and police violence," the IYSSE showed that the genocide in Gaza and the NATO war against Russia represent two fronts of a global conflict for the redivision of the world. As in the 20th century, capitalism is leading to world war again. A movement against genocide must therefore be a movement against capitalism and cannot rely on any capitalist regime, but only on the international working class.

At the second event, the IYSSE discussed the ideological dimensions of this question. Under the title, "The false accusation of antisemitism and the trivialisation of Nazi crimes at HU," they showed how HU has been systematically converted into a centre of German militarism. Professors have downplayed the crimes of German imperialism in order to prepare new crimes, and the university has always become a stage for the worst war propaganda. IYSSE lead candidate Gregor Kahl condemned in a video the glorification of the war dead as heroes displayed in an exhibition in the foyer of the university.

The IYSSE made clear that the current campaign against alleged antisemitism is part of a falsification of history to benefit German imperialism. The Holocaust is torn from its concrete historical context of the Nazis' anti-communism and the war of annihilation of German imperialism. This exonerates German imperialism and instead creates a racist myth that serves to justify another genocide. The real conclusion from the Holocaust is to never allow war, fascism and genocide to happen again.

The IYSSE's clear political perspective and its relentless struggle against right-wing and militarist ideology at HU have found a strong resonance among the student body. Just as the repression and propaganda at HU is an expression of a general tendency, the election result of the IYSSE also expresses the potential for young people around the world to be won over to a socialist movement against war and its root, capitalism. The IYSSE will make this election the starting point to intensify its work at HU and to expand it throughout Germany and internationally.



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