German federal and state governments deport ever-increasing numbers of refugees

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Germany's federal and state governments drastically increased the number of deportations last year compared to 2022. The figures show what to make of the supposed "fight against the right" and the "firewall" against the extreme right wing, about which German establishment parties—from the conservative Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU) to the Left Party—regularly bluster: namely nothing. Especially in refugee policy, all parties represented in government are putting the politics of the fascists into practice, thereby fueling the rise of fascism throughout Europe.

In 2023, there were a total of 16,430 deportations from Germany. A year earlier, there were 12,945. So-called "voluntary departures" increased from 26,545 to 29,600 in the same period. This policy has further escalated in the current year. In the first quarter of 2024, 34 percent more deportations were carried out compared to the same period the prior year. From January to March 2024 there were 4,791 deportations, compared to 3,566 in the same period a year earlier.

The most common destination for deportations was North Macedonia, where 483 people (around 10 percent of the total) were sent. In this poor Balkan state, which is ruled by a thoroughly corrupt political caste, members of the Roma community in particular are severely discriminated against. Amnesty International's 2022 report states that in North Macedonia, "Roma are subjected to derogatory language and systematic discrimination in housing and education, as well as in interactions with the police and in other areas of life." The same applies to the eastern and south-eastern European states of Albania, Kosovo, Croatia and Slovakia. Roma are often "stateless" and lack identity papers, which results in further discrimination and harassment.

A shocking example was reported last year from North Macedonia. A Roma man died there after being denied important medical treatment because he lacked an identity card.

Turkey ranks as the second most common destination for deportation, with 449 cases (9.4 percent of the total) and Georgia third with 416 (8.7 percent). Afghanistan is in fourth place with 345 deportations (7.2 percent).

While politicians of all stripes never tire of denouncing the human rights situation in these countries when it serves the pursuit of imperialist interests, these conditions are completely ignored when it comes to deportations.

Turkey systematically violates the principle of non-refoulement and deports thousands of refugees to countries where the deported face a high risk of serious human rights violations.

The situation in Afghanistan is especially catastrophic for people deported from Germany. After years of war and occupation by NATO countries, the Islamist Taliban have been back in power for three years now. According to the German Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt), "serious terrorist attacks" occur regularly. "There is also a risk of becoming a victim of kidnapping or arbitrary detention."

In addition, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development reports on its website that almost the entire population of Afghanistan (97 percent) is affected by extreme poverty. "Around 23.7 of the 40 million inhabitants are dependent on humanitarian aid in order to survive, and six million people are on the brink of famine. Millions of children are at risk of severe malnutrition and life-threatening diseases."

There were 114 million refugees worldwide last year. Seven years ago, there were only half as many. The reason for the sharp increase in global refugee numbers

is the many wars worldwide, which were provoked and caused primarily by the imperialist NATO states. The NATO war against Russia in Ukraine, the wars and crises in the Middle East and the war in Yemen, which has been ongoing for 10 years, are only the outstanding examples.

Since the start of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, around 1.1 million Ukrainians have fled to Germany. Around 400,000 of them are children and young people under the age of 16, as well as pensioners. Around 506,000 Ukrainians of working age in Germany receive citizen's benefits. Only 187,000 are currently working in a regular job, which is mainly due to the restrictive laws and almost nonexistent integration measures.

"Over 90 percent of refugees in Germany want a job," explains Kseniia Gatskova from the Institute for Employment Research. But 80 percent of Ukrainian citizens are women with children and no partner. There is not only a lack of language courses, but above all a lack of childcare.

While Ukrainian refugees were still much better off than other refugees at the start of the war, a vicious campaign is now also being waged against them. A few weeks ago, Alexander Dobrindt from the CSU demanded, in the style of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), that Ukrainian refugees should be deported to "safe" western Ukraine if they do not accept a job in Germany. Of course, western Ukraine is anything but safe. In addition, male Ukrainians of conscription age are being forcibly conscripted on the streets for the war. After massive Ukrainian battlefield losses in recent months, with an estimated 500,000 dead, the right-wing Zelensky regime needs fresh cannon fodder for the front.

Last fall, Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz (Social Democrats, SPD) demanded on behalf of the coalition government of the SPD, Greens and liberals (FDP): "We must finally conduct deportation on a large scale." This was implemented directly in the state government of the German capital, Berlin, where the CDU and SPD govern in coalition.

From the beginning of the year to the end of May, 477 people had been deported from Berlin, 123 of them to the Republic of Moldova and 60 to Georgia. Moldova and Georgia were declared "safe countries of origin" by the Bundestag (Federal Parliament) in November 2023. In Moldova, Roma are particularly affected by deportations. According to Amnesty International, they are at risk of "torture and other ill-treatment." In addition, the healthcare and education system is not accessible to Roma in Moldova and violent attacks on Roma take place routinely, according to a UN report. Homosexuals are likewise persecuted. Overall, healthcare fees in Moldova are extremely high, which means that one in six households cannot afford them.

The European Union's isolationist policy and the declaration of more and more countries as so-called "safe countries of origin" is intended to massively reduce the number of refugees and migrants living in Germany. In April, the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) was passed, effectively abolishing the right to asylum. As a result, refugees are forced to apply for asylum from outside mainland Europe, which is almost impossible to obtain.

The sealing off of borders against refugees has turned the EU into a deadly fortress and the Mediterranean into a mass grave. Since 2014, 30,000 refugees have lost their lives in those waters.

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