

Germany's "migration summit:" A booster for the far-right AfD

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For weeks, Germany's government and opposition parties have been competing with their proposals on how to turn back refugees, seal off borders and undermine the basic right to asylum. This reached a new climax with the second migration summit last Tuesday, which could be characterised as a booster for the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD).

As at the first summit a week ago, the government had invited representatives from the federal states as well as those from the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU) to discuss joint steps. Interior Minister Nancy Faeser (Social Democratic Party, SPD) had previously presented a catalogue of measures that would drastically tighten the regime at the borders.

Refugees whose asylum application is the responsibility of another European state under the Dublin rules—which is almost all of them due to Germany's largely landlocked situation—are to be detained until their deportation and deported more quickly. Border controls, border police and detention centres are to be expanded for this purpose.

However, this did not go far enough for the CDU and CSU, who demanded the immediate expulsion of all refugees who do not have legal entry documents, even if they had applied for asylum, which would violate current European and international law and lead to fierce tensions within the EU. Poland and Austria, through which many refugees enter Germany from Ukraine and—via the Balkan route—from the Middle East, have already protested vehemently.

However, those in favour of completely sealing off the borders are expecting a domino effect in which these countries and ultimately Greece, Italy and other countries on the periphery of the EU would also hermetically seal off their borders. After 30,000 people have already drowned in the Mediterranean in the last

10 years, this would result in a dramatic increase in the number of victims.

After two hours, the CDU and CSU demonstratively quit the summit and left the meeting. "During the discussion, it quickly became clear that there was a lack of political will in the coalition government to reject refugees at Germany's internal borders," they claimed. CDU leader Friedrich Merz wrote on Platform X: "The coalition is capitulating to the challenges of irregular migration. The federal government is incapable of action and lacks leadership."

For their part, the government parties—SPD, Liberal Democrats (FDP) and Greens—are accusing the CDU/CSU of beating around the bush instead of taking responsibility. "Talking slogans, not getting anything done," Chancellor Olaf Scholz said accusingly in the Bundestag's general parliamentary debate on Wednesday. Citizens did not want to see theatrical performances, Scholz opined. It would have been good to find common solutions to the migration issue, the chancellor shouted. His government had achieved the "biggest turnaround in dealing with irregular migration," he boasted, "Don't grumble, but act and tackle it. That is the motto."

FDP Secretary General Bijan Djir-Sarai made it clear that the coalition was prepared to do anything to reach an agreement with the CDU/CSU. He emphasised that there was no reason for the summit to fail: "After all, the CDU/CSU has been offered that its proposals on the rejection of asylum seekers will be implemented in full."

FDP leader Christian Lindner wrote on X: "The CDU/CSU's cancellation of the asylum summit must not be the last word." Lindner suggested that he, CDU leader Merz, Chancellor Scholz and Green Economic Affairs Minister Robert Habeck should sit down in

person to “solve the problem together.” Germany needed control and consistency when it came to migration, he said.

Sahra Wagenknecht, leader of the BSW, a split-off from the Left Party, attacked the summit from the right. “This was obviously not a migration summit, but a summit meeting of shirkers, a declaration of bankruptcy in terms of asylum policy,” she declared.

In the right-wing tabloid *Die Welt*, Wagenknecht accused Scholz and his predecessor Angela Merkel of having “turned Germany into a refugee magnet in Europe.” The incentives were too high: “Those who make it to us are effectively given unlimited right of residence and entitlement to social benefits.” This must be stopped. We needed “a drastic change in asylum policy: Anyone who comes from a safe third country must not be entitled to [an asylum] procedure or benefits.”

This constant agitation against refugees is grist to the AfD’s mill.

In a press release, AfD national spokesperson Alice Weidel wrote that the failure of the migration summit “should also make it clear to the last citizen that the old parties are neither willing nor able to solve the migration crisis.” This was “only possible through seamless border controls and the consistent rejection of illegal migrants.” When it was governing, the CDU/CSU had failed miserably in this respect. In order to make up for this mistake, “it must look for government partners with whom it can also implement such demands,” i.e., the AfD.

After winning the state elections in Thuringia on September 1 and becoming the second strongest party in Saxony, the AfD is also expecting to win the elections in Brandenburg on September 22. With 29 percent in the polls, it is well ahead of the SPD (22 percent) and the CDU (17 percent). Wagenknecht’s BSW is at 15 percent, while the Greens must fear for their re-entry into the state parliament, and the Left Party and the FDP are also well below the 5 percent hurdle to gain representation.

The rise of the AfD is the result of the shift to the right in all bourgeois politics. Refugees fleeing to safety from the wars instigated by NATO in the Middle East and Ukraine are being made the scapegoat for the growing social crisis—for expensive housing, a lack of daycare places, a shortage of teachers and low

wages—for which the billions gouged by the profits of the rich and the gigantic spending on war and armament are actually responsible. Whereas under the Nazis it was the Jews who were used as a lightning rod for social outrage, today it is immigrants.

The establishment parties—from the CDU/CSU to the SPD and the Greens to the Left Party and the BSW—are adopting the AfD’s policies and paving the way for the fascists because resistance to their pro-war policies in Ukraine and Palestine is growing and huge class struggles are imminent.

The announcement of plant closures and compulsory redundancies by VW heralds the destruction of hundreds of thousands of regular jobs throughout the automotive industry as well as in the steel, chemical and construction industries. This is why the fascists are being strengthened and the police and surveillance apparatus is being strengthened under the pretext of fighting terror and refugees.

Workers and young people must defend refugees and their right to asylum. This is not only an elementary question of humanity, but also in their own best interests. The destruction of democratic rights and the establishment of a police state, which is justified by the agitation against migrants, is also to be directed against striking workers, anti-war activists and socialists.



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