



Media Monitoring

Situation Report January 27-31, 2010

1) The reception centers for asylum-seekers

On January 27th, 2010, *Die Presse* asserts that for the time being the military quarter of Wolfsberg appears as the only alternative to Eberau. The same day, Vliminsky from the Freedom's Party, expressed the rejection of the idea, indicating that "A good share of the asylum-seekers are asylum-cheaters (SIC) and criminals" In addition, on January 28th, 2010, the Freedom's Party Carinthia through the member of the provincial parliament and president of the party in the city of Wolfsberg, Harald Trettenbrein, rejected categorically the choice of Wolfsberg.

On January 28th, 2010, *Die Presse* published the decision reached by the Home Ministry Maria Fekter and the governor of Lower Austria, Mr. Proell, asserting that only 480 asylum-seekers will be hosted in Traiskirchen. Ms. Fekter denied that Traiskirchen could be closed.

On January 29th, 2010, *Die Presse* interviewed the Minister Fekter, as the same day two petitions of non-confidence had been presented against her. Moreover, an urgent petition of information was presented by the Freedom's Party, asserting that there is not yet any alternative place for the reception center for asylum seekers.

The minister asserted that given the opposition of the governors of the respective provinces and majors, to find a place for such a center is "difficult." Moreover, she considered that a plebiscite cannot be accepted as binding. She has insisted on the need of counting with a third reception center, as to relief primarily Traiskirchen.

On January 30th, 2010, the Coalition for the Future of Austria through the speaker for Upper Austria, Mr. Rainer Widmann, recommended the implementation of Dublin, and the closure of Thalham: "If finally-according to the Dublin Convention [SIC] and

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the third-state rule would be applied in asylum cases and the existing asylum petitions would be finally quickly processed, the number of asylum-petitions would reduce automatically." In his view, in this case, Thalham would not be necessary any more.

2) *Interning asylum-seekers*

On January 27th, 2010, *Die Presse* presents an article with the opinion of Constitutional Law Professor Mr. Funk, asserting that the plans of interning asylum-seekers are unconstitutional. The new plans indicate that a model of two steps is planned: first, for five days-if they include a weekend, seven days, asylum-seekers cannot leave the asylum camp. Then a new step starts: each asylum-seeker that is likely to be admitted to the proceeding, particularly, because no other EU country is competent for the asylum-proceeding, are also obliged to remain in the camp, except for official or medical doctor appointments; administrative detention is possible in case of violation of the rules. The obligation of presence is considered an euphemism. A similar opinion has been expressed by the UNHCR. The Social-Democrats appear to wait for a decision on the constitutionality of the proposal, however, rejecting a general detention of all asylum-seekers.

On January 29th, 2010, Strache, leader of the Freedom's Party, issued a press release asserting that 80 % of the asylum seekers are "economic refugees."

On January 31st, 2010, Ms. Prammer, social-democrat and president of the Austrian Parliament asserted on TV that the interning of asylum-seekers as planned is unacceptable for her political group. Printed media have reflected the views expressed in the show.

3) *Rights of persons with disabilities*

On January 31st, 2010, *Der Standard* published an interview to the People's Party member of Parliament. Mr. Franz-Joseph Huainigg, who feels discriminated in the selection of the Defender of Persons with Disabilities. The job was assigned to Mr. Erwin Buchinger (Social-Democrat), who is not a person with disabilities, though he has a son with disabilities. Huanigg has asserted: "It is

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discrimination, if the post is filled with the only applicant who is not a person with disabilities." He has questioned the decision. In the Parliament, he is intending to obtain legislature asserting that the birth of a child is not a cause for receiving damages, as there had been cases of the Highest Court asserting that parents of children with disabilities should get higher compensations. He considers that this is not fair for those parents that see the birth of a child with disabilities as a chance, and not a damage. In that case, they do not receive money. In addition, in his opinion, medical doctors recommend in the diagnostic pre-birth an abortion in cases of disabilities, as they are afraid to be sued. He is also proposing to eliminate the protection against unjustified end of labor contract of two years, asserting that this prevents the hiring of persons with disabilities.

4) Right-extremism

On January 27th, 2010, Mr Oellinger from the Green Party has published a press release asserting that "The prohibition of an anti-fascist demonstration by the Vienna Police sheds a frightening light on the political situation in Austria...Extreme rightist are offered the public space, the police goes against anti-fascists."

ORF publishes on January 30th, 2010, that the demonstration against the Ball of the Corporation (rightist students) originated fourteen detentions and five persons blessed, about 300 denounces concerning material damages of unknown value. About 500 persons have participated of the demonstration. For security reasons, the authorities had not authorized the demonstration.

At about 7 pm, there were blockades and clashes with the police.

About 300 persons have been denounced pursuant to the Law on Assembly. The 14 persons detained would have been accused of resistance to the authority and assault.

5) Foreign criminality

The Freedom's Party of Lower Austria issued a press release on January 30th, 2010, "Stop immediately the freedom without borders for thieves and human traffickers... Whole legions of bands of robbers from the East fall upon Lower Austria as a cloud of grasshoppers and they steal without shame as much as never



before. Lower Austria, with 84.000 denounced crimes is the "second preferred" Bundesland after Vienna, die criminals from Eastern Europe-predominantly Romanians, Georgians and Serbians, use the proximity to a not secure border without shame" has asserted the security speaker of the Freedom's Party, Erich Königsberger. "More than 70 (!) % of the burglaries in lower Austria are committed by foreigners! If we count also those committed by fake asylum-seekers and illegal immigrants, we arrive at a participation of foreigners of more than 90% by the committed crimes.... " He recommended the securitization of the borders with assistance of the Army.

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