



## **Media Monitoring**

### **Situation Report January 9-11, 2010**

#### *1) The reception center in Eberau*

- Chancellor Faymann has asserted during an interview for the newspaper *Oesterreich* on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010 that he is giving his word that the result of the referenda would be followed, and he followed with interest the proposal of SOS Mitmensch to count with small centers in every province of Austria. Moreover, he asserted the need to "shorten" the proceedings.
- *Oesterreich* publishes an opinion poll where most Austrians appear to be against the construction of the new reception center (January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010). 58 % of Austrian citizens questioned asserted to be against the center in their own district or city.
- Mrs. Haubner, from the BZOe (Coalition for the Future of Austria) on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010, criticized the governor of Upper Austria who had spoken against referenda as to decide on the construction of the asylum center, and asserted: "the construction of an asylum center affects the direct living space of human beings, consequently, the people has also to be involved in such important questions" She has advocated by quicker asylum proceedings as well as border controls.
- Alexandra Foederl Schmidt publishes an article in *Der Standard* of the 9/10 January 2010 edition asserting "when Home Minister Maria Fekter (People's Party) says that 'more than 80% of the asylum seekers come for economic reasons or as criminals to Austria,' it is not a surprise that the planned reception center is not wanted by anybody... Direct democracy is important, but it has limits. On human rights it is not permitted to vote, and to seek asylum is a basic human right..."
- The Sunday edition (January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010) of *Die Presse* publishes an article about Eberau, written by Rainer Nowak: "Normally bad opinions are made against 'the center.' Faymann, the Burgenlander Hans Niessl and his adjoint in the Ministry office,



Norbert Darabos, speak of the 'fears and needs' of the Burgenlander, as they argue since years for an absurd securitization of the borders through the Austrian army inside the Schengen space. It is about gansters –thieves and destroyers, who come through the border to these centers. They do not dare to tell it, but it should sound like that”

## 2) *Situation of asylum-seekers in Austria*

- Ms. Fekter, Home Minister, presented her idea this Friday during an interview in ORF1 that asylum-seekers should remain enclosed inside the initial reception center for the first four weeks after their arrival. This has originated very different reactions. Asyl in Not has interpreted the issue asserting the meaning of such a decision in a press release of January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010, as “no access to an independent legal counsel, no testing by an independent psychologist, no contact to friends and relatives. Interned and isolated...” The Director of Caritas Vienna Mr. Landau asserted in *Kathpress* on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010 that “for every person in Austria the same laws should apply as well as the presumption of innocence. It is a scandal to treat refugees as criminals.” Similar criticism was expressed by the Red Cross, Amnesty and the NGO Volkshilfe. Minister Heinisch Hosek qualified the proposal as “inhuman” on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The President of the Freedom’s Party in the District of Vöcklabruck, Representative Hackl supported the proposal of Mrs. Fekter. He asserted moreover that the Freedom’s Party of his district wants that the reception center Thalham should be closed. The General Secretary of the People’s Party, Mr. Kaltenecker, has asserted that he supports Mrs. Fekter, indicating that “The preoccupations and fears of the people require solutions.” Claudia Gigler publishes a comment in *Kleine Zeitung* of January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010: “For Fekter it is not on satisfying the needs of those who have need, but the general public. The reason for enclosing asylum-seekers for a month has nothing to do with the affected, but it is a consequence of the inhabitants who fear ‘that the people have too much freedom of movement’” On Monday 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010, *Oesterreich* has published an interview to Professor Mayer, who

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- considers the proposal unconstitutional and against the European Convention on Human Rights. Mr. Strugl, leader of the People's Party in Upper Austria, has supported the opinion of Mrs. Fekter in a press release of January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010, considering that "With such obligation to be present in the camp it will be not only the need of security of the people living around the reception center taken seriously, but also the proceeding efficiency will increase."
- Mr. Fleischhaker publishes in Die Presse an article on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010, where he asserts "Interestingly all parties-from the blue to the green- recommend in the meantime 'shorter asylum-proceedings' without lettings us know what do they mean with that: to cut the access to a further instance? To pick out criminal elements after the first look at them? More officers? It would be good, if no asylum proceeding should last more than one year. But under the respect of international legal standards this task has nothing to do with Austrian politics: it is one of the so-called substantive questions."
  - Mr. Ackerl, vicegovernor of Upper Austria (Social-Democrat) issued on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010 a press release asserting that "It is not possible, that we are surrounded by so called safe third-countries and even so we cannot handle the flow of asylum-seekers."
  - Wiener Zeitung includes on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010 an article of Reinhard Goewil: "The fearful thing is not so much the weak intellectual political debate (that is an issue), but that persons without criminal record are with impunity referred to as 'bad people' Now these tones are not new from the Freedom's Party people, but this fighting rhetoric coming from the Social-Democrats and the People's Party causes fear. It is not necessary to clarify that this radicalization of the language and the ideas is linked to the coming election in Burgenland. Interning asylum-seekers has nothing to do with the constitutional state."

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