



# Rights of Children and Youth – Equal Rights for Refugees!

## **An End all Isolation! – An End to all Refugee Camps!**

## **Support Accommodation Suitable for Juveniles and Equal Rights to Education!**

**Wednesday, 23 May 2012 – 15.00 o'clock**

**Start: Sozialministerium, Winzererstraße 9, München (near U2 Theresienstraße)**

Unaccompanied, minor refugees often have a long journey behind them. Many of them were homeless for years in Greece, imprisoned in Hungary or exposed to racist attacks. They are usually deeply traumatized by their dangerous flight on foot, hidden in trucks or with small boats. They miss their families and are homesick. When they arrive, they hope to have finally found a place of safety and peace.

Instead, in Bavaria they are greeted with degrading accommodation in refugee camps. These are overcrowded, often out-of-the-way and sometimes in a disastrous condition – as for example the Bayernkaserne in Munich, an intake camp which is mainly occupied by unaccompanied minors.

Safety and peace do not exist here. It is noisy and crowded, 50 persons share one kitchen and one bathroom. Four youths or up to 8 adults share a room. They receive food packages instead of cash, clothes are only available from charity organizations, the area is fenced in and reminiscent of a prison. The police arrive frequently and check their IDs, sometimes the rooms are searched. "We always have to show our ID, sometimes they also come into our rooms at night and sometimes say bad things to us, that is very humiliating – but we are not criminals" one of the youths reports.

Frequently the youths injure themselves or even try to commit suicide. The nights are worst. Many youths weep and have nightmares. However, there are no responsible social workers at all available at night, and even during the day not enough are present.

At the beginning of this year the youths of the Bayernkaserne felt compelled to call attention to their desolate situation – they commenced a 2 week long hunger strike. In spite of minor improvements the fundamental problem did not change: whilst in other federal states above 15-year-old refugees are also accommodated in youth welfare housing and clearing houses, they have to live in refugee camps in Bavaria. In actual fact the youths should be placed in youth welfare accommodation immediately, instead they often wait for months, some for over a year, until they receive a place. This is especially problematic if the youth turns 18 years old during this time, as he is then threatened with a transfer to a refugee camp for adults.

A further problem is that, even for those who have made it into youth welfare accommodation, there are far too few school places available for juvenile refugees. Some have been waiting for a place at school for over two years. At present, all available places at schools for refugees are taken. Many are not entitled to educational endowment such as BAföG, some are even prohibited from training for a profession or going to university. Not even access to German courses is ensured.

We want refugees in Bavaria to finally be treated as human beings who want to achieve something in their lives and are not just shunted into camps as an unwanted burden. Therefore we demand:

- **Suitable Juvenile Accommodation and Care for Refugees!**
- **Youth Welfare Services from the first day, for all young refugees!**
- **A Place of Safety and Peace: Get rid of Refuge Camps such as the Bayernkaserne!**
- **Psychological Support and a Sufficient Amount of Treatment Places!**
- **Good-quality German courses, Places in School and Equal Rights to Education and Work for All!**