

steps

The new multi-cultural newspaper for
neighbourly togetherness in the Idstein area



Issue No. 1, August 2021

English translation

(translations by Monir Nashar, Mohamad Nashar and Steffi Bobrowski)

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Welcome to the first edition of STEPS!

Dear readers,

In front of you is the first issue of "steps" - the new newspaper for neighbourly newspaper for neighbourly togetherness as an Idsteiner. By this we mean the coexistence of long-time residents in our region and their foreign neighbours. A total of 25,275 people with foreign passports live in the Rheingau-Taunuskreis, around 13.5 percent of the population. Most of them have lived here for a long time.

However, many immigrants have only come here recently looking for a safe haven after fleeing from war and persecution in their homeland, and they are now taking one step after the other into their new lives. "steps" offers them a forum where they can tell their stories and talk about their worries and needs, but also share their joys and successes with you.

steps offers you a forum for stories, tips, connecting issues, explaining, entertaining. We hope to reach as many people as possible with "simple language". We are sure that we have many interesting topics also for our German readers and immigrants who are living here already for a long time.

At the end of each issue we will give a short summary in different languages. (Anyone who would like to help us translate is very welcome!)

This steps issue was supported by valuable expert advice from VRM staff as well as generous donations from NASPA and "A light shines for you". We sincerely thank.

The steps editorial team

P.S.: We would be very happy to hear your thoughts on our first issue. This is best done by emailing us on redaktion@steps-fhi-ev.de

Talking and listening to one another is the basis for understanding one another. An old Indian saying goes: "Great spirit, save me from judging another person before I have walked for a moon in his moccasins." So let's swap shoes and run a little, step by step together - towards good neighbourhood!

steps - Our mission statement and our rules

- We promote coexistence in society by bringing people of different origins together, providing them with useful and important information and working with them to point out commonalities.
 - We want to create a common identity and mutual understanding.
 - We stand for diversity, respectful cooperation and open discussion.
 - We undertake to report independently, objectively, credibly and impartially.
 - In Steps everyone can freely express their opinion. However, we strictly reject polemics, hatred and agitation as well as statements that violate the rules of respectful coexistence. We have no place for such contributions.
 - We want to make a constructive contribution to forming opinions in our society.
 - Our newspaper is open to anyone interested and is free of charge.
-

Number of immigrants by country of origin in Rheingau-Taunus district:

Figures from the central register of foreigners

(as of March 31, 2021, source: *Rheingau-Taunuskreis*)

Total population:	187,700	Romania	1,748
Total foreigners:	25,275	Syria	1,461
Share:	13.5%	Pakistan	500
<i>by countries:</i>		Eritrea	391
Turkey	3,052	Iran	349
Poland	2,784	Iraq	307
Italy	1,782	Somalia	240
		Ethiopia	218

steps Riddle

If you read this newspaper carefully, you will find some pictures with questions for this puzzle. You can use them to test your knowledge about Idstein. Some of the answers may also be found during a walk through the town. It's worth looking carefully!
You have to fill in the answers in the crossword puzzle on the last page. (All questions are listed there as well).

Imprint

steps

Inter-cultural newspaper for comon neighborhod for migrants and locals in the Idstein area.

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Questions to the mayor:

Christian Herfurth on the topic of integration

We asked Christian Herfurth, the mayor of Idstein, what is important to him personally when it comes to the topic of integration, and what to report about the city's activities.

**What is your personal main concern regarding the integration issue for the future?
What would you like to get off the ground?**

As mayor, I do not determine integration policy alone. Many questions on the topic of migration and integration will be addressed in the coming months in the political

committees and also in the newly elected Foreigners' Advisory Council. The administration and the mayor at its head will then implement these political guidelines. But of course, as mayor, I also have an opinion. Idstein has grown strongly in recent years and has also become more colourful and diverse with the influx of migrants. A total of more than 3,500 foreign residents live in Idstein and its districts, which is not an insignificant number. They bring cultural diversity to our society. I see that as an opportunity for all of us. Migration, by the way, has always been an important factor in German history. I would remind you of the French Huguenots who also fled to our region. Conversely, numerous Germans emigrated to the United States due to the bad political situation and famines in the 19th century. Or the Jewish Germans who fled all over the world during the Nazi era out of fear for their lives. Today, we can give special support to the migrants in our country so that they can integrate well into our society. And our society must learn to reduce scepticism towards other cultures. That is why our Office for Social Affairs, Youth and Sports is currently working on the topic of a diversity and development strategy, which we would like to launch together here in Idstein. On the basis of such a concept, the various activities can then be bundled and, if necessary, further supplemented. Funding can also be applied for for such a concept; we are still examining this.

What can you give the migrants and refugee helpers in terms of perspectives and courage?

The city of Idstein has a great interest in good integration work. We are constantly working on various projects, but some of them have also suffered from the restrictions imposed by Corona in the past year and a half. For example, the International Women's Breakfast or the Language Café (Sprachcafé) could not take place, and the popular International Festival of Associations (Fest der Vereine) had to be cancelled again this year. All these activities will now gradually be resumed - provided Corona does not throw a spanner in the works. Our Intercultural Week (Interkulturelle Woche) is to take place again in autumn.

For ten years now, our integration guides have been of great importance. They are happy to help with any problems and can be contacted regularly at the Limburger Straße neighbourhood office (Quartiersbüro). They will soon be joined by lay interpreters, and at the beginning of September seven people will take part in a basic qualification course. We cooperate closely with the Rheingau-Taunus district, but also with other institutions, for example the Frankfurt-based CITOYEN* foundation, which launched the "Frauen kommen an" (Women arrive) campaign. Now we want to participate in the programme "Women advance" („Frauen kommen weiter“). We are also pleased to have reliable local cooperation partners in the form of the Refugee Aid (Flüchtlingshilfe) and „Idstein bleibt bunt“. This voluntary commitment is very important and shows that there is a lot of interest and support for migrants and their families. The aim of all measures is for migrants to arrive in Idstein and feel accepted and welcome in our community. We hope that with municipal help, opportunities will also open up that lead on a good path to a future worth living.

Christian Herfurth on the first issue of Steps: "I am happy about this initiative, which should contribute to a better understanding between Germans and migrants. We all

know how important communication is. And the new magazine, which is intended equally for migrants, helpers and all Idsteiners, will certainly provide food for conversation. "

** See also the report by Ildikó Szelecz on page 15 (editor's note).*

Interesting to know

Grunerstrasse was also a place of refuge for refugees in the past.

Elke Gärtch from Idstein says: "We fled East Germany in 1960. At that time, many people came from the GDR to start over in the West. We first came via Marienfelde/Berlin to a camp in Malschbach. That's a former prisoner-of-war camp near Baden-Baden. Because there were so many GDR refugees, we had to go there first. After about six weeks, we were allowed to go to Wörsdorf, because my mother's sister lived there. After a while we were able to move into the accommodation at Grunerstrasse 60. There were many Germans living in Grunerstrasse who also came from Poland or elsewhere. But most of them were GDR refugees. My mother and we three children had a room in a flat with a communal kitchen and communal toilet. It was quite cramped. But it didn't bother us children that much."

The new Foreigners' Advisory Council in Idstein

(aa)

Idstein has had a new foreigners' advisory council since 1.4.2021. In the first two meetings, many topics have been raised that are to be discussed with local politics and the administration. Here we want to inform about the topics.

On the official website of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Ausländerbeiräte Hessen - Landesausländerbeirat (agah) the following statements can be found:

"The foreigners' advisory council has a right to apply and make proposals and is to be heard in all important matters affecting foreign residents."

"The foreigners' advisory council has a right to be heard in the committees."

"The municipal board/magistrate and the municipal council/city council can hear the advisory council."

"They represent the special concerns of the foreign population vis-à-vis the administration and politicians and have a say there."

"The foreigners' advisory councils stand up for the concerns of the foreign residents. They are there to enforce them."

"When serious interests are at stake, they also take to the streets if necessary to voice protest and offer resistance."

"The foreigners' advisory councils draw the attention of local politicians in parliaments and governments to grievances and injustices and demand that they be remedied."

Source: <https://www.agah-hessen.de/wahl2021/infos-fuer-waehlerinnen/was-ist-der-auslaenderbeirat/>

Requests to the city

Foreign children learning German

What is the situation between 2nd and 6th grade in Idstein? The question also goes to the education authority.

Motion by Ahmad Aldahik: "I move that the chairperson of this Foreigners' Advisory Council send a letter to the State Education Authority in Wiesbaden asking about the situation regarding the learning of German by refugee children in grades 2 to 6 in Idstein. What additional support is available for these children? The school authority should also be asked whether it considers the current situation for these children to be sufficient. After receiving the answer from the school office, a discussion on the contents of the answer should take place in this Foreigners' Advisory Council."

I am of the opinion that the refugee children in classes 2 to 6 in Idstein do not have sufficient opportunity to learn or improve their German. Since they came to Idstein later, they start German lessons later than the regular pupils from grade 1 onwards and they should therefore be given special and better support.

Housing situation

According to which criteria are flats for migrants allocated by the city? The allocation procedure is not transparent. How are injustices regarding eligibility avoided?

The Intercultural Week

Presentation of the Foreigners' Advisory Council at the Intercultural Week in Idstein: A room is needed where enough people can visit the Foreigners' Advisory Council. Where can this take place? The neighbourhood office is too small! The Foreigners' Advisory Council alone consists of 11 people.

The 11 members:

These are the members of the Foreigners' Advisory Council, listed in alphabetical order Ahmad Aldahik, Erwin Bienert, Mustafa Erdogan, Demet Gültekin, Samet Gültekin, Tesfamichael Kiflom, Isabel Pinheiro-Ehrentraut, Vjollca Sahiti, Arlind Selmani, Shehide Selmani, Yasin Sen

Why the Foreigners Advisory Council is so important to us

By Michael Kiflom

I am Michael and I'm from Eritrea. We are a large community. I try to keep it together so that we don't feel lonely and can also help each other.

Why I applied to the Foreigners Advisory Council

I applied as a Representative in the Foreigners Advisory Council in Idstein and was elected. That's good. Because the Council gives us the opportunity to be heard. It is the only body that represents the interests of the foreign population in the city. It plays an important role in improving the living conditions in the region.

The Foreigners Advisory Council is the main bridge.

- It is intended to enable citizens and the foreign population to live peacefully and with equal rights.
- It stands together with very many citizens against unequal treatment, discrimination and racism.

What is going well in Idstein

In my opinion, a lot is going well in Idstein. I can name a few issues: peace, safety, medical care, religious freedom, good kindergartens, a lot of good social contact, sometimes a search for an apartment, even though it still poses a big issue to many people. Integration and German language courses in Idstein are much better than in other cities. The voluntary helpers and the refugee and integration assistance (FHI) are all very committed.

What's not going so well in Idstein?

In my opinion, some things are not going so well. Here are a few examples:

- The difficult search for housing: Problems arise especially when a family has many children, or if they do not yet speak German well.
- Apprenticeships: Getting an apprenticeship place for people over 25 is very difficult, especially in the current pandemic period. We find little information about apprenticeship opportunities.
- Finding a place in a kindergarten is rare. One must often wait a year and during that time one can't go to an integration or German course, or can't get a job.

- Search for a job: If you don't have connections, it's hard to find a job. Sometimes it's because of a bumpy application. Refugee assistants and the Men's Circle of FHI can often help.
- Communication problems with authorities: there are no interpreters. Many have the impression that sometimes there is no freedom of expression. And that there is often uncertainty as to whether certain decisions are based on laws that must be applied, or whether this is an unfortunate decision on the part of the employee. It is no better in many other areas which I have not mentioned here. For example, family reunification. The many problems are not always typical for Idstein, they are found everywhere where asylum seekers arrive. But they burden us all, especially because we often suspect arbitrariness behind a bad decision (even if objectively this may often be a misunderstanding) and the always very long waiting times.

And that's the reason why I applied for the Foreigners Advisory Council.

There's a lot to do. A lot of it, in my opinion, needs to be explained by the politicians and officials. Hopefully, I will be able to make a difference in the Foreigners' Advisory Council.

The Chairwoman: Shehide Selmani

Shehide tries to describe in a few words what her motivation was to run for the Foreigners' Advisory Council:

Coming to a new country as a young woman who has fled can be understood by someone who has also gone through this. Since the first day in Germany, I have made an effort to integrate myself here. We, the refugees, do not have it easy. I can understand the people who come to Germany very well, so I put my heart and soul into helping people find their way around, listening when they talk about their worries.

Learning the language is very important to me. I learned German without any help, so I can serve as a role model, I think. My heart beats for integration. I now also have an important job as chairperson of the Foreigners' Advisory Council, but I still have a lot to learn. I am also active as an integration pilot, as a staff member of the project "Women advance", also as a secretary in the language school "De Code" with Mr Ehrentraud, as well as in the canteen of the Wörsbach primary school in Wörsdorf.

I will do my best to thank Germany for having me live here.

Vaccination - why the little prick is so important

(hpb)

Vaccination means protection - for yourself and for others. But some people are very fearful. Others, however, stir up fears in the media. Immigrants are also often reluctant. We want to inform people and encourage them to get vaccinated. This topic page is not only about the Corona vaccination, of course, vaccination, but about all important vaccinations. We should not forget them!

When does a vaccination start to work?

The injection into the muscles usually does not hurt at all. After a few hours, a slight sensitivity to pain develops there. Some people temporarily experience symptoms similar to those of a cold. However, many people hardly feel anything at all. The body's defence system now starts to work.

However, effective antibodies only appear after about 10-12 days. A second vaccination (usually after one month) strengthens the immune response. Only then you are well protected. A third vaccination (usually after 6 months) consolidates the effect.

How long does the effect of a vaccination last?

The antibodies can be detected in the blood for many months after a vaccination. Then their effectiveness slowly decreases. In older people and with special diseases, the effectiveness of a vaccination can be significantly lower. Therefore, further vaccinations ("booster vaccinations") are necessary at longer intervals.

Vaccination calendar

The vaccination calendar of the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) states when vaccinations should be given. It is available in 20 languages and can be accessed on the internet. You can find it by searching for "Impfkalender RKI".

Show your vaccination card to your family doctor and ask him or her if any vaccinations are still missing. (Measles, mumps, rubella, HPV/human papilloma virus, hepatitis B, influenza and tetanus).

Vaccination during pregnancy?

Women should already be immunised against infectious diseases before pregnancy, especially against rubella. This is because rubella can cause severe malformations in the unborn child.

So-called "live vaccines", in which the vaccine virus has only been modified (weakened), are not permitted during pregnancy. In contrast, "dead vaccines" can also be given to pregnant women. This also applies to the new mRNA vaccines against Corona.

What is the STIKO?

STIKO means "Standing Vaccination Commission at the Robert Koch Institute". It is staffed by independent scientists and develops recommendations on vaccinations for our population. These recommendations are published in a well-founded manner. Anyone can read them. The recommendations include the vaccination calendar for the standard vaccinations of infants, children, adolescents and adults.

In the now heated days of the Corona pandemic, there is growing public pressure on the STIKO.

We should be glad that the volunteer members do not give in to the political and public pressure and keep their objectivity.

Vaccination against Corona

Corona has become the common name for a Covid 19 infection. Its course varies greatly, and in about 2 to 4 percent it is also fatal! That is very, very much! Older people are particularly at risk. Vaccination prevents and protects. It also protects others. Get vaccinated!

What you have to know about Corona vaccines

The new Corona vaccines do not contain chicken egg protein. An allergy to chicken egg white is therefore no reason against a Corona vaccination. However, they do contain other ingredients to which one can also develop an allergic immediate reaction in rare cases.

The vector vaccines (such as the one from Astra-Zeneca) can, in very rare cases, cause serious cerebral venous thrombosis (usually after 10-14 days). This rare complication particularly affects pre-menopausal women. This is taken into account when selecting the vaccine. mRNA vaccines are a completely new development. They are very effective. But relatively little is known about long-term side effects. Before a vaccination is given, a discussion is always held with the vaccinator, who individual risks.

What is Long Covid?

Long-Covid means long-lasting symptoms after infection with Covid-19. About 1/10 of people keep symptoms for more than 3 weeks. The initial symptoms of the disease may persist and new ones may be added. This varies greatly. Most often, they include tiredness, shortness of breath, joint pain and sometimes other symptoms, such as lack of concentration. The more severe the course of the disease, the greater the risk of retaining some of the symptoms for a long time, or even for a very long time.

Vaccination of children and adolescents?

The STIKO has revised its recommendation for vaccination against COVID-19 of children and adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17. The data situation allows it to say: The health risk of a vaccination is to be assessed as lower than the

health risk from the delta variant of the virus.

One must now prepare for a 4th wave of infection. It is expected in autumn. From now on, this includes the vaccination programme recommended by the STIKO for adolescents with an mRNA vaccine.

After mRNA vaccination, heart muscle inflammation occurs in rare cases in boys and young men. This had caused concern. Now, however, the STIKO says that the side effects outweigh the benefits. But it also says it does not yet have enough data to assess the risk of long-covid in adolescents.

The STIKO therefore recommends vaccination for adolescents from the age of 12. In any case, the guardians (e.g. parents) must seek advice and consent from the vaccinator/family doctor).

The STIKO is expressly against making the vaccination of adolescents a prerequisite for social participation.

The vaccination recommendation is published in the "Epidemiological Bulletin" of the RKI. (<https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/Infekt/Impfen/ImpfungenAZ/COVID-19/COVID-19.html>)

Vaccination of pregnant women?

Medical associations advocate vaccination. Because an infection means a disproportionately higher danger for mother and child! According to current data, vaccine damage is extremely rare in pregnant women.

However, the STIKO (Standing Committee on Vaccination of the Robert Koch Institute) does not yet give a general recommendation. The question is: Who is liable if vaccine damage occurs?

However, the STIKO has clarified the question for the rare case that vaccination damage occurs: Despite the lack of a recommendation, compensation is paid! (<https://www.rki.de/SharedDocs/FAQ/COVID-Impfen/gesamt.html>)

So: Pregnant women can and should be vaccinated against Covid-19 if there are no increased risks. They should definitely seek advice from the doctor treating them.

What does herd immunity mean?

When more than 70% of the population is vaccinated, the spread of the infectious disease slows down and dies. It herd immunity" begins. Even those who have not been vaccinated now benefit from the immunity of the vaccinated. Therefore, as many people as possible should get vaccinated, especially against infections with a high mortality rate, such as measles, influenza or corona.

Some testimonials:

„My husband and I wanted to get vaccinated because we are afraid of Corona. Who will take care of our children if we get sick? Last year my mother and sister got infected with Corona and they were very seriously ill. My mother told us that we had to go for vaccination and now we are happy and no longer afraid. We hope that all people will get vaccinated.“

(Sarah & Kaiwan Ibrahim, from Iraq)

"I got vaccinated because my wife is pregnant and because I want to protect her."

(Nor Aldeen Hasan, from Syria)

„I get vaccinated because I want to protect not only myself and my family, but also my colleagues at work.“

(Binyam Estifanos, Eritrea)

„I got myself vaccinated because I volunteer both at the Refugee Aid Idstein and at the Diakonisches Werk Rheingau-Taunus, Refugee Counselling Centre Idstein, and come into contact with many people.“

(Tesfamichael Kiflom, from Eritrea)

"I can't understand why there are people here who don't want to get vaccinated. Here almost half of the people are already vaccinated and by the end of the summer there is enough vaccine for everyone. In Africa, the new virus variants are a big problem. So far, very few people have been able to get vaccinated and everyone is waiting for vaccine supplies."

(Kong Gautluak, pharmacologist from South Sudan)

„I got vaccinated because I belong to a risk group and because filling out forms and gathering receipts with my refugee families is not possible without contact. With the vaccination, I am not only protecting myself, but also them.“

(Steffi Bobrowski, volunteer refugee helper, Idstein)

Helping hands

Taunusstein help for Refugees on film

Joschua Sedlacek about his film project

Joschua Sedlacek made a film with and about Roswitha Kacmaczyk and the Taunussteiner Hilfe für Geflüchte (refugee aid in Taunusstein) as part of his student research project.

He was available for an interview. The film is called "Helping hands". It begins with the sentence: "Germany is one of the richest countries in the world." Then it continues: "Many refugees only know what to do to find their way in the country because of the help of VOLUNTEERS." An encouragement to just tackle something and try it out: "The proof of the pudding is in the eating."

Who I am

Hello, my name is Joschua Sedlacek. I work and study in the field of moving image. I live in Mainz, but originally come from Bad Schwalbach.

How I came to the film project

I came to the film project through my studies. Due to the Corona pandemic, I couldn't start my semester abroad in Bangkok, so I took an online course here in Germany at the German-Jordanian University in Amman, Jordan. The aim of this course was to have created a short documentary film at the end of the semester.

Why this topic?

To my shame, I have to confess that I only really found out that voluntary help for refugees is such a mainstay in this field through my friend's grandmother. That's why I wanted to make a film about it.

What the film says

As already mentioned, the film is about voluntary help, in particular about refugee aid. It shows a small picture of the interaction between volunteers (Ms Kacmaczyk) and refugees. To show everything, the film would probably have had to run for several hours.

What I want to achieve with the film

The film should show the problems, thoughts, feelings and opinions of refugees and helpers. The viewer should be able to participate and be made aware of this without much explanation.

What were the special challenges?

Of course, the current Corona conditions were and are a great challenge for film shoots. Be it from the organisation to the actual shooting. Even though there are not

many people behind the camera for a documentary, it would have been good to have one more helping hand.

Who supported me

Firstly, I made the movie in collaboration with my fellow student Jessica Lenz. She did both editing and camera work; on the other hand, our professor Yahya Alabdallah provided us with valuable tips and advice during the editing process. And of course the film would not have been made without the open and helpful nature of Ms Kacmaczyk. Many thanks again at this point!

Tips and suggestions for migrants' own ideas

To be honest, I don't know if I am in a position to give great tips. However, I have noticed that the maxim "The proof of the pudding is in the eating" is quite true, especially in the field of film, as hackneyed as it may sound. It also helps me if the idea of the film has a personal relevance and if you stand behind it.

Information for Eritreans with subsidiary protection

Roswitha Kacmaczyk from Taunusstein Refugee Aid sent us this message:

"Eritreans with subsidiary protection who want to apply for the grey passport at the Foreigners' Registration Office can expect relief in the future. The Administrative Court in Wiesbaden has ruled that it is unreasonable to make a declaration of remorse at the Eritrean Embassy when asking for a passport or other papers there. The 2% tax to the country is reasonable, according to the court. But the final decision will be made by the court in Kassel. Now we all hope that the visit to the Eritrean Embassy in Frankfurt will one day be without fear for everyone. And that in the future it will be somewhat easier for people with subsidiary protection to obtain a grey passport.

Steps editorial: What holidays mean for Germans

It is an important part of life in Germany, but during the Corona period it was cancelled for most: the holiday. But as soon as travelling is allowed a bit again, the Germans are back on the plane to "Malle". That's what they call their favourite island, Mallorca. Summer is just around the corner, and everyone is hoping to get away properly again during the holidays. For Mhreteab from Eritrea, people's desire to go on holiday in Germany is a new experience. Here are his thoughts about it:

By Mhreteab Medhanie

Holidays are when workers are off duty for recreation. They can go on holiday far away or close to home.

Since I have been in Germany, I have experienced what holidays mean to Germans. People plan it well in advance and save money for it. Holidays are a main topic at work! Also at the station, in the restaurant and everywhere where people meet. It's always a very interesting topic.

With us in Eritrea, it's quite different. We have a long beach. We also have many islands. But only a few people enjoy them. Mostly they enjoy the beach at wedding parties or other special celebrations.

Here in Germany, families discuss for a long time where and when they can travel. When they are back from holiday, they tell everything they did and experienced on holiday. This is how they tell it: We stayed in a five-star hotel, went hiking, lay on the beach and ate the typical food of the region. They also try to learn about other cultures and their stories. They travel far away from home and relax and enjoy life. In the beginning I didn't understand why people talk so much about holidays. But now I understand that holidays are very important for them. After work, our body needs relaxation and our brain needs time to develop new ideas.

I first have to familiarise myself with all this here in Germany.

Pages 10 - 11

A photo story: the evolution of a successful garden project by Flüchtlingshilfe Idstein and their international team of gardeners,

Refugees tell their stories

Fascinating, deadly sea

The sea is fascinating, it is attractive; children love to run away from the outgoing waves. It's where we want to spend our holidays and relax. Do we know what our refugees associate with the sea? A deadly danger! Especially when you are in a rubber dinghy and are being shot at with water cannons by a coast guard. Those who set out for the hoped-for asylum because of personal danger to their lives must muster the courage of despair in the face of such dangers. When one learns from many independent eyewitnesses what is happening in Europe's sovereign territory, our politicians should look closely, and we should encourage our politicians to do so. (hpb)

Rheingau-Taunus and Idstein - safe havens?

The Seebrücke's "Safe Harbour" campaign takes up a cause that would actually be a matter for politics: saving lives at sea (<https://seebruecke.org/sichere-haefen>). Idstein and the RTK have also been asked by FHI e.V. to declare themselves a safe harbour. This would signal that the big politics in Germany would have room to take in additional refugees who have already reached European territory. Neither Idstein nor the RTK have yet been able to bring themselves to do so. And this despite the fact that many role models already exist. Politicians have always dismissed this as symbolic politics. It could be so much more! Anyone in distress at sea must be rescued, and anyone who has reached Europe must be able to apply for asylum. (hpb)

Chronicle of a flight from Syria

By a Syrian boy, 17 years old

In 2015, I was 11 years old, living with my parents and siblings in Daraa and had just started school. I could not yet comprehend the political situation in Syria. I knew something was going wrong, but what exactly was not clear to me.

One day in April, I was at school with my four-year-old sister. All of a sudden, all the doors burst open and the windows shattered. There was dust everywhere. None of us understood what was going on. Then we heard gunshots in the neighbourhood. I took my sister by the hand and we went to the basement. There was a hole in the schoolyard where a rocket had hit. Our father picked us up from school and shortly after we fled Daraa. With time, I understood that the rocket was fired on the orders of the Syrian state, President Assad. That was the reason why my parents decided to

leave the country, because it was no longer safe there. They decided that part of us should flee and the other part should wait in Syria until a safe way could be found. This was a shock for us, because my father, sister and I had to leave our mother behind with our newborn sister. Dad, my little sister and I first went to Lebanon, and from there by ship to Turkey. With the help of smugglers, we were then supposed to cross the Mediterranean in a rubber dinghy in a group of 70 people to our first destination in Greece. That was a very dangerous journey, and if we had known that at the time, we probably wouldn't have done it. But it was the only way. It was very difficult, but we made it and we arrived. I always asked, what is the destination and where does our path lead? My father answered, "To safety." From Greece, we continued our journey. We travelled partly by bus, but also often walked and had to sleep on the street because we had no other option. I remember cold nights and dark refugee camps. At some point we arrived in Serbia. Here we had to cross the border on foot. It was almost nine hours that we walked through rainforests. That was very exhausting. When we arrived in Hungary, we were stopped by the border police there. Then it was time to go to the refugee camp. A week later we were in Germany. We took the train to Saarbrücken, and from there to Gießen, where we were accommodated in a huge refugee camp (reception and registration facility). There were a lot of people there and I didn't understand our situation. After a long time in Gießen, we came to Idstein and were allowed to live in a communal flat. From then on, we had to cope independently in a foreign country. Fortunately, we had people who supported us in the beginning. Some time later we found our own flat and our mother was able to join us with our little sister. My mother didn't have an easy path either, but we all made it. We were now safe. Now we had to manage on our own and learn a lot. In the beginning it was hard to make friends. There was a big culture difference and I didn't know the language yet, but some time later. In 2016, I attended school in Niedernhausen for the first time. I learned German and caught up well in the intensive class. A year later, I was in the 8th grade. I graduated from Realschule and am now preparing for the Fachabitur. I can cope with my life here and have learned a lot. And I really appreciate what it means to live in freedom and security. I was also able to make good contacts here and find friends who support me.

In the end, I am very happy and satisfied and was incredibly lucky, because very many of my compatriots either did not arrive here in good health or even died or have to continue enduring life in war. In war there is no freedom and no security, and you don't know when it will end and whether you will continue to live or not.

You must know, my father was a priest

A report based on an interview by Traudel Hermann with Daniel from Gonder/Ethiopia.

Daniel reports about shocking things that happened and are happening in his home country. He was born in 1982 in Gonder /North Ethiopia, the son of a high-ranking Christian Orthodox priest. He is a photographer by profession. He is married, has two children and has lived in Idstein since 2014.

"Unfortunately, I had to leave my country because of border conflicts between different ethnic groups in my home country. The Tigray forcibly annexed the fertile homeland. The TPLF (Tigray People Liberation Front) decided out of the blue to call the area West Tigray.

My father was of course against this idea and strongly condemned these actions, but TPLF had no respect for the old priest. He was arrested. They tortured him, and then they finally killed him." Daniel despaired, "You must know, my father was a priest, a learned and humane man. At the time, he already warned of unrest that still exists today in my homeland. Yes, he foresaw this conflict! Every day people are killed there, thousands have already died. The regions of Oromia, Benishangul Gumuz, Amhara and the Tigray region are hell for those left behind!"

More than 60,000 people have fled to Sudan in the meantime. It is unbearably hot there, more than 41°C at the moment. There is a shortage of water and food. It is a humanitarian disaster! Daniel received photos from home showing dead relatives and friends.

„My wife and I are so happy to be able to live here in safety," says the young man, moved to tears. "Unfortunately, I have lost my job due to the pandemic. Now my family and I hope that this pandemic will soon pass and we can go back to work."

Learning German – a few tips

Free courses in Idstein

Hello, my name is Nicola Lisy. My colleagues and I have been doing German lessons in Idstein for 5 years. We do courses for migrants. Our courses don't cost anything. We have many good students. Some have already taken the B2 exam. They understand everything and have already found a good job. We asked these students: How did you learn German so well? They say: I talk a lot with German people. And if I don't understand something, I ask. You have to be brave and just speak. Mistakes are not so bad. Many say: I practise German with a group. That's more fun! Some say: I read the Idsteiner Zeitung. Then I know what's happening in Idstein. I learn a few new words every day. I write these words down. I also like listening to German radio and watching German television. That's interesting. And I automatically learn German. One of our pupils is now doing an apprenticeship. He says: I practised writing a lot. In the beginning I was very slow. But now I can write fast. That's important for my final exam. I don't have much time. Everyone says: You have to practise a little every day. At least 15 minutes. It's like fitness training for the brain! Maybe you'd like to take a German course with us?

You can register here:

WhatsApp 0176 47737001 or email N.lisy@web.de

Have fun and good luck learning German!

www.integration-rtk.de

A digital platform on the topic of integration

The Rheingau-Taunuskreis has dedicated a website to the topic of integration. Here, professionals in social institutions and public agencies, committed citizens and also interested immigrants can find important information and useful links on all topics related to arriving and living in Germany.

The topics range from asylum procedures and residence to housing, health, education & training, career & work, finances, social issues and volunteering. Birgit Lichtenfels is responsible for integration and project acquisition at the district authority in Bad Schwalbach. She explains: "This website has been created as a broad information platform for professionals and people with sufficient knowledge of German. Next year we will see how we can supplement this with a special offer for immigrants with little knowledge of German."

It's worth taking a look and browsing through the sections!

„Vielfalt für Zuhause“ - Diversity for the home:

A video project by Caritas Wiesbaden-Rheingau-Taunus

As part of its integration project "Hand in Hand", the Caritas Association Wiesbaden-Rheingau-Taunus has set up an interesting cooking corner on YouTube together with immigrants. "Diversity at Home" is the name of the new channel on which the project participants present dishes from their home countries and themselves.

For example, women from Algeria, China, India, Kenya and Colombia or a Syrian family from Geisenheim tell something about themselves in the videos and show how to cook the delicacies. The project "Diversity for Home" came into being last summer because of the Corona situation. The videos are produced by Afghan photo artist - Yama Rahimi, who himself fled to Germany.

"With the project we want to encourage migrants to show themselves and their culture. New videos will also be shot in the summer of 2021. We therefore invite all interested parties to do so. Diversity must show itself!", says Daniel Naumann, Head of the Caritas Migration Service.

You can find these appetisers here:

[Vielfalt für Zuhause - YouTube](#)

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUdYIROySEUb3miB_Uehoew/videos

Women arrive - and they advance

Projects for refugee women in the Rheingau-Taunus district

By Ildikó Szelecz

When you arrive in Germany, don't speak the language yet and don't know how everything works here, it is very difficult to find a job or a training place. Nevertheless, the women who had to flee their home countries were determined to try.

Their goal was to earn money themselves in order to stand on their own two feet, support their families and be a role model for their children. In the project "Frauen kommen an" (Women arrive) of the CITOYEN Foundation from Frankfurt, more than 70 refugee women were helped to find their way into the labour market with the help of volunteer mentors. For some, this meant attending German courses first, others prepared their application portfolio and went to job interviews. More than 30 women found jobs or training positions, most of them in elderly care, but also in catering and retail.

When looking for a job, the biggest challenge was always the lack of German and computer skills. After all, using a computer is a prerequisite for almost all jobs nowadays. The project leader Dr. Ildikó Szelecz has therefore set up computer courses for refugee women with the support of the Gölkel Foundation and the CITOYEN Foundation. Here, the participants learn everything from the beginning, and

whoever wants to can attend a further training after the basic course. Three computer courses have already been successfully completed by the participants (i.e. with a certificate). Some have learned so quickly that a course on creating websites can now be offered. If you are interested in the computer courses, you can find the contact details in the info box below.

The project "Women Arrive" ended in May 2021 and fortunately a new project was approved by the CITOYEN Foundation. This project is called "Women advance". Here, various courses are offered that support refugee women to learn many things that can help them achieve their goals.

Five different courses are offered and can be attended from September. The courses are held in Idstein and Bad Schwalbach, with Waldems and Geisenheim to be added later. The courses always take place in small groups of six participants and can be completed with a certificate. Curious?

The following courses are offered:

Course 1: Learning to learn: How do I learn "correctly"? How can I remember things better and how can I prepare well for exams?

Course 2: Digital language teaching and digital skills: How do I use the internet properly, for example to learn German?

Course 3: Competence development and personality training: How can I become more courageous and self-confident and show others what I can do?

Course 4: Social interaction and democracy in Germany: What does democracy mean? How can I get involved in society? How do I get along well here?

Course 5: Career orientation and career prospects for women: What professions are there in Germany? What training options do I have? What suits me best?

If you are interested in the courses, you will find the contact details for further information in Infobox 2. Simply call, send a WhatsApp or write an email. We will then look for the right courses together. Shehide Selmani, Chairwoman of the Foreigners' Advisory Council in Idstein, is enthusiastic: "It's a great project, especially because it aims to help people to help themselves, and that's where we want to go, that people want to help themselves.

For information on the courses offered by the project "Women get ahead", please contact Dr. Ildikó Szelec at 0176 504 12 251 or at fkw@stiftung-citoyen.de

For information about the computer courses for refugee and migrant women, please contact Kerstin Reimers at 069- 69869360 or at projekte@stiftung-citoyen.de

Let's go - The sports programme of TV Idstein

The gyms and sports facilities are open again, and the TV Idstein offers a wide programme for everyone who wants to do something for their fitness again after the long break.

Renate Stübing from TVI advises: "You can find all the events on our website under „Sportangebot“ at www.tv1844idstein.de. Our handball, volleyball and football groups are particularly popular. In addition to the courses and various sports groups, there is also the possibility to use the weight room with the fitness equipment; you also get an introduction by the trainer. Appointments for this can be easily booked via Doodle. There is also a great rehab offer for children with a lack of exercise - this is especially important after the long Corona break. With a doctor's certificate, the course can be applied for at the health insurance company and is free of charge." Important: Membership is a prerequisite for participation in the events at the TVI. Those who receive benefits from the JobCenter receive a discount on the membership fee.

Renate Stübing will be happy to answer any questions about the courses and registration: phone: 06126-9595557, e-mail: geschaefsstelle@tv-idstein.de, renate.stuebing@t-online.de

A note on Afghanistan

A topical note: At the moment, there is a humanitarian catastrophe in Afghanistan which concerns all of us. We want to publish reports from eyewitnesses in the next issue and ask our Afghan fellow citizens for support: Do you have contact with your relatives in Afghanistan? How are they doing there? How are they experiencing the Taliban takeover? How has their life changed in the last few days and weeks? Please write to us: redaktion@steps-fhi-ev.de.

Germany - the paper country / Part 1

Ways through the bureaucracy

(sbo)

A German proverb says: "From the cradle to the grave – it's forms, forms, forms". It starts with the birth certificate and ends with the death certificate. And in between, we have to fill out, sign, copy, send away or keep safe a million other forms, applications, notices, certificates, contracts, bills and many other documents.

Every country has its own kind of bureaucracy. Some need a lot of paper, some less. In Germany, you tend to need more paper.

Even Germans often find it difficult to fill out forms - for example, there is special assistance if you have to fill out a pension application. For foreigners, however, it is of course particularly difficult to wade through the jungle of forms. It is already a challenge when you have to fill out forms in a foreign language. It is even more difficult when this foreign language uses different words in the "official language" than in the normal language.

In a series of articles, we want to guide you through our "paper country" and start with some tips on which documents are most important, how you can best sort and keep them, and what is important when dealing with the authorities in Germany.

Important documents to keep

The most important documents in life - and not only in Germany! - are

- the birth certificate
- your identity card/passport from your home country and the document you received from the foreigners authority, i.e. the residence permit, the toleration permit or the residence title (the residence or settlement permit)
- Proof of your tax number
- the pension insurance number or social security card
- the health insurance card and number
- the marriage certificate, if you are married
- Also important are school and university certificates, training certificates or job references or your driving licence, and of course your bank card.
- Other documents are also important: for example, the JobCenter needs your bank statements for the last 6 months if you apply for benefits.

Offices and authorities

Very important:

- If you do not agree with a decision, you must lodge an objection to it within the deadline. If the appeal is late, nothing can be changed!
- Observe the deadlines and be punctual or make another appointment in good time!

What do I do with all the paper?

The bad method: collect all the letters and documents unsorted in a corner of the cupboard.

The efficient method: buy a file folder (or two) and sort the documents by subject. For example, this is what the labelling of the topics in the folder might look like:

- important documents
- asylum procedure
- foreigners' Registration Office
- social welfare office / JobCenter
- health insurance and doctors
- bank
- child benefit (Kindergeld)
- housing (rent, electricity)
- internet/mobile phone
- work/salary statements
- kindergarten/school/training
- insurances
- tax office (Finanzamt)
- car
- miscellaneous (all the rest...)

Important words:

In each issue we explain some important terms.

With a (usually written) **Antrag** (application), you make a request to state, municipal or private institutions. You apply to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) for an integration course, to the family insurance fund for child benefit, to the health insurance fund for an allowance for treatment and to your employer for a holiday. You usually need a **Formular** (form) for this. You can get one from the office concerned. You have to fill in the form and send it back together with all the required attachments (e.g. copies of your identity card and other documents).

Once a decision has been made on the application, you will receive a **Bescheid** (notification or ruling). This is an important document and informs you about your rights and obligations.

If you do not agree with the decision, you must lodge a **Widerspruch** (objection) within the specified period. A decision is only valid if there is no appeal by the end of the deadline or if you accept the decision on the appeal.

In the next issue we will deal with the important topic of contracts.

Painting monsters with your fingers

Finger printing for little children

A sheet of paper, colourful ink pads, a pencil and your own fingers: that's all you need to paint great figures. The following instructions will show you how. You can get the whole book from Bassermann-Verlag and the stamping inks in the bookshop!

From: Fingerstempeln für kleine Künstler - Monster und Abenteuer, by Birte Schrader & Norbert Pautner, ©Bassermann-Verlag 2014. All graphics and texts courtesy of Penguin Random House Verlagsgruppe GmbH.

Kids' talk

What children say

We asked children of immigrants what they think about Germany, how they like it here, what is different in their home country and what they want most.

Abdullah and Ram, 10 years old, two boys from Syria, answered us. They have been in Germany for a few years and go to school here. They have foreign and German friends.

What do you like most in Germany?

Ram: The weather and the nice people.

Abdullah: There are many nice people.

What don't you like here at all?

Ram: Corona! And when someone calls me a foreigner.

Abdullah: bad children.

What is strange or different from your home country?

Ram: The streets are clean here.

Abdullah: the German language.

Are the people here different from those in your home country?

Ram: Yes, here are people with different skin colours.

Abdullah: They speak differently.

What do you miss about your home country?

Ram: Nothing, I was little.

Abdullah: Everything, Syria was my home.

What do you wish for most?

Ram: that there will never be a war.

Abdullah: a good family, and I already have one.

Steps Humour – Everbody has got his own „East Frisians“

By Hans-Peter Röther

Humour is important for the soul, and telling jokes is a popular way all over the world to cultivate friendship and neighbourliness and to laugh together. As is well known, the best way to do that is to make fun of other people together. People prefer to laugh at those they don't like, such as politicians. There are many particularly good jokes in countries where there is a dictatorship - but there it is also very risky to tell them.

Sometimes the jokes are not very nice and rather quite mean, but it is probably in the nature of people that they like to have fun at the expense of others. There are jokes about certain groups of one's own people, in Germany, for example, about East Frisians (a nice little people on the North Sea coast who are quite wrongly called somewhat stupid), and Swabians (who are said to be very stingy). The Bavarians make jokes about "Saupreußen" (as they call all German non-Bavarians).

In addition, there are of course jokes about members of other peoples: the Germans like to make jokes about the Scots (who are supposedly very stingy) and the Swiss (who are supposedly "very slow"). The French laugh at the Belgians, the Austrians at the Germans, and all Syrians (that is, all those who are not from Homs) laugh at the people from Homs.

Finally, there are millions of jokes about certain groups of people (e.g. blondes) or occupational groups (e.g. civil servants).

We start with some jokes about Germany's East Frisians and the Scots to encourage our readers to tell us jokes or anecdotes from their home country. Please write us your favourite jokes! Are there also "East Frisians" in your home country?

+

Question: Why are the telephone connections so bad in East Frisia?

Answer: Because from Oldenburg onwards, communication is via drums.

+

Question: Why do East Frisians sprinkle pepper on the television?

Answer: To make the picture sharper.

+

What do East Frisians do when they have a bucket of water left over?

Freeze it. You can always use hot water.

+

A stranger comes into an East Frisian village and asks two East Frisians for directions to Aurich. Both shake their heads. The stranger asks in English, no answer, then in French. No answer. The stranger drives on in despair. Afterwards, one East Frisian says

to the other: Great, he knew two foreign languages. Says the other East Frisian: And what good did it do him?

+

Remember: Scots are stingy!

Question: Why do most Scots learn Braille?

Answer: Because then they can read without light.

+

A Scotsman at the baker's: Please, a loaf of bread! And wrap it in today's newspaper!

Black humour

Sometimes jokes are more tragicomic. We call that black humour. Especially political jokes are often not funny at all. But you have to laugh anyway. Ahmad Aldahik tells an example from his home country Syria. There, the president was re-elected in May. This joke was told about the elections:

An old man came to a polling centre in Syria and asked the polling officer:

"Can you please check if my wife has voted yet?"

The election worker replied, "Yes, she has already voted. Do you have any quarrel with your wife or are you two already separated?"

The old man replied ironically, "No. My wife died 15 years ago, but every election she comes to vote and every time I try to catch her, but am always too late."

Steps Cuisine

Vegan delicacies: Starters from Ethiopia

Ethiopian cuisine is very diverse, very healthy and also looks very delicious. You can see that in the photo Kidu Tilahun took of her vegan appetiser platter. These dishes are mainly eaten during Lent before the Orthodox Easter, when people abstain from animal products such as meat, milk and cheese.

Very important in cooking in Ethiopia are the many spices that are combined into traditional mixtures.

Kidu Tilahun has written down the recipes for eight starters, two spice mixtures and the typical flat bread from her homeland. You will notice that there are usually no quantities. You have to try it out and follow the motto "you take...": If it tastes good, the quantity is right! We present some of the recipes on this page.

The starters

Alicha: a delicious vegetable salad

Chop and fry onions, garlic and a piece of ginger, cut some boiled potatoes, carrots into small cubes, finely chop raw white or pointed cabbage and mix everything with oil and the spice mixture Mekelesha (see below).

Keyser Alicha: Potatoes and beetroot in a spicy salad.

Chop and fry onions, dice cooked potatoes and beetroot, mix with oil and mekelesha.

Azifa: Paprika and lentil salad

Finely dice an onion, finely chop cooked peppers and add cooked brown lentils. Mix with mustard, olive oil, salt and black pepper.

Alicha Ater Keke: Yellow pea dip

Mix cooked yellow lentils with a diced sautéed onion, oil, garlic, grated ginger, turmeric and mekelesha.

Gomen: Kale dip

Chop cooked kale, mix with oil, salt, black pepper and mekelesha.

Sembera Asa: Chickpea dumpling sauce

Fry chopped onions in oil, add berbera, deglaze with water and continue cooking until onions are soft. Mix pureed chickpeas with a little oil to make a dough and form small dumplings. Bake in a pan or in the oven. Serve with the onion spice sauce.

A bit complicated, but there are also instructions on YouTube to look up:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9fpH4quYzY>

Suf Fetfet: Vegetable sunflower seed dip

Chop/dice sunflower seeds, diced and sautéed onions, peppers, and tomatoes, season with salt. Serve with injera bread.

Miser Wate: Red lentil dip

Fry diced onions in oil, add berbera, garlic and red lentils, add water and cook, season with mekelsa.

The spice mixtures

Berbera (paprika spice mix)

Mix 500 g mild paprika powder and 1 tablespoon each of coriander, cardamom, cloves, fenugreek seeds, basil, thyme, rosemary, cinnamon, cumin, black pepper, nutmeg, ginger, tenadam (Ethiopian herb), (all ground / chopped, dried fried onions, garlic powder and salt well.

Mekelesa (hot spice mix)

Mix 1 teaspoon each of cardamom, nutmeg, black pepper, cloves, cinnamon, cloves, cumin and stick pepper (all ground) well.

Very important: the bread - injera

(flat bread without salt)

1 kg spelt flour, 100 g rye flour, 500 g teff flour (Ethiopian flour; available in speciality shops or on the internet), 1 cube fresh yeast, mix with water and leave to stand for a whole day. Then prepare like pancakes in the pan.

steps Riddle

If you read this newspaper carefully, you will find some pictures with questions for this puzzle. You can use them to test your knowledge of Idstein. The other questions are below. Some of the answers may also be found on a walk through the town. It's worth looking carefully!

If you find the right answer, the letters in the coloured boxes will give you the answer. You have to read them in order from yellow to green to red.

Have fun!

1. What is the name of the city bus in Idstein?
2. This heron is waiting for his lunch and is standing in the middle of the ...
3. This is now a grammar school and once used to be a...
4. (vertical) The landmark of Idstein is the ...
4. (horizontal) This is the first name of the man with the broom
5. The mayor's workplace is the ...
6. The Limeschule is on the ...
7. This broom can be seen in the ...
8. What is in the building behind the stork?
9. This is the name of the Kindergarten Am Weißen Stein...
10. and this Kita can be found in the Eisenbach.
11. In the house with this letterbox is the ...
12. On Saturday mornings there is a... on Löhrlplatz
13. Idstein is in the federal state of ...
14. What is in the house with this chimney?

A note on the spelling of the answers: "ß" becomes "ss", and umlauts are written separately (i.e. ä = ae etc.).

Flüchtlings- und Integrationshilfe Idstein e.V.

Refugees and integration assistance in Idstein

We care about integration and neighbourly coexistence of refugees, migrants and their neighbours.

Anyone who would like to support our projects is cordially invited to join us - either as an active or passive member or by making a donation.

More information at www.fluechtlingshilfe-idstein-ev.de

E-mail: fluechtlingshilfeidstein@gmx.de

