

German state of Hesse sends Ukrainians who have fled back to war

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Fugitive Ukrainian men of military age whose papers have expired are to be returned to Ukraine, according to the Hesse state government. A response from the Social Democratic Party-led Hesse state Ministry of Social Affairs, states this would be “reasonable” for them. Hesse is thus the first federal state in Germany to explicitly declare it wants to force Ukrainian men aged 18 and 60 to return to the war against Russia.

The official hypocrisy of the federal government—a coalition of the Social Democrats (SPD), Liberal Democrats (FDP) and Greens—could not be more clearly exposed. Official propaganda is that Germany is standing by Ukraine to defend “Western values” such as democracy and human rights against an “unprovoked attack by Putin.” In reality, for the German bourgeoisie, the Ukrainian population is only good enough to be used as human materiel in the war against Russia.

“Hesse immigration authorities will not issue Ukrainian men of military age with replacement German travel documents,” writes the state Ministry of Social Affairs. “It is reasonable for them to travel to Ukraine to obtain a passport and fulfil their compulsory military service.”

With this letter, the Ministry of Social Affairs is responding to a spiteful parliamentary enquiry on the subject, which, significantly, originated from the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD). The government letter now states that the most recent EU decision of October 19, 2023, according to which, “Ukrainian men fit for military service are not exempt from the granting of temporary protection,” is being relied upon. Nevertheless, the men are to be forced back to the front: It is “reasonable” for them to “fulfil compulsory military service.”

Almost 20,000 Ukrainian men of all ages are

registered in Hesse, around eight times as many as before the start of the war in Ukraine. This figure also includes children, young people and senior citizens. Almost 5,000 are in employment and paying social security contributions, i.e., they have a permanent job and are socially integrated; many also have families.

They could now be threatened—like thousands of undocumented refugees—with being dragged out of bed in a cloak-and-dagger operation and deported to Ukraine, where they would be immediately conscripted. For some time now, men of military age have no longer been able to have their Ukrainian papers renewed at the Consulate General in Frankfurt. Now the phrase “it is reasonable for them” confirms the German government’s determination to become a direct agent of the Zelensky government and its notorious Ukrainian mobile detachments, which grab men off the streets and conscript them to the front.

The NATO proxy war in Ukraine was provoked by the West from the outset with the aim of defeating Russia militarily, dismembering it politically and exploiting it economically. NATO itself is increasingly openly a party to the war. In order to lead the offensive against Russia, it is setting up a NATO office in Ukraine and a NATO command in Germany. Long-range precision weapons are also being stationed in Germany again, including at the Wiesbaden base in the densely populated Main-Rhine region, jeopardising the lives of millions of people.

The war in Ukraine has now taken on the character of a war of attrition. Hundreds of thousands have already fallen victim to it on both sides, and new cannon fodder is being recruited using brutal methods. The Kiev puppet regime has ordered the mobilisation of a further 500,000 soldiers. “Young people are being taken from gyms, restaurants, shopping centres and the streets and

forced into the army,” reports a correspondent for the WSWS.

Now the German authorities are coming to Zelensky’s aid. The decision by the Hesse state government under Boris Rhein (Christian Democrat, CDU) and his Social Affairs Minister Heike Hofmann (SPD) is the next stage in the escalation of this war, which goes hand in hand with the abolition of basic democratic rights. The decision is only the first step in a nationwide attack on Ukrainian men living in Germany.

Heike Hofmann, Minister of Social Affairs and Deputy Chairwoman of the SPD parliamentary group in the Hesse state parliament, has been in close contact with Federal Interior Minister Nancy Faeser (SPD), who herself comes from Hesse. For more than 20 years, the two SPD politicians worked closely together in the Hesse state parliament, Faeser as the party’s domestic policy spokesperson and Hofmann as its legal policy spokesperson. When Chancellor Scholz brought Nancy Faeser to Berlin as Federal Interior Minister, Heike Hofmann took over her position in the state parliament. In January 2024, she became Minister of Labour, Integration, Youth and Social Affairs in Boris Rhein’s cabinet.

Faeser repeatedly uses the Hesse state government as a battering ram to tear down social and democratic rights. For example, the coalition agreement of the Hesse CDU-SPD coalition, which Nancy Faeser played a key role in drafting, includes the requirement that immigrants and refugees must unconditionally recognise Israel’s right to exist. If “anti-Semitic or extremist criminal offences or corresponding confirmed activities are identified”, German citizenship may not be granted, whereby any criticism of Israel is considered “anti-Semitic”.

Faeser has now extended the same attacks to the federal territory. Hardly a week goes by without new bans and raids being carried out against people exercising their right to freedom of opinion or freedom of the press. The move against Ukrainian men in Hesse is just the first step in the nationwide deportation of refugees from Ukraine, forcing them to serve as cannon fodder on the Russian front.

The next step has already been announced. The German government is preparing to deploy troops itself. On June 12, 2024, Defence Minister Boris

Pistorius (SDP) presented his plan for a new military service (conscription). “We have to be ready for war by 2029,” said Pistorius. For a third time, young people are to be utilised in a major, European-wide and global war.

Workers in Germany must stand in defence of their class brothers and sisters in Ukraine. There is only one way to stop the threat of a third world war. The independent mobilisation of the international working class on the basis of a socialist programme that combines the struggle against war, social inequality and fascism with the struggle against their cause, capitalism.



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