

Merz government tightens migration policy and arms police

Johannes Stern
11 June 2025

While President Donald Trump is mobilising the National Guard and the military against the population in the United States, the German government under Chancellor Friedrich Merz (Christian Democratic Union, CDU) is also moving towards an authoritarian police state. The latest decisions by the federal cabinet on migration policy and the planned arming of the federal police with Tasers mark a further escalation. Interior Minister Alexander Dobrindt (Christian Social Union, CSU) is openly pursuing the agenda of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD).

In recent weeks, the cabinet has passed several draft laws that effectively abolish the right to asylum and humanitarian protection and facilitate the deportation of tens of thousands of people.

Among other things, the government wants to define so-called “safe countries of origin” by means of a statutory order, thereby massively expanding deportations to these countries. Unlike a formal law, such orders do not have to be debated and passed by the Bundestag or the Bundesrat (lower and upper houses of parliament). In their coalition agreement, the CDU, CSU and Social Democratic Party (SPD) had already announced that they would expand the list of safe countries of origin. Countries such as Algeria, India, Morocco and Tunisia are being discussed.

At the same time, key rights are being undermined: family reunification for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection is being stopped and facilitated naturalisation is being abolished. These measures not only violate fundamental human rights, they also contradict applicable European law. The right to respect for family life (Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights) is being trampled underfoot, as is the individual right to asylum.

The refugee organisation Pro Asyl reacted with horror

to the measures. It said that this would close legal and safe escape routes. “It is a disaster for the families affected,” said Tareq Alaows. “The de facto separation will last longer than two years, especially for families who have been waiting for years for their applications to be processed.”

The entry rejections at Germany’s external borders are particularly extreme. Despite a ruling by the Berlin Administrative Court on June 2 that the rejection of asylum seekers at the borders is illegal, Interior Minister Dobrindt stated: “We will continue to act at the border if necessary. Germany must decide for itself who enters the country.”

With this openly unlawful stance, the government is following the example of Trump, who also ignores court rulings in the United States. The German constitution and international agreements are being undermined in an authoritarian manner.

The project to promote freedom of information, “FragDenStaat” (Ask the State), has filed a criminal complaint against the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the President of the Federal Police, Dieter Romann, for “inciting subordinates to commit a criminal offence.” “The rejections” are “criminal offences” and could be “considered coercion through abuse of official authority.” The Legal Tribune Online website also speaks of an “obvious breach of law.”

At the same time, the authorities are carrying out brutal deportations, which are increasingly meeting with opposition from the population. In Frankfurt, an Afghan family with two school-age children had 20 minutes to pack before being deported to India. In Offenbach, a nursery school teacher was deported to Lithuania—even though she was considered a much-needed skilled worker. Such individual fates are not exceptions, but the systematic expression of an

inhumane deportation policy.

According to the federal government, this policy is to be tightened at European level as well. “We are working with a two-pillar strategy to combat illegal migration, namely a European pillar and a national pillar,” Dobrindt told the Bundestag on June 6.

The European pillar included, among other things, “the implementation and tightening of the Common European Asylum System, ... a common European return regulation and, yes, the establishment of European asylum centres at the external borders of the European Union.” In other words, mass deportations and the locking up of refugees in concentration camps at the external borders.

Significantly, after Dobrindt’s list of planned measures, the Bundestag minutes note the interjection of an AfD member of parliament: “The AfD is working, I would say!”

And that’s not all. Parallel to the tightening of migration policy, the state apparatus of repression is being massively beefed up. Dobrindt announced that the federal police would be equipped with “Tasers” across the board. He said it was “about expanding the repertoire of our forces and protecting lives.” This is pure cynicism.

Tasers are not harmless or even “life-saving” alternatives, but dangerous weapons. These electric shock guns fire high-voltage darts that penetrate clothing and hook themselves into body tissue. The electric pulse can be triggered multiple times and regularly causes serious injury or even death.

In the United States, where Tasers have long been part of everyday police practice, the number of deaths resulting from such use is well documented. An investigation by the Associated Press found that between 2012 and 2021, 538 people were killed by stun guns.

The planned arming of the police does not serve to protect the population, but rather to intimidate and violently repress it. Like the attacks on migrants, it is directed against the entire working class. Amid growing social inequality, massive rearmament and preparations for war, the ruling class wants to nip any opposition in the bud and, if necessary, suppress it with potentially lethal weapons.

The criticism of the latest decisions by the Greens and the Left Party is tame and hypocritical. The Greens

spokesperson on refugee policy, Filiz Polat, described the “suspension of family reunification” as “problematic.” As part of the last federal government, the Greens themselves had constantly tightened refugee policy. The Left Party also criticises “the government’s right-wing policies” in its Sunday speeches, but, like the Greens, voted in the Bundesrat for the Merz government’s war credits. And, as a governing party at the state level, it is involved in brutal deportations.

The tightening of migration policy and the expansion of the police state are two sides of the same coin: they serve to prepare for social conflicts and to enforce the massive rearmament and war course against the enormous opposition in the population.

Eighty years after the end of the Second World War, Germany is to become “fit for war” again, as Defence Minister Boris Pistorius (SPD) already demanded in autumn 2023. The reintroduction of compulsory military service, a target military budget of 5 percent of gross domestic product (around €225 billion), preparations for war against the nuclear power Russia and growing tensions between the imperialist powers, especially the US—all this requires, as in the 1930s, a break with democratic rule and the establishment of a dictatorship.

The German ruling class knows that its policies will meet with growing resistance, as in the United States. That is why it is arming itself at home. The only answer to this course is the independent mobilisation of the working class on an international and socialist basis. Only in this way can the advance towards authoritarian state restructuring, militarism and war be stopped.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact