



Letter of Welcome to Refugees in Radolfzell

Dear Friends,

We, the members of the **Freundeskreis Asyl** welcome you here in Radolfzell. We want you to feel safe here, so that you can recover, rest and finally benefit from chances and prospects in Germany. We would like to assist you in this.

In your accommodation, personnel from public authorities and also private citizens will be of assistance to you. **Mr. Brich, Mrs. Urban and Mrs. Willam** are members (**social workers**) of the district office ("**Landratsamt**"). Their office is here in this main building. Opening hours are from **Monday to Friday from 8.00 h until 12.00 h**. Mr. Brich, Mrs. Urban and Mrs. Willam take care of your personal issues. You can also ask them about the procedure for granting your right of asylum. They will help whenever you need a doctor and they organise your children's entry to kindergarden and school.

Mrs. **Misol** is the head of **administration**. She will hand out health insurance certificates for your consultations with doctors. She informs about any changes in your location. In her office you will receive your support for living and your pocket money.

Then there is the **Freundeskreis Asyl**. Their members are private citizens who support and assist refugees in their personal issues and questions. You can meet members of this circle in the "**Café International**" every **Friday from 15.00 h until 18.00 h**. It's located in the Regiment-Piemont-Str.7 not far from the accommodation for refugees (crossroad to the Kasernenstrasse - just walk along the shop windows as far as to the last entrance door on the left side). You can have a nice cup of coffee or tea there and can talk to us about your issues and concerns. We will gladly give you tips about everyday life in Germany. We will maintain discretion and treat your questions confidentially.

We have prepared a starter kit for you. In this kit you will find a small dictionary, a folder, a hole punch, writing utensils and a memo pad. Unfortunately, the dictionaries are not available in all languages.

Language Courses

Learning our German language is very important. Maybe in the beginning a bit of English or the assistance of a friend or colleague can help you communicating. But for a thorough communication German language courses are inevitable. A good Know How of the German language is required when you look for a job. The "Freundeskreis Asyl" organizes and performs language courses which are free of charge.

There are different courses and levels: If you do not know the Latin script, an alphabetization course is the proper course for you.

The following course is a basic course: Here you learn basics of the German language, so that you



can manage your everyday life in Germany.

For the advanced students there is another course in which you learn to converse in German language. An advanced level follows this course.

Although you may now want to recover first of all, we recommend you to register in a language course immediately. Mr. Brich and Mrs. Urban have a list in which you can register. All courses begin in regular intervals of a few weeks. The classrooms are close to your accommodation. For mothers with little children there is a special course. The children will be taken care of next door while their mothers can concentrate on the lesson.

The lessons have to be attended regularly. Shouldn't you be able to join the lesson, please let us know.

Procedure for granting your right of asylum

Probably you will be invited for an interview ("**Anhörung**"). Or maybe you have to fill in a questionnaire. There you have to mention the reasons for and course of events of your flight in order to receive a residence permit. You will have to answer questions to your person, your family (wife, children, brothers and sisters), exact birth dates and home addresses. You should answer these questions in short and precisely. Then there will be questions to the reasons and course of events for your flight. Here you have to answer in detail and completely, even if this is difficult for you. Otherwise the authorities cannot judge, whether you have the right to stay in Germany. Just be confident.

In many countries, and probably in your home country as well, it is common not to answer direct questions directly and precisely. You may be used to slowly get to the point during a conversation. This is not common in Germany. If you are asked a question which can be answered with "yes" or "no", Germans expect to get a clear and precise answer as well. But only mention facts which you really know and which concern you personally. If you do not know anything exactly, then say so ("I am not quite sure, but"). In any case you should avoid to say something today and the next day you say it differently. Then the authorities think that you are not telling the truth. This is most important if in an interview husband and wife give different statements. Always tell the truth! The authorities easily notice when you invent a false story of your flight. Don't be afraid of the interview or the questionnaire. **Talk to us in advance at the Café International.**

You will receive letters from German authorities concerning your asylum procedure and other topics. At the beginning these letters will be absolutely incomprehensible for you. **Never toss these letters away, but ask Mr. Brich, Mrs. Urban or someone in the Café International** about the meaning of these letters and what you have to do. Otherwise you may miss an important deadline. Keep these letters safely in your files.

You received a folder from us in which you can file these letters. In this folder you should also file any documents which you brought from your home country (e.g. certificates, identity cards etc.) Never give these original documents away, but copy them so that you can hand out the copies. The memo pad is for your own notes. **Write down your most important data and experiences during your flight immediately. Later on you may have forgotten or suppressed them.**



Cultural Differences

Most Germans are very punctual. Probably in this case we are different from most people in your home country. Whenever a German says 15.00 h he absolutely means it and not, for example, 15.30 h. At this point of time he will already have left. If you cannot keep an agreed appointment, give your partner a call!

In Germany no religion is allowed to elevate itself above another religion or even menace or threaten the other one. The same applies to people from different nationalities. This is part of the German Constitution and is being supervised by our judiciary. Please obey to these regulations and rules if you want to stay in Germany.

We heard that in your home country you cannot rely on the police and you prefer to avoid the police. This is different here: Whenever you have a problem concerning your safety or should you have an accident you can always contact the police: Tel. 110 (police) or Tel. 112 (accident). Tell them where you are (street name and house number). The police or ambulance will turn up. But please only call them in case of need or emergency!!

How to find your way in Radolfzell

Radolfzell is a small city. You can go nearly everywhere afoot. From your accommodation to the centre close to the big church it takes about 15 minutes. You will find a city map in your starter kit so that you cannot get lost. The market place is our city centre. There is the big church, the so-called "Münster" and the town hall nearby. Inside the town hall you will find the "Ausländeramt" (local authorities responsible for foreigners). You have to go there to prolong your passport. Sometimes you are summoned to enlist there. If you are unsure what you have to do, ask someone from the Café International to assist and accompany you.

In the registry office ("Bürgerbüro") in the town hall just beside the "Ausländeramt" you can get your social pass. With this pass you can get discounts in various municipal institutions and a permission to shop in a special food store ("Tafel"). Close to the church you can find the municipal library. There you can read books or magazines and borrow them.

By the way: Even if you are Muslim you are allowed and invited to go into a church; e.g. you can visit the "Münster". Out of respect, men take off their caps or hats. Women are allowed to keep on their headscarfs. Please do not speak loudly. During a ceremony, please stay at the entrance.

You can shop in various large supermarkets or discounters near your accommodation. The discounters Lidl and Aldi are good and well-priced and not far away from your accommodation. The Rewe supermarket at the large roundabout and the Kaufland in the city centre have a larger assortment, but are a bit more expensive. The "Tafel" in the "Markthallenstrasse 16" is very low priced. There people with a social pass ("Sozialpass") can buy very cheap food. However, this shop only opens at fixed hours. You have to wait for entrance in the front.

If you need clothing, you don't have to buy new and expensive clothes. There is a charity shop where you can buy second-hand clothes in good shape for only a few Euros. Just ask Mr. Brich or



Mrs. Urban.

Mobility

As already mentioned you can reach nearly every place in Radolfzell afoot. Those who cannot or do not want to walk, can take the city bus. The bus stop is just beside your accomodation. The city bus takes you to the train station. However, a one-way ticket costs 2,20 €.

It is better to have a bicycle. The "Freundeskreis Asyl" collects second-hand bicycles und sells them together with a lock to refugees for 10,00 € while stocks last. Maybe you have to wait a bit until further bicycles are on sale. Just ask in the Café International.

If you want to visit the neighbouring cities Konstanz, Singen, Engen or Stockach you can go by train. The train goes every 30 minutes. To Konstanz or Singen a one-way ticket costs 3,60 € . The Lake of Konstanz where you are situated is one of the most beautiful regions in Germany. Take advantage of this fact and do not remain stuck in your accomodation. Especially Konstanz is a very interesting and nice city (about 20 km, one-way ticket 3,60 € or approx. 1,5 hour by bicycle). Konstanz has a very beautiful historic centre around the main church ("Münster"), a harbour with colored ships and many shops. But please be careful: Very often they are very expensive. Another important thing: Konstanz and the neighbouring city Kreuzlingen in Switzerland are nearly built together. Sometimes you do not notice the border. You as refugees without a visa should not enter Switzerland by accident. The Swiss authorities are very exact and judge this as a criminal act. If you are at the harbour, always stay in the area where the ships land. The boarder is just close to the aquarium "Sealife".

As a refugee you have to face certain restrictions regarding mobility. You are allowed to move in the federal land "Baden-Württemberg" (e.g. Stuttgart, Karlsruhe, Freiburg, Mannheim). If you want to visit friends in other federal states (e.g. Munich, Berlin, Hamburg) you have to apply for a permit ("Erlaubnisschein") at the "Ausländeramt" in the town hall. **If you plan a trip or journey, first of all ask Mr. Brich!**

Sports

If you feel too crowded in your accomodation, maybe sports and physical exercises such as soccer, handball, volleyball etc. will do you good. The local clubs in Radolfzell are willing to include refugees as guests in their teams. **You can get information in the Café International.**

Last but not Least

Did you notice? All these offered options are only practicable if you can speak German. Therefore register for a German course!
We wish you good luck in Radolfzell and hope that we can soon welcome you in the Café International.