

Introduction (Daniel)

Dear activists of Fridays for Future, dear citizens of Heidelberg, dear friends, thank you for the invitation and the opportunity to speak here today.

Gabriele and I are standing here on behalf of BAFF, the Alliance for the Arrival Center for Refugees and Land Preservation. In recent months, we have been working to initiate a citizens' petition and have also been successful thanks to the many signatures of Heidelberg's citizens. Around 10,000 signatures were collected and we are very grateful for that! Now a referendum will take place on April 11. The election documents, including absentee ballots, should already be in your mailboxes.

But today we don't want to talk about how the process went, which political decision-makers behaved and why citizens have less trust in democracy and political decision-making processes precisely because of such processes.

Today we are talking about people who really deserve to be talked about. We are talking about people who do not leave their homes voluntarily. We are talking about people who want to arrive, who want to live in freedom and who, above all, deserve it.

Situation of the refugees (Gabriele)

Dear listeners,

I stand here as a representative of a generation that grew up in so-called post-war Germany. The stories of the horrors of the Second World War between 1939 and 1945 accompanied my childhood. Countless families were victims of Nazi terror, so often they had to flee, they had to leave their homes. The terms flight, expulsion, uprooting, loss of home and the warmth of the nest, hatred, fear, hunger and pain, they were associated with it - and are today, 80 years later again, or still, more than ever. I cannot believe it. To have to see how people at the outer borders of rich Europe, through external and internal cold, in snow, frost, rain, soggy ground, housed in makeshift tents, their freezing, crying children pressed against them, beg for admission to this Europe, these images from Bosnia and Croatia will not get out of my head. The whole world seems to be out of joint - figures from the year 2020 :

- 79.5 million people are on the run worldwide

- 4,2 million asylum seekers

- Since 2010, the number of refugees has doubled

- 6.6 million are from Syria, followed by refugees from Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Myanmar, East Africa, Yemen, Iraq, Burundi and Ukraine.

Causes are hunger, wars, political conflicts, violence, crime, and many more.

There are currently up to 12,000 refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who arrive via the so-called Balkan route and end up.....in a dead end at the border of Croatia. There, they experience mistreatment, "pushbacks," serious injuries, kicks, beatings, meanwhile also from the local population.

Housed in makeshift camps in the forest, asylum applications cannot be submitted. "Instead of offering political and, above all, humane solutions, the refugee problem is being exploited politically by the parties in Bosnia; the refugees are a good way of distracting attention from their own failures. A country, from which thousands of refugees fled to Germany and other countries and were accepted there, now refuses humane solutions for people from other crisis areas, even worse, those responsible in Bosnia seem to deliberately increase the suffering of the refugees." (Quote H.B. Foundation) And in the process, EU member Croatia is systematically breaking European and international law by

systematically refusing to allow refugees to apply for asylum, but no one within the EU seems to care. Orderly asylum procedures are apparently not desired on the Balkan route.

And Brussels? Apparently, the EU has been counting on the problems of refugees in the Balkans to solve themselves. The opposite is the case. The situation has escalated over the winter. The EU is facing the consequences of its isolation policy!

But not only the EU has its essential share in this dilemma of flight and asylum, but also the unequal distribution of the consequences of global warming, which affects those population groups (mostly in the global south) that contribute least to climate change and CO2 emissions, but often suffer the most and are the most unprotected from its consequences. Keywords: Climate change and climate justice "Climate Justice" "Fridays for Future".

Climate change, as a product of social inequality and a global economic system that sees perpetual growth as essential, has put the focus on the people who are disproportionately affected by its consequences, i.e., famine caused by drought disasters and subsequent migration within their countries across borders with armed conflicts and flight across the seas towards Europe.... Deforestation, environmentally harmful exploitation of raw material deposits and the cultivation of monocultures are additional threats.

Most of the people who are now seeking asylum in our country, if they are rescued from the sea on the coast of Europe and are able to overcome the hurdles of the mostly inhospitable European border controls, come from areas south of the Sahara.

Climate Justice and the Fridays for Future movement have set themselves the goal of keeping the ethical and political problem of these causes of flight in focus and to point out again and again the responsibility that we all, through our way of life, have also taken on for our entire earth and its inhabitants and the following generations. Whether at the borders in the East or in the South of Europe, our humanitarian obligation is required more than ever and must not fail!

Integration (Daniel)

Today we also want to talk about what happens to the people who have made it here, to Baden-Württemberg, to the arrival center in Heidelberg.

Integration is not a short-lived and, above all, not a one-sided affair. It is a continuous process, characterized by constantly changing framework conditions. It is incredibly individual and takes place primarily through social relationships, through exchange, through togetherness. And who contributes to a large part of this? Well, it's civil society, which is willing to assume responsibility alongside the government agencies involved. People who voluntarily establish contact with refugees, accept them as neighbors and meet them at eye level. Without prejudices, ready to learn from each other, to listen to each other and to accept each other. Integration is not a one-way street, not a one-sided act of adaptation, but a social agreement on a reciprocal basis that changes both sides and in which both learn.

And it would be possible to design an arrival center in this way in a way that would more directly and immediately set the stone of integration in motion. The secret of successful integration lies precisely in the fact that it remains inconspicuous. It cannot be postponed until later. It is up to us as an urban society to shape integration and inclusion in a positive way.

But how do we now envision this for Heidelberg and the arrival center.

Citizens' decision (Daniel)

Migration, climate crisis, and housing shortage are three major social challenges at international and national level. However, these issues can also be observed concretely here in Heidelberg.

We advocate not to move the arrival center for refugees of the city of Heidelberg to the Wolfsgärten, but to leave it in the Patrick-Henry Village (PHV). For us, this is an issue that has a lot to do with the issue of climate justice, since social and ecological issues are being played off against each other, so to speak. So on the one hand we have the problem that refugees are not seen as equal residents of a new district and on the other hand the problem that high quality farmland continues to be paved over.

Either way, we have the opportunity to rethink society and togetherness in PHV. Of course, it is a great challenge to think about an arrival center for refugees, the scarce land, climate-sensitive construction and socially acceptable housing at the same time. But we think that this should be seen less as a contradiction and more as an opportunity. Think global and act local - which brings us to our citizens' decision.

I don't want to complain about the fact that our request to combine the referendum with the state elections was rejected. That instead we "got" the last Sunday of the Easter vacations. After all, all eligible voters are automatically sent the absentee ballots in advance. But we must not forget that this additional date naturally costs a lot of money. We are talking about a quarter of a million euros.

So you have to ask yourself why the issue is being dealt with in the way it is at the moment. From our point of view, this harms everyone involved, the city, democracy, the refugees and us! As already mentioned. You should already have all the absentee ballots available. A YES in the referendum means a NO to the Wolf Gardens. Let us also understand land paving as a local problem.

At this point I would like to point out that we have prepared an exciting discussion round for you next week on Thursday evening at 7 pm. Check out our website for that: ankunftszenrum-hd.de

Thank you to the dear people of Fridays for Future, thank you for your commitment, your courage, and perseverance. Let's shape the future together in a positive way!

And to use the words of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi, to conclude our contribution:

Not only does displacement currently affect many more people, but it is no longer a short-term and temporary phenomenon. We need a fundamentally new and more positive attitude towards all those who flee, coupled with a much more determined effort to resolve conflicts that last for years and are the cause of this immense suffering.