

DIE LINKE Party Congress in Bielefeld, 6.-7. June 2015

Over the past weekend DIE LINKE gathered for its party congress in the Northrhine-Westphalian town Bielefeld. Over 1000 delegates, guests and visitors came together for the event. Main points of the agenda were the debate about the unconditional basic income, guidelines for local politics and the election of the Federal Auditing and the Arbitration Committee.



Katja Kipping, Gregor Gysi, Bernd Riexinger (f.l.t.r.)

Party Chairs Katja Kipping and Bernd Riexinger led a controversial debate about the unconditional basic income. DIE LINKE needs to find a more specific position and proposal regarding changing lifestyles and working models in a world of growing disparities and insecurity. This will be the starting point for further elaboration. International guest Melina Klaus, vice chair of the Communist Party of Austria, contributed to the debate.

The federal working group for local politics had worked out guidelines for party structures responsible on community level. The day to day work still lacks an elaborate theoretical foundation. It was approved by the congress with great majority, preceded by detailed reports and a lively debate on how to proceed on local level.

The highly anticipated speech of DIE LINKE parliamentary group leader Gregor Gysi was the emotional highlight of Sunday. Very moved the outstanding figure declared not to run for the office of group leader anymore coming autumn and to pass responsibility to the next generation. Gregor Gysi had dedicated himself to popularise radical left thinking and the values of democratic socialism over the past 25 years. He shaped the success of DIE LINKE

to a great extent and is certainly one of the most popular and favoured politicians in the country. We fully respect his decision to have more time for family life and are very happy to learn that he will continue to rally for the leftist course as a member of parliament. Still in June the party chairs will propose possible candidates.



Bodo Ramelow, Prime Minister of Thuringia

This same weekend Bundestag Vice President, Petra Pau, Prime Minister of Thuringia, Bodo Ramelow, and others represented DIE LINKE at the **German Evangelical Church Assembly** asking if Jesus was a socialist or whether there is a paradise on earth.

While the **G7 Summit** held its meeting in Bavaria thousands took to the streets in Munich to protest against this elite gathering. This event not only becomes a hollow alibi with Russia and China excluded, the few remaining member states are also all involved in

Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis made a blitz visit to Berlin on June 8. After meeting his German counterpart Wolfgang Schäuble he discussed the situation with the heads of the party and the parliamentary fraction of DIE LINKE. Mr Varoufakis pointed out, that the latest proposal of the lenders is an attempt to torpedo the negotiations: The Greek Government will under no circumstances approve of cuts in pensions and low incomes. The necessary reforms should be built on growth and he referred to the concrete proposals submitted by the Greek government one week ago. In general, Mr Varoufakis showed confidence to reach an agreement in the forthcoming weeks.



Dietmar Bartsch, Gregor Gysi, Katja Kipping, Yanis Varoufakis, Wolfgang Gehrcke (f.l.t.r.)

In the evening Mr. Varoufakis joined a public discussion at Berlin describing his positions and willingness to reach a compromise he was cheered by the audience. It showed that broad parts of the German public are much more open for a fair settlement of the situation than the German Government.

preparing the free trade agreements TTIP, CETA, and TISA in favour of big companies and against the interests of wage earners, consumers, against environmental protection and democracy harming especially the countries of the South.



On Monday the action week for our new **campaign against precariousness** That is essential! started. Everywhere in Germany DIE LINKE demonstrates for good work, a good life, redistribution, affordable living and energy conditions and more staff in the educational, care, and health sector.

On **World Refugee Day** (20. June) DIE LINKE will co-organise a demonstration and accompany a subsequent concert at Brandenburg gate to raise awareness for the situation of refugees and show solidarity with Greece at the beginning of the Greece solidarity week launched by the World Social Forum.

<http://europa-anders-machen.net/aufwurf/europe-remade-different-democratic-with-solidarity-without-borders>

<http://www.change4all.eu/change-in-greece/detail/call-for-a-european-bottom-up-mobilization-from-movements-of-greece.html>