



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on August 1, 2016

Hundreds Demonstrate in Berlin Against Merkel's Immigration Policies

More than 1,300 people gathered in Berlin on July 30 for a demonstration against German Chancellor Angela Merkel's (shown) open-door immigration policy, with many shouting, "Merkel must go!"

The demonstration was organized by an activist group called "We are for Berlin, we are for Germany," for the stated purpose of expressing discontent with Merkel's open-door immigration policy. The group organized two previous immigration-related demonstrations in March and May.



Many of those protesting blame Merkel's liberal immigration policies for multiple terrorist attacks that have left 13 people dead during the last month. A report in Britain's *Daily Mail* observed that three of the four attackers were asylum seekers, with two of the attacks being claimed by ISIS.

These attacks have included an axe-and-knife rampage, a shooting spree, and a suicide bombing — all of which took place during a one-week period. In addition to the 13 people who died (which included three assailants), dozens more were wounded. Following a brutal [attack on a German train on July 18](#) by an axe-and-knife-wielding teenager who was an Afghan refugee, the Islamic State (ISIS) claimed responsibility. Four people were injured in that attack, one critically.

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On July 24, Mohammad Daleel, a Syrian refugee who pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of ISIS, blew himself up outside a wine bar in Ansbach, Germany; 15 people were injured, four of them seriously.

Also on July 24, a Syrian asylum seeker armed with a large knife or machete attacked pedestrians in Reutlingen, Germany, killing his coworker, who was a pregnant Polish woman, and also wounding two other people.

A gunman with dual German-Iranian citizenship killed nine people at a mall in Munich on July 22.

One protester told reporters, "It is not acceptable that we let people in our country without correct checks. We have a situation with people arriving and it is unclear what their intentions are."

Two of the four attacks took place in the German state of Bavaria, prompting Bavarian premier Horst Seehofer, whose regional Christian Social Union party traditionally fields a joint chancellor candidate with Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU), to say his party may break ties with the CDU in next year's election and run its own candidate.

During a July 31 interview on Germany's ZDF public television, when Seehofer was asked whether he could envision seeing his own face on election posters in Bavaria rather than Merkel's, he replied: "Of course." He further anticipated that while there is a "high probability that we will agree" on policy matters and a candidate, that outcome isn't assured.



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An article from Bloomberg reported that Merkel defended her open-borders stance on July 28, repeating her often-heard phrase, “We can do it,” to drive home her point that Germany is quite able to assimilate migrants and also ensure public safety.

When a reporter asked Seehofer’s views on Merkel’s assertion that “we will manage,” the Bavarian premier answered: “With the best will, I can’t embrace this sentence. The problems are too big for that and the solutions we have so far too unsatisfactory.”

Seehofer is demanding a cap on the number of refugees allowed into Germany after last year’s influx of more than one million. “We can only manage security and integration if we don’t accept an unlimited number of people,” he said in the ZDF interview.

A July 31 article in *The Australian* reported on the widespread dissatisfaction among German voters with Merkel’s immigration policies. The article quoted from an interview with a woman who had been injured during the July 24 suicide bombing in Ansbach. She and the reporter sat at the very location outside the wine bar where the bombing had occurred.

“There was a loud bang, and a very bright light,” the woman recalled four days after the attack. The writer noted that the woman’s face was covered with ugly gashes, and that her legs revealed many bruises and burns. “I felt an intense wave of air and then blood on my face,” she said.

“The images keep coming back to me. I feel very afraid,” she told the journalist. Looking toward the chalk outline that had been drawn by police investigators on the pavement around the body of Mohammad Daleel, the bomber, she continued: “Why are people like him not being sent out of the country more quickly?” she asked. “They’re such a threat to us — like ticking time bombs. We’re far too indulgent with them.”

Then the woman’s friend jumped in, saying sarcastically: “Thank you, Mrs. Merkel.”

Many political analysts have concluded that the recent terrorist attacks in Germany will deal a blow to Merkel’s refugee-welcoming policies, which have been called *Willkommenskultur* (welcoming culture).

About 1.2 million refugees are estimated to be living in Germany. Latest estimates by the European commission put the number of asylum seekers in Europe by the end of 2017 at around three million.

As we noted in an article last September, Germany had recently made a change in policy and decided to restrict the flow of migrants across its borders, with the nation’s Interior Minister Thomas de Mazière announcing the change in policy last September 13.

De Mazière explained that the new restrictions were partly necessary for security reasons and added: “This step has become necessary. The great readiness to help that Germany has shown in recent weeks ... must not be overstretched.”

Those restrictions were put in place mainly because of the economic burden of absorbing so many refugees, as well as the potential cultural impact of admitting such large numbers of non-Christian refugees into the nation.

With the recent epidemic of terrorist incidents, however, the resistance to Merkel’s open borders policies is bound to increase, as the demonstrations in Berlin over the weekend clearly indicate.

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