
East Germany Sees Rise in Racist Crimes

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Officials also announced Tuesday that Germany can expect to see an additional 750,000 people apply for asylum in the country this year.

Racist crimes have increased in eastern Germany by over 40 percent in the past year, according to figures released Tuesday, at a time when the country is seeing a massive influx of migrants and asylum seekers.

The figures showed that the five eastern states, which used to be the German Democratic Republic, as well as Berlin only account for 17 percent of the country's population, yet 47 percent of all racist crimes reported in the country in 2014 happened there.

The number represents a 40 percent increase in racially motivated crimes in east Germany compared to the year before.

To be more specific, a total of 61 out of 130 registered racist crimes nationwide were reported in the country's east. This includes attacks against migrants as well as German citizens of foreign origin.

The figures were released by the Interior Ministry in a response to an inquiry by the Green party, and reported by the German daily *Mitteldeutsche Zeitung*.

The findings were released the same day officials announced that Germany will see a record number of asylum seekers this year. The country has seen a wave of migrants recently, mainly people from Syria and the Balkans, while state officials estimate that the country could see as many as 750,000 additional asylum seekers this year alone.

Robert Ludecke, a spokesman for the German anti-racism and extremism Amadeu Antonio Foundation, told German newspaper *Deutsche Welle* that the increase in racist crimes in the country last year are not surprising.

According to Ludecke, attacks on refugees have been increasing over the past two years, particularly at large marches organized by PEDIGA, an anti-Islam organization created in the eastern city of Dresden in 2014.

“Racist violence increases in places where there is a corresponding mood,” he told german newspaper.
