

Germany

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AVP Germany Introduction and Country Profile

PAG (Project Alternativen zur Gewalt) now is a registered association. This has several advantages:

1. Contributions render possible tax reductions
2. Fines ordered by courts can support our budget
3. The association can be a partner for contracts.

PAG-courses are given honorary on weekends and in prisons. The contributions of participants are about 50€ per weekend. Prisoners do not pay anything.

Some facilitators (the young ones who have to earn their living) give paid courses to elected persons, sponsored by the Luthren Church in order to train more facilitators and during the week in schools. Trainings for personnel of prisons during their education during the week will also contribute to the income of facilitators. We have no problems of conflict about paid and unpaid facilitating. It works very well without jealousy or complaints since 5 years. These facilitators bound themselves to give at least 3-4 unpaid courses a year.

Peace work is not less or more necessary in our country than in any other countries. Prisoners suffer from violence in prisons and ask for more courses than we can offer. There are several facilitators in prisons, even one team - leader.

History

We started AVP (PAG) in 1994 . After a phase of fast growth, we had a phase of slowing down, but a recent Open Space Conference has brought new ideas and effort, so now we have a continuous growth again. From 1994 until 2005 we have run 170 courses, 101 in prisons and 69 in the community. In 2006 we have run approximately 30 courses. We have now trained 150 participants in T4F and at present have 70 facilitators in various status of facilitating (12 team-leaders, 4 apprentice team-leaders, 17 facilitators and 37 apprentice facilitators).

We have been trying to translate the handbooks to German, but this taken much time and is expensive. The revised Basic is finished, the Youth Manual is almost finished and the new Advanced shall be translated by the end of 2006 and we are waiting for the new T4F next year.

Workshops

We set up workshops decentrally through engaged facilitators organizing courses and getting help and support from team-leaders. In prisons this process is engaged by team-leaders through continuous work over many years. Currently we are running workshops in three prisons which get 5-6 courses a year. In 2006, we ran workshops in three different towns and held 4-5 courses.

Facilitators and Training

T4F participants join a facilitating team 3-5 times until they are facilitators. After another 5 -8 courses they start for leading the teams. In prison-courses we have about 14 prisoners, 2-3 participants from outside, 3 facilitators from outside and 1-2 from inside.

We also have one week-end a year for continuous training for facilitators paid for by PAG. In addition we have one week-end a year for all active AVPers. Here we discuss and train new elements, report on last year's courses, plan for next year, give the financial report and do the organisational obligations for the association, finally we elect the PAG-council of 6 persons that finds the decisions during the year (about 3 meetings).

Funding

The largest part comes from private and institutional contributions from Quakers, a small part from the Luthren Church, a small part from fines and a small part from surplus from courses outside the prisons. 50 % of the costs of prison-courses are paid by PAG, 50% by the prison-administrations. Outside the prisons the fees of the participants about cover the costs.

Report Compiled by Bernhard Klinghammer, PAG Germany