

IYSSE wins election to student parliament at Institute of Technology in Karlsruhe, Germany

By the IYSSE group at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology
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The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) will be represented in the student parliament by one deputy following recently held elections.

In addition to Humboldt University in Berlin, the IYSSE is now represented in the student parliament of a second major German university. The IYSSE stood its own list for the first time in the election held from July 8 to 12. According to initial results, the list won 3.9 percent of the vote.

Seven other lists will be represented in the parliament, including the Green Alternative List (23.5 percent), the Social Democratic Youth (Jusos, 17.2 percent), The List (11.5 percent), the Left Party-aligned SDS (7.68 percent), the Christian Democratic Union-aligned RCDS (7.58 percent), and the Liberal University Group (5.73 percent). The IYSSE list received the votes of 118 students.

The IYSSE's electoral success expresses widespread opposition to militarism, war and the rise of the far-right and shows the growing support for a socialist perspective. In its election statement, the IYSSE wrote that it was standing in the student parliament election "to build a movement against militarism and war, social inequality, and right-wing extremism."

"We found an extremely powerful response to this during the election campaign. Many students we spoke to during the election campaign participated in our campaign and introduced their friends to us," said Gregor Kahl, the spokesperson for the IYSSE at KIT.

"Like everywhere else, students and young workers in Karlsruhe view the international drive to war, the global rise of social inequality, and the growth of the

far-right with hostility. This was made clear during the two meetings we held during our election campaign at KIT."

In the week prior to the election, deputy chairman of the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei and long-standing spokesman for the IYSSE in Germany, Christoph Vandreier, presented his book *Why are They Back?* at the invitation of the IYSSE Karlsruhe.

The book shows how the rise of the right-wing extremist and nationalist Alternative for Germany (AfD) was politically and ideologically prepared by professors, the media and political parties. It documents in this context the IYSSE's struggle against the transformation of Humboldt University into an ideological centre for war propaganda. Against the backdrop of the murder of Christian Democratic politician Walter Lübcke by a right-wing extremist terrorist, Vandreier's remarks were followed with great interest.

To conclude the campaign, the IYSSE organised another well-attended meeting on the topic "Stop the war drive against Iran!" Although the weeks prior to the student vote saw an unprecedented intensification of tensions in the region, with almost daily provocations by Washington and its allies, the IYSSE was the only list to take up this issue.

The IYSSE invited Johannes Stern from the editorial board of the *World Socialist Web Site* as the featured speaker. Stern analysed the background to the war drive, explaining why the fight against war requires a struggle against the capitalist system and the mobilisation of the working class on the basis of a socialist programme.

Following the electoral success, the IYSSE plans to

expand its work.

“Our entry into the student parliament at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology is just the beginning,” stressed Kahl. “The issue now is to develop the opposition to war, militarism and social inequality into a conscious political movement armed with a socialist perspective. This requires not only the building of the IYSSE at KIT, but at all universities across Germany and internationally. I appeal to all of our voters and supporters to take the next step and become IYSSE members. Read our statement of principles, follow our work on Facebook and take part in discussions at our regular meetings. There is no time to lose.”

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