

### OUR SUMMER ACTION 2026:



## BUILDING COMMUNITY AND STRENGTH



**From July 16–18, 2026, Women in Exile & Friends will come together for our annual Summer Action at a place that holds deep meaning for us: our House Project, *Home in Exile*.**

This gathering is not only a space for exchange and strategy, but also a celebration of collective resistance, solidarity, and the progress we have achieved together.

Many women\* in our network continue to live with the uncertainty of the asylum process, facing daily racism, isolation, and the constant threat of deportation. In a political climate that is increasingly hostile especially toward refugee women\*, it is more important than ever to create spaces of safety, empowerment, and shared strength. *Home in Exile* represents exactly that: a space we are building together, where dignity, support, and belonging are at the center.

We are grateful to welcome our networks from Brandenburg, Hamburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, as well as members of FLIT Africa Munich. This gathering offers an important opportunity to reflect on current political developments and their impact, while strengthening the alliances that sustain our work.

July 16 will be our arrival day, bringing together friends, supporters, and members to reconnect and

co-create the program. By listening to each other's ideas and needs, we ensure that this space reflects all of us.

On July 17, we will host a joint action with our neighbourhood. As we are still new to this community, this is an important moment to introduce who we are, what we stand for, and the networks we are part of. Through storytelling, sharing our creative skills, and organizing activities for children, we aim to create an open, joyful, and welcoming space for exchange.

During our time together, we hope to welcome new hands and hearts of solidarity, helping to further build and sustain *Home in Exile*. As renovation and construction are still ongoing, this support—whether through presence, skills, or shared resources—remains essential in making this space more comfortable and welcoming.

On the final day, we will hold an evaluation and feedback session before closing early to ensure safe travel for all participants.

**We look forward to sharing this time of growth, resilience and connection with you.**

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# ***A Resilient Journey Leading To The Ownership Of A Community House: Updates On The 'Home In Exile' House Project***

**Firstly, we would like to express our sincere gratitude for helping to make our dream of owning a house a reality. The necessary funds have now been secured from crowd funding and from direct loans from individuals, allowing us to proceed with the purchase and renovation of the property. We are looking forward to officially owning the house once all the paperwork is complete.**

This house's history is a testament to the power of unity and cooperation. It demonstrates that when people come together, they can create something truly special that enriches the community and benefits society as a whole. We are also aware that owning a house will not solve all the problems of refugee women in Brandenburg. However, we are confident that the ideas and projects that will be developed here will benefit not only refugee communities but society in general.

Our aim is to create a living environment through this house that provides a supportive and empowering setting for refugee women. This enables them to develop their skills and participate in local life, which strengthens their independence and their integration into the local community. We believe it is important to show that when given the opportunity, we can meet our potential and thrive.



For this reason, we want to thank everyone who has donated money and who have organised solidarity parties to raise funds to support us. We are also thankful to those who have offered their support and given their time and energy to help with the renovation of the house, and we hope that they will continue to do so.

We will still count on you all and appreciate your continuous solidarity in making this house project a success. To achieve this goal, we still need your help. We need your help to keep the house project going and to pay the people and organizations we owe money to.

Our slogan, “No lager for women and children, Abolish all lagers”, is not just a rallying slogan but also a message of resilience. Today, it is that same spirit of resilience that is inspiring us on our new journey towards owning a community house built on solidarity, purpose and hope.

# Bezahlkarte: What Happened Next



If you remember, our last piece on the Bezahlkarte focused on the problems it creates — the restrictions, the loss of dignity, and how cashless control makes everyday life harder for people in the asylum system. We heard from residents who could not buy culturally specific food, pay the school excursion for their children or pay for a second-hand bicycle from a neighbor. The card didn't simplify life, it narrowed it.

So, what happened from there? We visited different Heims across Brandenburg: Sedlitz, Calau, Halbe, Cottbus, Bernau, Treptow and Kyritz. In each place, we sat with residents over tea and listened.

In Sedlitz, people showed us receipts declined at the little corner shop, because the shop does not take the Bezahlkarte. In Calau a mother explained how she can't pool money with friends to buy rice in bulk — the card blocks transfers. In Halbe teenagers told us the card outs them as refugees at checkout, inviting stares and questions. The pattern was clear: the Bezahlkarte doesn't stop "abuse." It stops normal life. It was introduced as "modernization." On the ground, it feels like control.

We documented these stories, took notes, and — with consent — recorded short voice messages and filmmaterial for a film. Virginia designed a bold, simple visual that says: "Cash is dignity – abolish Bezahlkarte." With this we want to make the invisible visible for the public. And we connected with others to build up pressure: with neighbors, support groups, the die Linke political party and churches, who all see the human costs. Soon we will write a petition "abolish Bezahlkarte" to mobilize even more people.

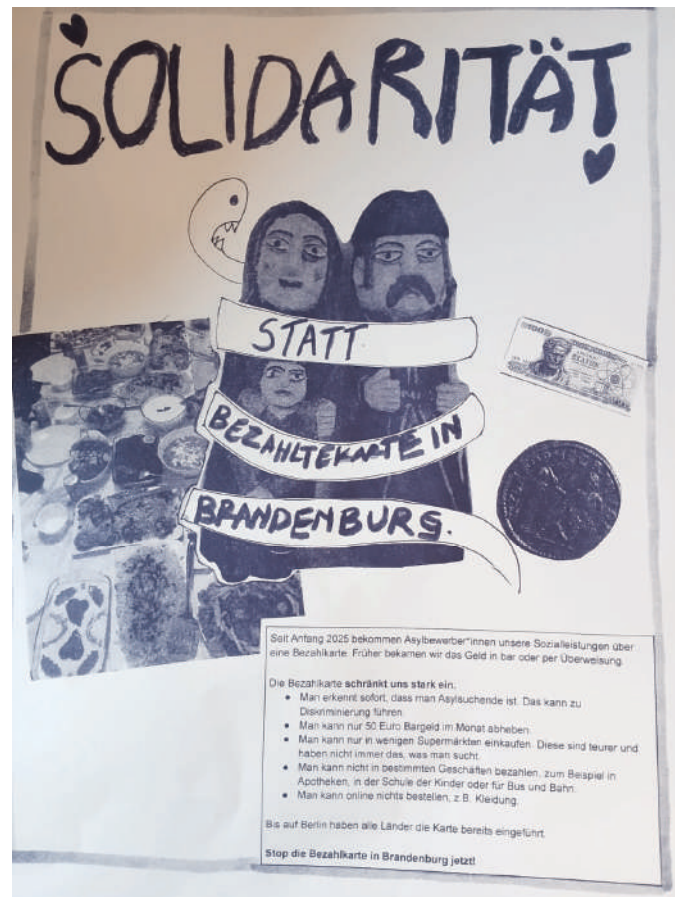
Who can abolish Bezahlkarte? In Brandenburg, the state government and its municipalities. Usually they are focused on cost-cutting and reducing

bureaucracy. But with the racist Bezahlkarte tool, they are being extremely generous. From 2024-2026, the Bezahlkarte cost taxpayers in Brandenburg €2.86 million. The bureaucratic costs (the time and money spent by everyone to implement and comply with the card) are not included – so the real cost is much higher.

Who is making a fortune with Bezahlkarte? The likely millionaire and founder of PUBLK GmbH, Jörg Schwitalla, and founder and owner (and probably also millionaire) Hans Peter Weber, of Secupay. They developed the Bezahlkarte and won the call for tenders from the government on the 25th September 2024.

**Time to stop them! On the 25th September 2026 – 2 years after the introduction of the card – we will demonstrate in front of the office of PUBLK in Berlin and in front of Brandenburg's Parliament in Potsdam to make this clear: Abolish Bezahlkarte! Solidarity will win!**

If you want to join the actions against Bezahlkarte, or host us at your Heim, reach out to us. Dignity shouldn't be on a payment card!



# Resilience For Refugee Women: Empowerment Through Theater, Storytelling, And Creative Expression In Brandenburg



Refugee women face many challenges after arriving in Germany and then in Brandenburg. Many have experienced trauma caused by war, displacement, or violence. They often struggle with social isolation, language barriers, and the difficulties of integration into a new society. Despite these obstacles, they carry within them a powerful strength: resilience.

Our project, “Resilience for Refugee Women: Empowerment through Theater, Storytelling, and Other Creative Means,” which we ran in Brandenburg, was created to nurture this strength. The project provides a safe and supportive space where refugee women can express themselves, start healing from painful experiences, and rebuild self-confidence through artistic and creative methods.

One of the key tools we use is theater. Through role-playing, improvisation, and performance, participants are encouraged to explore and express their emotions, experiences, dreams, and hopes. Theater helps women strengthen their self-esteem, develop confidence, improve communication skills, and build a sense of group solidarity.

Another important aspect of the project is storytelling. Sharing personal stories in a safe environment allows women to reclaim the power of their own narratives. By transforming painful memories into meaningful

stories, they regain control over their experiences and discover strength in their journeys. Storytelling also creates connections among participants, helping them to feel heard, understood, and supported.

In addition to theater and storytelling, the project includes other creative activities such as writing, painting, drawing, music, dance, and body expression workshops. These activities promote emotional well-being, encourage creativity, and help participants discover new talents and abilities.

Beyond the workshops, this project is a space of empowerment and solidarity. Women come together to share experiences, support one another, and learn from each other. The project also helps them strengthen their autonomy, understand their rights, develop practical skills, and regain their place in society.

Resilience is not only about surviving difficult circumstances—it is about rebuilding, growing, and moving forward with hope. Through this project, refugee women in Brandenburg discover that they are not alone and that they have the strength to create a brighter future.

Together, through art, storytelling, and creativity, we transform wounds into strength and exile into hope.



## KEEP IN TOUCH

Website: [women-in-exile.net](http://women-in-exile.net)  
Facebook: “Women in Exile & Friends”  
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## DONATIONS

Women in Exile e.V.  
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BIC: GENODEM1GLS (GLS Bank)

We thank the following foundations and organisations for their continued support of our work:

