

Mobilität untertage

Esch macht mobil: Der Schöffenrat der Stadt hat in der vergangenen Woche den City-Bus in Betrieb genommen, als weitere Komponente des Escher Verkehrskonzepts - unter anderem neben dem "Parking résidentiel" und Extra-Pisten für RadfahrerInnen. Dafür bekommt die rot-rot-grüne Stadtregierung allerhand Lob, so auch vom Mouvement écologique. Weniger uneingeschränkte Unterstützung dürfte Verkehrsschöffe Felix Braz hingegen für die Pläne bekommen, den Rathausplatz mit einer Tiefgarage für Kurzparker zu untertunneln. Dies sei ein weiterer Teil des Verkehrskonzepts, erklärte Braz gegenüber der woxx. Zuerst müsse jedoch der Umweltverbund realisiert werden, so François Hengen vom Mouvement derweil. Mit dem Parkhaus wird die Stadt zwar nicht autofrei, der ortsansässigen Geschäftslobby dürfte es jedoch gefallen.

Forscher gegen Klonbabys

"Reproduktives Klonen ist unsicher, und kein verantwortungsvoller Wissenschaftler würde es angesichts der großen gesundheitlichen Risiken versuchen." Mit diesen Worten stellte Yves Quéré von International Issues in Triest die gemeinsame Forderung von 63 wissenschaftlichen Einrichtungen vor. Die ForscherInnen verurteilen das reproduktive Klonen, da es ihrer Meinung nach zu großen medizinischen Problemen führen würde: unter anderem überhöhtes Wachstum und eine geringe Überlebensquote der Embryonen. Sie fordern deshalb von den Vereinten Nationen, das Klonen zu Fortpflanzungszwecken zu verbieten. Zu therapeutischen Zwecken solle es jedoch beibehalten werden.

(K)ein Ende des Kopftuchstreits

Zumindest juristisch ist der deutsche, so genannte Kopftuchstreit entschieden. Das Bundesverfassungsgericht verkündete am vergangenen Mittwoch, dass die muslimische Lehrerin Fereshta Ludin ihr Kopftuch im Klassenzimmer aufbehalten darf - so lange, wie die Bundesländer kein entsprechendes Verbot gesetzlich verankern. Nicht Behörden und Gerichte, so die Meinung von fünf der acht RichterInnen, sollten über die Frage entscheiden, ob muslimische Frauen im Schulunterricht Kopftücher tragen dürfen, sondern der Gesetzgeber. Die viel diskutierte Kopftuchfrage beschäftigt deutsche Gerichte schon seit vielen Jahren: Zu entscheiden hatte das hohe Gericht zwischen dem staatlichen Neutralitätsgebot, dem Recht auf freie Religionsausübung sowie dem Recht auf freie Berufswahl. Das Grundgesetz lasse den Ländern im Schulwesen umfassende Gestaltungsfreiheit, begründeten die RichterInnen im Urteil.

Meysemburg gerettet?

Das Areal um das Meysemburger Schloss, wo ein Golfplatz und eine Luxussiedlung entstehen sollte, wird möglicherweise unter Denkmalschutz gestellt. Nach Informationen der woxx hat sich die staatliche Denkmalschutzkommission für eine Klassierung ausgesprochen. Die Entscheidung liegt nun bei Kulturministerin Erna Hennicot-Schoepges, von der bis Redaktionsschluss keine Stellungnahme zu bekommen war. Umweltminister Charles Goerens, der einer Änderung des Bebauungsplans zugunsten des Golfprojekts zustimmen müsste, zeigte sich gegenüber dem Luxemburger Wort wenig begeistert: "Mein erster Reflex ist negativ." Das Vorgängerprojekt sei ja seinerzeit abgelehnt worden, außerdem befinde sich Meysemburg in einer Habitat-Schutzzone. "Einen Zaun drumherum ziehen und das Ganze verfallen lassen, das ergibt keinen Sinn", so Roger Schauls vom Mouvement écologique. Die Umweltorganisation tritt deshalb für eine "sanfte" Valorisierung der Zone ein. Wichtig sei jetzt, bei allen Beteiligten, insbesondere der Gemeinde Larochette, eine "Entkrampfung" zu erreichen.

How can the trafficking of women be combated effectively?



Foto:
Lilya 4-ever - film about women's trafficking at cinema Utopia

INTERVIEW

"Prostitution is violence"

Gunilla Ekberg, the Swedish project coordinator for the campaign against prostitution and trafficking of human beings, strongly holds the opinion that prostitution in itself is a form of violence against women and must therefore be abolished - a thesis she also defended yesterday at the seminar "Regards sur la traite des femmes" organized by the Luxembourgish "Ministère de la Promotion féminine" and the Swedish Embassy.

The Swedish law was introduced in 1999. Has it been a success up to now?

Having worked for a long time for gender equality, we came to the conclusion that prostitution is male violence, that women need to be assisted to get out of prostitution. For us, it's a structural problem that has to do with male sexuality, with men's power over women.

In practical effect, the law has worked very well. We have managed to arrest around 500 men at this point, two thirds of them having been fined and convicted. Before the law was in place, about 13 percent of Swedish men had bought sex. This rate has gone down. Those men that buy on the street wanting a blow job or a quick thing before going home from work are no longer doing that, because they risk being arrested.

The National Rapporteur on Trafficking has also concluded in her latest report that the law has had a reductive effect on trafficking. We have between 200 to 500 women who are victims of trafficking to Sweden. Our neighbouring countries - Finland for example - have up to 7.000. Whereas trafficking in the last five years has gone up all over the world, it has stayed steady in Sweden.

When the police raided the brothels, they arrested the traffickers or the pimps, but they also arrest all the clients. We had a case of a trafficker here in Stockholm who was convicted of procuring women from Estonia and Finland who had a customer registry of 1.500 men. There will be about 800 men who will be convicted in this particular case.

The opponents of the Swedish law say that prostitution just has shifted from the streets into hotels and apartments.

There is no correlation between the fact that there is no prostitution in the streets and more women in the hotels. Many of the women that were on the street here did not go into brothels, they actually left prostitution. Some of them are drug-abusers. There is a big program now that is started to assist those drug-dependent women.

The whole bottom line for the ones who run the prostitution industry, is to get in contact with the buyers. And to get in contact, you need to advertise. This means that the police know where most of the brothels are. The problem is rather that the police do not have enough resources to investigate. For 2004, the government has given 30 million Swedish crowns to the police especially to combat trafficking and prostitution. The Swedish police is now learning to have an understanding of what prostitution is: the actual fact that women are in prostitution is violence, it is violence to be raped ten to fifteen times a day by men who pay money to have the right to do.

Another counter-argument is that the law just displaces the problem, that Swedish clients now go to neighbouring countries.

Of course there are men who are sex-tourists. But please remember: the two countries that have the highest percentage of sex-tourists in the world are the Netherlands and Australia, both having legalised prostitution. Why is that? Because it is becoming normal and okay to buy women - in the country and elsewhere.

Since the Swedish law has a repressive approach, do you think that men will learn getting a new attitude?

The law is just one element among a lot of things that we do here. We do a lot of information and awareness-raising because we think that men and boys have to learn not to objectify females. At the moment for example, there is an educational campaign in all the high schools and colleges about the attitudes towards females, about the sexualisation of the public space where women and girls are displayed.

In the Nordic Baltic campaign against trafficking that I coordinated last year, and which brought together the five Nordic and the three Baltic countries,

we had many different educational and information awareness seminars, education of the police and the prosecutors, the journalists were involved. Our trainings for journalists have contributed to the fact that in the Baltic countries, the writing about the problem has changed from just sensational to some analytical understanding of the problem.

The law per se is important, but the most important for every country, every female, every parliamentarian is to decide whether you think that men should have the possibility of buying women. Or whether you want a society where all females should have the same rights to live without this violence. That is the key question.

What is the approach of the other countries of the Northern Baltic Campaign since the introduction of your law?

Finland has already decided to do that. That is going to be very helpful to us, as it will surely reduce trafficking. The Baltic countries, as all the candidate countries, must harmonise their legislation to the EU standard. But I find that after the campaign, the sensibility and the understanding of the problem has increased a lot. We have a police cooperation, but we also have a government task force of all the Nordic and Baltic countries that are working together.

We are planning a campaign on the Russian side where we are going to put a lot of money into sustainable development measures for women who are potential victims of trafficking or who have been victims.

The Swedish law is based on the idea that violence lies in the act itself. But nowadays you also have women as clients, and you have men as sex workers.

We don't have women as clients, but we do have men as sex workers. It is a gender-neutral legislation. It does not matter who buys and who is bought.

But is it right to speak of every prostitute or sex worker as a victim? Is this not a way of denying women's responsibility in prostitution?

Do you really believe that? That women voluntarily like to be raped every day?

I see women in Luxembourg who came here out of economic motives, to finance their studies for example.

Of course, women come because they have economic difficulties. But that does not make it right. That makes an even harder pressure on the states to ensure that women don't have to pay this way for their studies.

Some women, and men too, claim the right to sell their body.

When you reason that they do it voluntarily you get yourself out. The state can back off, we can back off, and we don't have to take any responsibility for these women.

I think you should try and think yourself into the same situation. These women react just like battered women, when they are in the situation of violence. They say: he's okay, this is my life, and I'm not going to leave him. That is called normalisation, it happens to people who are in situations they can't get out of. Talk to the women when they have left prostitution, and let them tell you what they suffer: the flashbacks, the physical problems that they have. The majority of women in prostitution do not do that voluntarily.

You mentioned the Netherlands. There are many feminists who say that if prostitution is legal, you can have a better control over it, and you can help the women more easily, because they get out of the dark.

Prostitution is an industry that pays a lot of money to Holland, and they have been living of the avails of prostitution for years. I don't consider women who believe that sexual violence is something women choose, they are not the feminists that I would like to be around.

In Germany they changed the law too.

What is the result in Germany? 400.000 women are in prostitution. This is official statistics. Of those, about 60 to 70 percent are women from other countries.

In Australia, the brothels have been legalised for the longest. What has happened there is that the illegal brothels have increased. There is an increase in trafficking. We have to start looking at the reality and not just some phantasy world where we think that there is another category of women that are not us, that would like to do this.

Interview: Renée Wagener