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Journalists Stripped of Press Accreditation and Victims of Police Violence During the G20 in Hamburg

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

CATEGORY  ▶ Attacks on physical safety and integrity of journalists

PARTNER: EFJ/IFJ, Index, RSF

During the G20 summit that took place in Hamburg on 7 and 8 July 2017, at least 32 journalists were stripped of their press accreditation. Among them, 9 journalists were deprived of the accreditation that they had initially been granted, and 23 journalists were placed on a no-access list for the G20 press centre.

On 7 July, the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) confirmed on Twitter that, in accordance with the Federal Press Office, it had decided to reserve the right to withdraw in some cases accreditation from journalists. According to the Government Spokesperson Steffen Seibert, this decision was justified by “security reasons”. A photographer for the daily newspaper *Weser Kurier* had his press accreditation revoked “without any explanation”, the newspaper reported. Another photographer working for the same outlet was also stripped of his accreditation after taking pictures of the protests in Hamburg and “has not received any response as to the reason why, despite inquiring about it”, according to the same newspaper. The two main German journalist associations, DJV and dju in ver.di have contested these restrictions.

Furthermore, in the context of the summit, numerous journalists have been victims of police violence while covering the protests taking place in the city. Freelance journalist Flo Smith, who was on the scene on 7 July, has reported that he and his colleagues were insulted by police officers and hit with tear gas, despite the fact that they were identifiable by their cameras and press cards.

Newspaper *Taz* reported a dialogue between a police officer and a journalist during which the journalist was subjected to threats and insults. Other journalists also reported being victim of attacks by protesters.

UPDATES

22 Jul 2019: In the summer of 2018, the Hamburg Public Prosecutor's Office had opened 138 preliminary investigations, mostly for assault in the exercise of public authority, and the Internal Investigation Service at the Hamburg Administration of the Interior had 152 administrative investigations under way.

➔ [Article published by the Huffington Post \(in French\): G20: « A Hambourg, la presse n'est plus en sécurité »](#)

16 Aug 2017: On 11 August 2017, eight journalists filed suit against the Federal Press Office before the Administrative Court at Berlin, to find that the deprivation of their accreditation was illegal.

➔ [Statement from the German Journalists Union dju in ver.di \(in German\): G20-Akkreditierung: dju unterstützt Klagen](#)

24 Jul 2017: On 18 July 2017, the President of the Federal Criminal Office (BKA) replied to a letter sent by Deutscher Journalisten Verband, explaining the accreditation practice.

➔ [Letter from the President of the BKA \(in German\)](#)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

➔ [Journalist Flo Smith on being attacked in Hamburg \(in French\)](#)

➔ [Dialogue between a police officer and a journalist reported by Taz newspaper \(in German\)](#)

➔ [Statement by the EFJ: "Press accreditations stripped and violence against journalists at G20 protests in Hamburg"](#)

➔ [Press release by the German Journalists Union dju in ver.di \(in German\)](#)

➔ [Press release by the German Journalist Association DJV \(in German\)](#)

STATE REPLIES



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➔ [Letter from the Federal Government to the Council of Europe](#)

