

GERMANY: 459 MILLION EUROS IN CHILD BENEFITS TRANSFERRED ABROAD IN 2021

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foreign bank accounts climbed to all-time highs last year, reaching nearly a half a billion euros, as the country's foreign population continues to balloon. Data from the Federal Employment Agency, released following an information request from the anti-globalist Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party, has revealed that 459 million [...]

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Data from the Federal Employment Agency, released following an information request from the anti-globalist Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party, has revealed that 459 million euros in child benefit payments flowed out of the German economy in 2021, nearly double the amount that was transferred abroad in 2015, *Tichys Einblick* [reports](#).

Per existing European Union regulations, parents living and working in Germany are entitled to child benefit payments that range between 150-300 euros per child, irrespective of the country the child resides in—and its cost of living. The benefit scheme extends to certain foreign nationals who have lived and worked in Germany for at least six months.

In 2010, when foreigners composed 8.8% of Germany's total population, some 95,093 children abroad received the child benefit payment. Twelve years later, in March of 2022,

when foreigners now make up close to 13% of the population or more, 328,985 children living abroad now receive child benefit payments, an increase of 345% since 2010.

As the amount in child benefits paid to foreign accounts has surged in the past decade, an increasing number of German taxpayers have leveled stiff criticism against the benefits system, arguing that the payments should be proportional to the cost of living in the country where the child resides.

René Springer, an AfD MP from the state of Brandenburg, is one of few politicians who has sharply criticized the faulty scheme, calling it inequitable and arguing it has resulted in an ever-growing burden placed on the backs of German taxpayers.

"In some Eastern European countries, child benefit for two children already corresponds to one month's wages. The German taxpayer, who can hardly pay his rent here due to inflation, can no longer explain it," Springer began. "That's why we, as the AfD parliamentary group, call on the federal government to reduce child benefit and the planned child bonus on local living costs."

According to figures released by the Federal Employment Agency, foreign nationals compose 18.2% of those who are currently entitled to child benefit payments, while 20.5% of the children receiving the benefit do not hold a German passport.

The Austrian government, under an ÖVP-FPÖ coalition in 2018, had worked to modify child benefit payments, making expenditures proportional to the cost of living in the child's country of residence. Following the changes that were made, Austria was taken to the European Court of Justice by the EU Commission, where the new rules were found to have breached EU law.