

■ FEATURE

Eliant Campaign: Participation in the Rights Sphere

Effects Around the World

As of this date, the Eliant campaign will have gathered 200,000 signatures. A report on the Eliant campaign was also met with spontaneous enthusiasm during the *In the Midst of It* youth conference. Michaela Glöckler had pointed out at the conference how important an active participation in the rights sphere would be for the future of Europe. Heike Sommer

In her lecture on "Health in the midst of it," Michaela Glöckler described the difficulties encountered by initiatives arising from applied anthroposophy; it is being inadequately regulated or not at all. As Europe grows, regulations are being created and it is important to play a role in their creation. I wanted to find out more from Michaela Glöckler about the legal situation of anthroposophical cultural impulses.

Marketability and Availability

Heike Sommer: To what extent are anthroposophical endeavors and their organizations and products protected or regulated by law?

Michaela Glöckler: Even in his own day, Rudolf Steiner spoke emphatically about the fact that the Waldorf school founded by him and Emil Molt was only possible because of a "loophole" in the law—at that time there was no law regulating privately-run schools. And anthroposophical medicine was able to develop unhindered from the 1920s to the 1970s because medical work was still entrusted by law to the ability of physicians to make decisions about what they did. This has undergone changes since the 70s.

The increasing regulation of remedies in the various countries and throughout Europe, the growth of double-blind testing, and the introduction of lump-sum compensation for hospitals has already had a negative effect on the status and further development of anthroposophical medicine. Today we can say with certainty that anthroposophical medicine no longer encounters the conditions it needs to develop further, i.e., the establishment of anthroposophical medicine was made possible by the regulatory conditions that prevailed at the time. That is why the first order of business in securing the legal status of anthroposophical medicine is to maintain what he have—the marketability and availability of the remedies in European and non-European countries.



Active participation in the rights sphere in Europe: Eliant campaign signatures in Basel

Sommer: How are the anthroposophical pharmaceutical companies reacting?

Glöckler: They do what they can to meet the official requirements, but they increasingly recognize that this approach will not be enough to maintain the availability of the remedies at the current level. Anthroposophical medical remedies need their own set of regulations that take into account their special quality and the fact that decades of experience have shown them to be harmless as well as beneficial for patients. This request is further supported by positive research results, especially during the last twenty years. With the Eliant campaign we can send a clear signal that we want anthroposophical medicine!

The Citizen's Right to Choose

Sommer: And how do the doctors react?

Glöckler: The doctors are still relatively free thanks to professional regulations that give them the right to make decisions as long as the patient agrees to the recommended measures and is prepared to meet their costs. In the United States, for instance, anthroposophical medicine was prohibited in most states until the 1990s. Practicing anthroposophical medicine put the physician at risk of losing his license. Only with the spread of complementary medicine did this change, and not least of all because there was a high degree of

acceptance among the population. In the last analysis, the citizens have the right to choose in areas that are governed democratically. If this right is not exercised, then it is really our problem!

Sommer: How does it happen that something that has been established for decades and does no harm is suddenly prohibited? In your lecture you spoke about the much-discussed issue of requiring that vitamins be added to baby food.

Glöckler: There are always certain reasons for prohibitions: By experimenting on animals, researchers calculate the need for a particular vitamin per kilogram of body weight, for instance. These calculations are then transferred to the human being whose daily nourishment is often of a lower quality anyway because of the way food is produced. Thus there is a synergy between research and industry that seems to be quite favorable to both; the political area may also profit through possible taxes. Everything that is regulated by laws creates a large demand, and this creates a large market in return.

Orientation to European Legislation

Sommer: Since European cultural diversity is threatened, a foundation was established to preserve the spectrum of European cultures in the face of leveling. What position does Eliant take on this initiative?

Glöckler: The Eliant campaign offers its support—in material ways as well, where possible—to all the efforts, institutions, and initiatives that are working to bring about cultural diversity and freedom of choice for the individual citizen under the law.

Sommer: Since Europe serves as a model for so many nations, these regulations carry much more weight than is commonly recognized. You were just in Australia. What kind of resonance does the Eliant campaign find there?

Glöckler: Extremely positive. I hadn't expected it, but I met many Eliant activists and a sense of joy that they could do something for a constructive cultural development. I learned there that Australian legislation covering the marketability of remedies and the recognition of certain therapy approaches seeks to follow the European model. What our united forces can accomplish for Europe also has a direct effect "Down Under." ■