

Spring Convention 2024

Bürgerräume West in der Bebelstraße 22, 70193 Stuttgart
April 13 2024 - 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

We are pleased to announce and invite you to this year's spring convention on Saturday, April 13, in Stuttgart. You can expect an array of insightful topics: The main talk will focus on the fight for women's and refugee rights from the perspective of female refugee activists. Afterwards, we will do a "photoflash session" during which the topics naturalization law, right-wing populism, antisemitism & anti-muslim racism, and the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) will be introduced. In the following in-depth sessions you can choose one of these and join the respective expert group to learn and discuss further.

In the late afternoon, the members' meeting will take place. This will include the byelection for one seat on the extended board.

Entry to the convention is free, and it is aimed primarily at volunteers working with/for refugees.

Location: Bürgerräume West, Bebelstraße 22, 70193 Stuttgart

We aim to offer a safe space for all participants and members at our event. We ask everyone to look at our agreed framework for respectful communication. The document will be available to read in the reception area on the convention and provides useful guidelines which we kindly ask to respect.

The convention is taking place within the context of the project "Aktiv für Integration", supported by the State Ministry for Social Affairs, Health and Integration from state funds as decided by the state parliament of Baden-Wuerttemberg. UN Refugee Aid Germany and the German Postcode Lottery provide co-sponsorship.

Schedule

09:30 am: Registration and arrivals

10:00 am: Address of welcome

10:15 am: Main talk: Female refugee Activists fighting for their rights

Female refugees experience discrimination in two dimensions, both misogyny and racism affect them. Because of this, the fight for their rights is doubly important. 22 years ago, the initiative "Women in Exile" was founded in which female refugees joined forces. Doris Dede will tell us about the female refugee movement, their experiences, their self-concept, networks as well as strategies and activities.

Contributor: Doris Dede (Women in Exile e.V.)

11:00 am: Photo flash sessions

Our contributors will each give a 15-minute overview of the most important aspects of their area of expertise. For each topic, an in-depth session will be available to join in the afternoon:

- Reforms and developments in naturalization law (Dominik Keicher, Landratsamt Sigmaringen)
- The evolution of right-wing populism (Sandy Schüler, Stand up against Racism/Aufstehen gegen Rassismus)
- Antisemitism and Anti-muslim racism (Furkan Yüksel and Kiril Denisov, Kubus e.V.)
- The current state with regards to the CEAS (Seren Haliloğlu, University of Freiburg)

12:15 – 1:15 pm: Lunch

1:15 – 2:45 pm: In-depth phase

1. Talk: Developments in Naturalization law

The federal government struggled for some time with their plans to reform naturalization legislation. While some progress has been made, e.g. in dual citizenship and mandatory timeframes of residing in Germany, the law has become tougher with regards to securing one's own livelihood affecting mostly people in precarious work and personal circumstances. This talk will address both the latest reforms, and the real-life practice of how they are applied by the authorities.

Contributor: Dominik Keicher (section manager of the foreigners' registration office, Landratsamt Sigmaringen)

2. Workshop: Becoming a vocal presence in everyday life: Facing and opposing right-wingers and discriminatory language

We've all been there: We hear someone speak about others in a way that appalls and stuns us, whether it is at work, at a sports club, by a family member or someone on the street. Afterwards, we think to ourselves 'I wish I had said something.'

This is where the workshop comes in: It aims to enable people to get past the moment of shock, take a stand and be clear: We don't tolerate this sort of behavior! We will examine common right-wing positions and ways of arguing from a theoretical and practical perspective. We will practice how to respond to them and explore ways to offer solidarity-based alternative ways of thinking.

Contributor: Sandy Schüler (Stand up against Racism/Aufstehen gegen Rassismus)

3. Workshop: Antisemitism and anti-muslim racism – Roots, facets, and raising awareness

Currently, there is a lot of media coverage regarding antisemitism and the discourse surrounding it. Anti-muslim racism is, by comparison, barely addressed even though there is a link between these two forms of discrimination. The workshop offers a comprehensive look into the history of antisemitism and (anti-muslim) racism before the current discourse is examined. Participants will learn how to recognize and understand these phenomena in the context of supporting refugees.

Contributors: Furkan Yüksel and Kiril Denisov (education policy consultant and ambassador for „Schalom und Salam“, Kubus e.V.)

4. Talk: The reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS): Regulations, procedures and fatal consequences

The reform of the CEAS was preceded by years of political controversy and confrontation. In the context of the shift to the right across Europe, EU member states and the European Parliament agreed on a disastrous reform of the legislation in late 2023. In this talk, an overview will be provided of the components of the CEAS, of the institutional application of the law and of the expected changes for refugees at the EU's outer borders and within the Union. It is obvious that the EU is sealing itself off and the CEAS opens new instruments to accomplish just this. What will the future look like for people seeking shelter in the EU?

Contributor: Seren Haliloğlu, LL.M: (research fellow at university of Freiburg)

2:45 – 3:00 pm: Break

3:00 – 5:00 pm: Member's convention of the Refugee Council of Baden-Württemberg:

We extend our invitation to all members, supporting members and anyone else interested in our work to join our member's convention.