

## Summer Conference 2024

Bürgerräume West, Bebelstraße 22, 70193 Stuttgart  
July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024 - 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

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We hereby cordially invite you to the Refugee Council's annual summer conference on Saturday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, in Stuttgart. We put together an exciting and diverse program. The keynote speech will focus on Alarm Phone's life-saving work. In two workshop sessions, you can then choose from the following four workshops:

- family reunification,
- deportations to Iraq,
- family roles,
- dealing with hate speech

In between, there will be ample opportunities for networking and conversations.

The conference is free of charge and is primarily aimed at volunteers working with refugees. It is intended to be a safe space for all participants. Therefore, we ask all participants to read our [agreed framework for respectful communication](#) when registering and abide by it throughout the conference.

The conference is part of the "Active for Integration" project, supported by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Health and Integration and made possible through state funds approved by the State Parliament of Baden-Wuerttemberg. Co-funding is provided by the UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe (the German NGO tasked with raising funds for UNHCR) and the German Postcode Lottery.

## PROGRAM

**09:45 am: Registration and arrival**

**10:00 am.: Introductory remarks**

**10:15 am: Voluntary commitment - Projects & Networking**

*Three initiatives close to the Refugee Council will present their voluntary projects as well as touch on the topics that are covered by their activism. Afterwards, there will be time to network and exchange ideas.*

Speaker:

**Dilnaz Alhan** introduces Pena.ger, an initiative founded last year that offers free online advice for refugees in German, Kurdish, Turkish and English (Pena.ger Stuttgart)

**Jörn Stoltze** talks about the fight against increased user fees in shared accommodations (Zuflucht Association, Müllheim)

**Gabi Ayivi** and **Chibuzo Orame** report on the situation in Nigeria, in particular on the political conditions that force people to flee as well as the situation of returnees (Olileanya e.V.)

## 11:30 am – 01:00 pm: Workshop Session I

Please choose one of the following four workshops.

### Workshop 1: "Can I bring my family to Germany?" - Basic knowledge on family reunification

The first answer to this question is: "That depends on your residence status in Germany." Based on that you can determine which legal conditions must be met for a successful family reunification in Germany. However, even then many practical hurdles remain which need to be overcome to reunite a family. In her lecture, Maria Kalin will explain the legal basis for family reunification, especially regarding individuals who have been rejected in the asylum procedure and have been able to obtain residence permits through other means.

Speaker: Maria Kalin (lawyer, Ulm)

### Workshop 2: Iraq: deportations to a country with a volatile security situation

Since mid-2023, the decades-long restrictions on deportations to Iraq have been lifted and monthly collective deportation flights are now taking place. This causes great uncertainty for many Iraqis who possess a temporary suspension of deportation ('Duldung') who could now be at immediate risk of deportation. Lawyer Geraldine Trotzier will explain what has changed politically, what requirements must be met for deportation and what residence options are available for individuals with a 'Duldung'. Oliver M. Piecha will give an insight into the current situation in Iraq, the realities of life on the ground in general and the problem of the "disputed territories" regarding Yazidis and other minorities.

Speakers: Geraldine Trotzier (lawyer, Heidelberg), Dr Oliver M. Piecha (Wadi e.V.)

### Workshop 3: Psychosocial dynamics in families with refugee experience

It is not only the experience of being a refugee, but also arriving in Germany that challenges families as well as relationships within families. Previously established responsibilities and roles are called into question. Competences and a sense of self-efficacy must be rediscovered. Sibel Koray will shed light on the changing gender and intergenerational relationships within families that arise in this special situation and discuss difficulties and opportunities. After a brief input from the speaker, the interactive workshop will focus on reflecting on the topic, one's own role (incl. self-awareness elements) and sharing experiences. Concrete cases may be assessed together to develop a better understanding of the situation of those affected and to gain more confidence to act.

Speaker: Sibel Koray (qualified psychologist, systemic family therapist and supervisor)

#### **Workshop 4: Together against hate speech and fake news**

Hate speech and fake news have become increasingly prevalent in the digital space in recent years. On social media in particular, we encounter discrimination, hateful comments, disinformation and conspiracy narratives that affect both refugees and their supporters. How can we deal with this appropriately? And what democratic action can we take to counter this? In this workshop, Joachim Glaubitz will first provide an insight into right-wing media strategies. Using concrete examples, forms of digital civil courage will then be developed and discussed together.

Speaker: Joachim Glaubitz (trainer for the Amadeu Antonio Foundation's Firewall project, Refugee Council BW)

#### **1:00 – 2:00 pm: Lunch**

#### **2:00 - 3:15 pm: Keynote speech: A telephone provides support in distress at sea - the work of Watch the Med Alarm Phone**

*Alarm Phone - a transnational network of activists that mobilises help for refugees in distress in the Mediterranean and at the external borders via an emergency number - has been in existence for almost 10 years. Together with civilian rescue ships, thousands of lives have already been saved, human rights violations denounced and, in the best-case scenario, prevented. However, only a different European policy can put an end to the deaths in the Mediterranean.*

*Conni Gunßer will report on Alarm Phone's origins and structures, the coordination of rescue missions, the actors involved, contact with those affected, the personal burden, the criminalisation of refugees and activists as well as the political challenges and current developments. There will be plenty of time for questions and discussion.*

Speaker: Conni Gunßer (Watch the Med Alarm Phone)

#### **3:15 - 3:30 pm: Break**

#### **3:30 – 5:00 pm: Workshop Session II**

Please choose a workshop from the following four. This is a repetition of the morning's workshop session.

**Workshop 1: "Can I bring my family to Germany?" - Basic knowledge on family reunification**

**Workshop 2: Iraq: deportations to a country with an unstable security situation**

**Workshop 3: Psychosocial dynamics in families with refugee experience**

**Workshop 4: Together against hate speech and fake news**