

Spring Convention 2025

April 12 2025 – 10am – 5pm

Location: Bürgerräume Stuttgart-West at Bebelstraße 22, 70193 Stuttgart (accessible for people living with disabilities)

We warmly invite you to attend this year's spring convention on Saturday, April 12 2024 in Stuttgart. We are pleased to share with you the exciting and thematically diverse program for the day.

This year's central talk will focus on hybrid identities of refugees. Afterwards, we will do a "photoflash session" during which the topics rise of the right and volunteering, health and deportations, criminal offences and residence as well as exchange campaigns with Bezahlkarten 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 the topic further.

There will be breaks in-between to give everybody the chance to connect and chat. Our members' meeting will follow in the afternoon during which the election for chairperson, vice-chairperson and the board will be held.

The convention is free to attend and is aimed at everyone active in the field of refugees and asylum.

There will be a vegan lunch meal, on-site childcare as well as interpretation for non-German speakers (German-English).

We seek to create a space that is safe for all participants. To ensure this, we ask all attendees to read our [Code of Conduct](#) and to embrace these guidelines.

Timeline:

09:45 am: Registration and arrivals

10:00 am: Introduction

10:15 – 11:00 am: Keynote: Hybrid identities of refugees: Rethinking belonging

It sounds completely normal and yet it is often problematised: People feel they belong to several cultural spaces. However, the pressure to fit in is enormous for migrant people and places a heavy burden on their personal development. Refugees in particular feel an enormous 'pressure to integrate'. Yet we have long been living in a pluralistic society in which multilingualism, religious diversity and interculturality have

become part of everyday life. Afina Albrecht will talk about hybrid identities and the associated negotiation and recognition processes using the example of Ukrainian refugees.

Speaker: Afina Albrecht (Bürgerstiftung Stuttgart and Ukrainian Association for Culture & Sport)

11:00 am: Break

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:

- Joachim Glaubitz (Amadeu Antonio Foundation, a.o.) and Julian Staiger (Leuchtlinie, a.o.) will talk about the effects of the political shift to the right on volunteers.
- Ulrike Schneck (Refugio Stuttgart e.V.) and Dr Robin Maitra (Landesärztekammer BW) will show how the threat of being deported endangers health.
- Laura Noehte-Shinwari (lawyer Mannheim/Heilbronn) will present the effects of criminal law on residence.
- Matthias Weinzierl (Campaign 'Offen!' Munich) reports on exchange campaigns for people with Bezahlkarten.

12:15 – 1:15 pm: Lunch

1:15 – 2:45 pm: In-depth phase

You may choose from these four options:

Working Group 1: What is the political shift to the right doing to us volunteers?

Right-wing populist demands in the area of asylum and migration are becoming increasingly popular in society and politics at local, national and European level. Unlawful and inhumane proposals have become socially acceptable. What impact does this have on those involved in refugee work? Is criminalisation on the rise? Are there incidents of violence and how can we protect ourselves from them? Is volunteering becoming too tiring and how can people be encouraged? What new solidarity networks are needed? Joachim Glaubitz reports on political developments and the practical and psychosocial effects on volunteering. Julian Staiger will focus in particular on protective measures. There will be plenty of room for exchange and networking.

Speakers: Joachim Glaubitz (Amadeu Antonio Foundation, Caritas Association and Refugee Council BW) and Julian Staiger (Leuchtlinie and Refugee Council BW)

Talk 2: Deportations jeopardise health

Most refugees have experienced serious human rights violations in their countries of origin and during their flight. After arriving in Germany, these experiences continue to have various health consequences for those affected. Treatment options are severely limited under the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act. In addition, the uncertainty during the asylum procedure, a protection status based on illness and the negative outcome of the asylum procedure make recovery extremely difficult. As a result, people at risk of deportation are barely able to recover. Ulrike Schneck will report on this from a psychotraumatological perspective and Dr Robin Maitra from a human rights perspective.

Speakers: Dr Robin Maitra (Human Rights Officer of the Baden-Württemberg Medical Association) and Ulrike Schneck (Head of Refugio Stuttgart e.V.)

Talk 3: What are the consequences of criminal offences on residence?

Time and again, refugees and their supporters are faced with this question. It is often not clear when a conviction was handed down, whether it was a misdemeanour or a criminal offence and how severe the sentence actually is. The consequences of criminal offences in terms of residence law are also initially unclear. This talk is about learning to understand what is considered a criminal offence and what you need to find out to be able to assess the consequences under the residence law. The talk then discusses the different aspects of how criminal offences affect residence, e.g. residence permits, asylum procedures, expulsions and deportations.

Speaker: Laura Noehte-Shinwari (Lawyer Mannheim/Heilbronn)

Working group 4: 'Cash for vouchers': exchange campaigns for people with Bezahlkarten

In Baden-Württemberg, more and more refugees who receive social benefits are now given a Bezahlkarte instead of cash. The system of Bezahlkarten is being introduced nationwide and sooner or later everyone will have the same problem: € 50 in cash is not enough for purchases at flea markets, African supermarkets or Kleinanzeigen. This is why volunteers are setting up solidarity cash exchange campaigns all over Germany. The 'Offen!' campaign in Munich has been implementing an exchange campaign since July 2024 and reports here on stumbling blocks, attempts at criminalisation and

successes in the working group. Are you thinking about organising an exchange campaign in your area? Here you can network and get inspired.

Speaker: Matthias Weinzierl (Campaign 'Offen!' Munich)

2:45 – 3:00 pm: Break

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

All members, supporting members, and anybody else interested is cordially invited to join our meeting.

This year, elections for the chairperson, vice-chairperson, and the board will be held. You can [run for a post](#), too!

Our spring convention is taking place within the project "Aktiv für gesellschaftliche Teilhabe", supported by the Ministry for Social Issues, Health and Integration from public state funds as enacted by the Baden-Württemberg parliament. Co-funding is provided by the Deutsche Postcode Lottery.