

## SYLFF MIKROKOLLEG - FORCED MIGRATION

The fellows of the SYLFF Mikrokolleg will work on a variety of aspects related to international forced migration which is understood as a cross-border “migratory movement in which an element of coercion exists, including threats to life and livelihood, whether arising from natural or man-made causes” (International Organisation for Migration). The fellows will

- analyse the root causes of international forced migration in the home countries, including poverty, loss of land, and the persecution due to ethnicity, traditions and religious beliefs,
- evaluate the effectiveness of different international approaches to respond to forced migration in the home countries, such as humanitarian action, foreign aid, institution building and democracy promotion,
- focus on the rights of forced migrants and refugees in different legal orders and on the duties of the involved actors, including the host state, international and regional organisations

The SYLFF Mikrokolleg invites the application of excellent young researchers with a strong interest in research on international forced migration, with a background in law, psychology, political science or sociology and with a clear commitment towards cross-disciplinary cooperation.

### Research perspective: INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE- AND MIGRATION LAW

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The Kolleg also encompasses a legal perspective. Projects should focus on international, European or comparative public law. These may include questions concerning the rights of forced migrants and refugees in different legal orders as well as the corresponding duties of the different actors involved (e.g. the principle of non-refoulement and other human rights obligations). These actors can be States, international or regional organisations (including the United Nations or the Council of Europe) and even non-governmental organisations or non-State actors, as well as forced migrants and refugees themselves. Projects may also incorporate current legal developments as well as recent public policy proposals in the national or international sphere. Questions relating to the intersection between refugee law and other fields of international law (e.g. environmental law, law of the sea, human rights) or other perspectives (e.g. alternative approaches to international law, refugees' inclusion in decision-making) are also welcome.

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### **Research perspective:**

### **MENTAL HEALTH OF INDIVIDUALS EXPOSED TO FORCED MIGRATION**

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Forced migration puts people at a particular risk for mental health problems (MHP). Mental health is crucial to the overall well-being of individuals and societies, as large-scale studies by the EU, WHO and others have shown. It is estimated that more than 50% of the refugees who fled armed conflicts are affected by MHP. Despite the enormous individual burden and long-term economic costs, treatment rates for children and adults with MHP are low and treatment is typically provided only many years after arriving in the host country and the onset of disorders. A major challenge for improving mental health in refugee populations is to identify more efficient ways of providing a low threshold, early and cost-effective interventions for the prevention and treatment of MHP. The project will address research questions regarding the improvement of mental health and well-being in individuals exposed to refugee experiences.

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### Research perspective: URBAN BORDERWORK / SOCIOLOGY

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The rights of refugees, asylum seekers and (forced) migrants are protected and regulated by international and national law as well as by local regulations and practice involving a myriad of state and non-state actors. Over the past years, scholarship in migration and border studies has started to pay closer attention to the everyday borderwork forced migrants encounter in cities today. More restrictive national stances are often opposed to bottom-up solidarities of civil society actors and urban citizens while city policies and administrations have been identified both supportive and more restrictive in their responses. In this vein, local actors construct and contest the border in a variety of ways and negotiate their meaning, turning the city into a space of political struggle around the notions of the border, inclusion, exclusion and belonging. Yet, these urban struggles of borderwork have only started to the subject of empirical research.

The applicant's research focuses on urban borderwork in Europe, or beyond. It investigates one or several cities in their responses to forced migrants, preferably with a focus on the fields of work and/or health access.

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### Research perspective:

### AMBIGUITY AND CLEANSING: RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM AS A ROOT OF FORCED MIGRATION

Prof. Dr. Dieter Haller  
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In the last decades, the world witnessed an increase in fundamentalist movements in a struggle against postmodern ambiguities and cultural pluralities, linked to ethnic, lifestyle and religious identities.

The prominence of such movements and their political relevance varies from country to country. Often, fundamentalist groups not only fight against minorities, but also aim for a purification of the mainstream society. This research project invites doctoral students to investigate religious fundamentalism as a possible root cause in the context of forced migration. Research will be based on ethnographic fieldwork and participant observation. All regional contexts are welcome.