

# Protection for vulnerable refugees

Between legal entitlements and reality

Symposium of the Psychosocial Centres for  
Refugees and Victims of Torture

3 – 5 May 2021 (online)



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## DAY 1: MONDAY, 3 MAY 2021

- 13:00-13:30 Opening and welcome
- 13:30-14:00 **“Setting the basis“: (legal) introduction and terminology**
- Anna Suerhoff*, research assistant at the German Institute for Human Rights
- 14:00-14:10 **Break**
- 14:10-15:10 **Aspects of practice: The limits and opportunities of defining vulnerabilities**
- David Keller*, Center ÜBERLEBEN  
*Falk Wachsmann*, Schwulenberatung Berlin GmbH  
*Helen Deffner*, Refugee Council Saxony-Anhalt
- 15:10-15:30 **Break**
- 15:30-16:30 **Defining vulnerability – a philosophic and ethical review of an ambivalent concept**
- Sylvia Agbih*, Faculty of History, Philosophy and Theology at the University of Bielefeld
- 16:30-16:45 **Break**
- 16:45-17:30 **Are we vulnerable or are we made vulnerable?**
- Jennifer Kamau*, International Women’s Space
- 17:30-17:45 **Closing remarks**

## DAY 2: TUESDAY, 4 MAY 2021

- 10:00-11:00 **Europe’s external borders – considerations from a legal, political and practical/activist perspective**
- Clara Anne Büniger*, Equal Rights Beyond Borders  
*Marie von Manteuffel*, Doctors without borders (MSF)  
*Tareq Alaows*, BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN (TBC)
- 11:00-11:15 **Pause**
- 11:15-12:00 **From a game of chance to an orderly system. Status quo, models and challenges**
- Lisa vom Felde*, BAfF e.V.
- 12:00-13:00 **Pause**
- 13:00-14:00 **Berlin network for particularly vulnerable refugees**
- Panel with representatives from participating organisations
- 14:00-16:00 **Pause**
- 16:00-16:45 **Vulnerability and the reality of available services**
- Louise Biddle*, University of Heidelberg  
*Kayvan Bozorgmehr*, University of Bielefeld

16:45-17:00 **Break**

17:00-18:30 **From crisis mode to a strategy for integration? Providing healthcare to refugees after the federal election**  
*Panel discussion with representatives from politics, academia and practice*

*Luise Amtsberg, MP, Bündnis 90/ die Grünen*  
*Kayvan Bozorgmehr, University of Bielefeld*  
*Frank Heinrich, MP, CDU (TBC)*  
*Achim Kessler, MP, Die Linke (TBC)*  
*Hilde Mattheis, MP, SPD*  
*Sybill Schulz, Head of coordination unit refugee management*

17:45-18:15 **Closing remarks**

### DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, 5 MAY 2021

10:00-12:15 **Workshops\*** (see page 3)

12:15-12:30 **Break**

12:30-13:00 **Closing session**

\* Participants can choose from six workshops. For some workshops there is a limit to the number of participants. Admission depends on the time of registration. A brief description of each workshop can be found on the following page.

**Due to time zone differences, workshop 6 will take place in the afternoon between 2 and 4.15 p.m.**

## REGISTRATION AND CONTACT

The symposium will take place online via Zoom. All presentations and workshops – with the exception of Workshop 6 – will be held in German. There will be a running translation to English.

### Registration:

Participants can register **until April 23** here:  
<https://eveeno.com/681776952>.

Please state the workshop you wish to attend and whether you require translation into English.

Before the symposium, you will receive an email with your Zoom meeting link.

**Cost:** 25 €

Participation is free for those generally entitled to benefits (e.g. unemployed persons, students and/or trainees)

### Certification:

A request for certification from the Psychotherapeutenkammer Berlin has been submitted.

### Contact:

XENION -Psychosoziale Hilfen für politisch Verfolgte e.V.  
 Marie Gleißner  
[bns@xenion.org](mailto:bns@xenion.org)

## ORGANISATIONS:

The symposium is organised by



This symposium is co-financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund as well as by the German Red Cross and the Paritätischer Gesamtverband.



## WORKSHOPS

### Workshop 1: Working with and providing counselling to vulnerable refugees – taking power into account

*Speaker:* Rafia Shahnaz, GLADT - black and PoC lesbians, gays, bisexuals, Trans\*, Inter\* and queers in Berlin

In this workshop, we invite participants to consider how practical approaches in counselling take the dimension of power into account both on a psychosocial as well as on a therapeutic level. How do we provide support to particularly vulnerable people without reproducing paternalistic and stereotypical prejudices? There will be room to share experiences and learn from each other as well as share best practice examples.

### Workshop 2: InTo Justice: An interdisciplinary approach to assessing the consequences of torture

*Moderator:* Christian Cleusters

*With:* Felix Mayer/ Lisa König (forensic medicine Düsseldorf); Thomas Wolter/ Christopher Hochscheid (forensic medicine Gießen); Carina Heyde/Felix Ahls, Psychosocial centre Düsseldorf; Leonie Teigler, BAfF e.V.

In recent years, a model based on the Istanbul Protocol, which relies on an interdisciplinary approach, has been developed in North Rhine-Westphalia to assess the consequences of torture and will be further developed over the next two years. The project combines forensic, therapeutic, social work and legal expertise. Experts will present the model for discussion with participants.

### Workshop 3: Models to identify vulnerability. Good practice and challenges

*Moderators:* Alva Träbert, Rosa Strippe e.V. & Lea Flory, BAfF e.V.

This workshop aims to provide an overview of the models currently being used to identify vulnerable refugees. Representatives of psychosocial and counselling centres from several federal states will present recent projects, their challenges and positive experiences before discussing similarities, strategies and scopes for action.

### Workshop 4: Equal yet different: providing counselling to LGBTI\* refugees

*Moderator:* Falk Wachsmann, Schwulenberatung Berlin gGmbH

LGBTI\* refugees have only become more visible in public discourse and in psychosocial centres in recent years. Schwulenberatung Berlin has provided counselling and a number of services to around 2,000 LGBTI\* refugees since 2015. Due to the highly heterogeneous nature of this group of people and their different experiences, needs and desires, both as individuals but also structurally, the abbreviation LGBTI\* (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans\* and inter\*) cannot cover all gender and sexual minorities. In this workshop, we hope to raise awareness of diversity by offering input, dialogue and best practice examples and examining the particular challenges and opportunities of working with this target group.

### Workshop 5: Psychosocial centres as places of interdisciplinary co-operation – potentials, challenges and limits

*Organised by:* Center ÜBERLEBEN (BNS-vulnerable refugees, outpatient and day unit)

Designed to facilitate exchange between practitioners, this workshop analyses the potentials, but also the challenges in interdisciplinary co-operation in psychosocial centres for refugees. How can effective case management answer the complex psychological, medical, social and not least legal issues facing refugees? How can psychosocial centres contribute through networking across multiple professions and with an interdisciplinary focus based on a holistic approach to counselling, and where are the limits to such an approach? The workshop invites participants to reflect on these questions, but also to share specific best practice examples (i.e. with the aim of sharing knowledge, stances and opportunities).

### Workshop 6: Expanding the lens of vulnerability (in English)

**Due to time zone differences, this workshop will take place between 2 and 4.15p.m.**

*Speaker:* Dr. Erinn Gilson, Merrimack College, USA

This workshop will introduce participants to vulnerability as a complex concept with multiple definitions. It will provide opportunities for participants to reflect on how these ways of understanding vulnerability impact their experiences and work. The session will evaluate the implications of understanding vulnerability as a status (connected to factors such as age, gender, citizenship), a product of socio-political circumstances, and a fundamental part of the human condition, as well as of understanding vulnerability as necessarily harmful or as potentially related to empowerment. The session will focus on exploring the benefits and difficulties of these different understandings of vulnerability, and will pay particular attention to the impact of these ways of understanding vulnerability on those who are labeled "vulnerable", self-identify as "vulnerable", and experience different forms of vulnerability.