

Caring for future: Why psychosocial work is essential for social cohesion

Conference of the German Association of Psychosocial Centers for Refugees and Victims of Torture

Wednesday, May 21st – Thursday, May 22nd 2025
Franz-Mehring-Platz 1, 10243 Berlin

“Recognizing our needs both to give and to receive care not only provides us with our common sense of humanity, but enables us to confront our shared fears of human frailty...”

The Care Collective, *The Care Manifesto*

Vulnerability belongs to the core of human existence, we are therefore dependent on social support and mutual care. The current multiple crises make our vulnerability painfully apparent. The neoliberal approach of relying on individual responsibility and the free market for basic human needs – such as health, safety, love – fails because these needs can only be met through the reliable support of other people. The consequences of this failure can be observed increasingly in the past years: in the form of increasing anger in society regarding for example long waiting times for doctors’ appointments, lack of affordable housing, lack of affordable childcare. People worldwide feel less represented through political actors, have less trust in the state, feel more lonely. The future is associated less with progress and more with destruction. Driven by rightwing populism, tendencies towards marginalizing more people – refugees, queer people, people with handicaps – are on the rise in an ill-advised attempt to search for a common “we”. Such forms of exclusion inevitably lead to societies that become even more fragile. Because diversity has always been part of our society and always will be.

Through psychosocial work with refugees we want to demonstrate a countermodel to social exclusion. As vulnerable beings we can only establish a sustainable future through solidarity and mutual care. Offering health care for refugees means for us that we bring together care with responsibility, because we as humans are responsible for each other. We view the diversity in our society not only as an existing condition, but as an essential source for viable approaches as to how health care can function well in the future. We also recognize the dependencies between various areas of society. A healthy life is only made possible when other aspects of life are cared for. When people have enough possibilities to participate in society socially, economically and culturally. We see a collective responsibility for this and want to take responsibility. Because we want to build our future based on community and agency instead of anger and division.

At this conference we want to offer a space for exchange between people and initiatives that advocate for community and agency in different contexts. Together, we want to find ways in which to strengthen synergies and promote human and professional cooperation in a manner that

recognizes the diversity of perspectives as a strength and counters societal division with a common vision.

Program

Wednesday, May 21 st 2025	
13:00 - 14:00	Registration and arrival
14:00 - 14:15	Welcoming Statement BAfF
14:15 - 15:00	Keynote: Professional and human rights oriented (social) work with refugees <i>Prof. Dr. Nivedita Prasad, Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin</i>
15:00 - 15:30	Lecture: Rule of law as an embattled concept – populist campaigns against legal rights <i>Arne Bardelle, European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights</i>
15:30 - 16:00	Coffee Break
16:00 - 16:30	Lecture: A Holistic Approach to Security: A Dialog <i>Marianne Koch & Peter Steudtner, Holistic Protection Collective</i>
16:30 - 18:00	Panel Discussion: Support and Resistance: Creating Safe(r) Spaces between Politics, Practice and (Self-)Protection <i>Prof Dr. Nivedita Prasad, Arne Bardelle, Marianne Koch</i>
18:00 - 19:30	Dinner
19:30 - 21:00	Evening program with music

Thursday, May 22 nd 2025	
9:30 - 9:45	Introduction
09:45-11:00	Networking sessions with:

	<p><i>Verband der Beratungsstellen für Betroffene rechter, rassistischer und antisemitischer Gewalt e.V. (VBRG)</i></p> <p><i>Aktivistinnen-Agentur e. V.</i></p> <p><i>CommunAid – Initiative für gesellschaftlichen Zusammenhalt (to be confirmed)</i></p>
11:00-11:30	Coffee Break
11:30-13:00	<p>Panel discussion: Never alone, always together – Perspectives from Psychosocial Care</p> <p><i>Fatma Karacakurtoğlu, Train of Hope Dortmund</i></p> <p><i>Beybûn Seker und Soniya Alkis, Pena.ger</i></p> <p><i>Carina Heyde, PSZ Düsseldorf</i></p>
13:00 - 13:30	Closing Remarks
13:30-14:30	Lunch

Conference Organizer

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