

Cultural Diversity and the Family in Germany

Refugees, Migration and the Family in Question, Past and Present

Public Panel Discussion
16 May 2017 (16.00-18.00)

Georg-August-Universität Göttingen
Zentrales Hörsaalgebäude (ZHG) 008
Platz der Göttinger Sieben 5, 37073 Göttingen

Especially since the so-called wave of refugees in Germany over the last couple of years, the question of child marriage has been controversially discussed in connection with the integration of asylum seekers in German society. But how new and how widespread is this phenomenon really? And, what are the actual experiences of refugees and other migrants and their families in coming to and settling in Germany?

This event seeks to bring together current political, legal and popular discussions with historical reflection on cultural diversity, marriage and the family in modern Germany. It focuses on questions about the nature of marriage and the family that arise in light of discussions about the recent movement of refugees to Germany. The panel also considers the varied experiences of refugees in leaving their families behind or coming to a new country together with their family. Finally, it situates current discussions about the family that have arisen from the refugee situation against the longer history of migration in twentieth-century Germany. The event connects scholars and practitioners working on various aspects of these issues in order to shed new light on the topic.

The discussion will take shape around the following questions:

- Why does cultural diversity seem to cause concern when it comes to the family?
- How have the families, relationships and marriages of refugees and earlier migrants to Germany been perceived?
- Does migration seem to challenge norms about the family in Germany? How?
- How has moving to Germany affected the family relations and marriages of refugees and earlier migrants?
- How has starting anew in Germany affected relations with family and spouses left behind in one's home country or elsewhere?

Panel Chair:

- Professor Riem Spielhaus, Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Göttingen

Speakers include:

- Dr Marcel Berlinghoff, Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies, Univ. of Osnabrück
- Clare Deery, Chairperson, Lower Saxony Refugee Council
- Swenja Gerhard, Central Office, Association of Binational Families and Partners, Frankfurt
- Dr Lena-Maria Möller, Max Planck Institute for International Private Law, Hamburg
- Abdou Ouedraogo, the former Chair of the Lower Saxony Integration Council

No need to register in advance. All welcome!

NB The discussion will take place in Germany.

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