

2020

ODYSSEUS SUMMER SCHOOL

Refugee VOICES

From the Beneficiaries of the
Odysseus Academic Network's
'Scholarships for Refugees' Initiative



#REFYOUNGEES



Odysseus Network

ULB

Academic Network for Legal Studies on Immigration and Asylum in Europe

FOREWORD

Starting in 2015, the Odysseus Academic Network for Legal Studies on Immigration and Asylum in Europe decided to launch an initiative to enable refugee-students to participate in its annual summer school. By participating to the summer school, refugee students will have the possibility to gain knowledge in European immigration and asylum law and to further their education, which may have been interrupted by their forced departure from their home countries. The project entails costs which the Odysseus Network - a non-profit organisation - cannot cover alone. The Summer School is entirely self-financed and does not benefit from any financial support other than the fees paid by the participants.

Thanks to our crowdfunding campaign, we are for the fifth time able to host 6 refugee-students at the Odysseus Network Summer School taking place in Brussels from 23 August to 4 September 2020. These scholarships cover the costs of transportation, daily expenses in Brussels, and a portion of the tuition fees. The Odysseus Network is grateful to all the donors as well the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) that accommodates the refugee-students in university residences.

In order to support this year's crowdfunding campaign, we created a social media platform to share faces and stories of persons who believe that a different model of integration is possible. Join us on Instagram and Twitter by following the hashtag **#REFYUGEEES**

This booklet allows the recipients of the scholarships to tell their story - to have their voices heard. We are grateful to all the recipients of the 2020 Refugee Scholarship for their participation in the Summer School. Please note that some of them are not included in this booklet as they preferred to keep their profiles and stories, which contain sensitive information, private.

PRÉFACE

Depuis 2015, le Réseau académique Odysseus d'études juridiques sur l'immigration et l'asile en Europe a lancé une initiative afin de permettre à des réfugiés-étudiants de participer à son cours d'été annuel. L'objectif est de leur permettre d'acquérir des connaissances en droit européen d'immigration et d'asile et de poursuivre leurs études qui peuvent avoir été interrompues par leur départ forcé de leur pays d'origine. Ce projet engendre des coûts que le Réseau Académique Odysseus ne peut supporter seul en tant qu'organisation sans but lucratif, le cours d'été étant entièrement auto-financé par les droits d'inscription payés par les participants.

Grâce à une campagne de crowdfunding, le cours d'été peut pour la cinquième fois accueillir 6 étudiants-réfugiés. Les bourses couvrent les frais de transport, les dépenses quotidiennes à Bruxelles, et une partie des droits d'inscription. Le Réseau Odysseus exprime sa gratitude à tous les donateurs ainsi qu'à l'Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) qui offre le logement aux réfugiés-étudiants.

Afin de soutenir notre campagne, nous avons créé une plate-forme de médias sociaux pour partager les profils et les vécus de ses personnes qui croient en un modèle d'information différent. Rejoignez-nous sur Instagram et Twitter en suivant le hashtag **#REFYUGEEES**

Cette brochure permet aux bénéficiaires de raconter leur histoire - de faire entendre leur voix. Nous sommes, à ce titre, reconnaissants envers ces derniers pour leur participation au cours d'été. Certains d'entre eux ne sont cependant pas inclus dans cette brochure car ils préféreraient garder l'anonymat concernant leurs profils ainsi que les informations sensibles liées à leurs parcours.

On behalf of the Odysseus Academic Network
Au nom du Réseau académique Odysseus

Prof. Philippe DE BRUYCKER
Coordinator of Odysseus - Coordonnateur d'Odysseus



Nassr Eddine Errami

Nationality: **Moroccan**

Field of studies: **Master degree in Business - Currently enrolled in preparatory courses of Political Science**

Profession: **Social Worker – _independent Consultant (Human Rights – _Interfaith & Intercultural Dialogue)**

Date of granting refugee status: **2015**

The Member State which granted my protection: **France**

Asylum Story:

I have never thought I would be a refugee, migrating and seeking asylum were not part of any of my future programs when I was younger. I was involved in many civil society organizations and NGOs working on. Religious freedom and human rights, especially minorities' rights and gender equality. After few trainings on human rights' advocacy, I co-founded few projects in Europe and Africa and participated in several conferences, trainings and grassroots initiatives supporting refugees, addressing gender-based violence and tackling gender-sexual discriminations from faith-based perspective.

In 2013, my organization received threats from religious authorities and some extremist religious groups. I decided to apply for asylum and that was the price to pay in order to continue raising my voice, challenging religious dogmatism and political disengagements which failed and still fail in protecting lives of marginalized groups.

Why choosing the summer School?

This summer school is a professional and personal diving board into the complex system of asylum law and migration policies of the EU? It's an exciting opportunity to be so close to asylum politics and its institutional and practical stakes.

I feel sometimes unequipped while facing some difficult migration-asylum situations in my daily work and I would like to deepen my knowledge of the EU asylum legal and political tools in order to understand the whole law frame. Having insights from a wide range of experts covering key-topics of existing and future challenges of the EU asylum laws and migrations policies is also a very learning process for my projects and career.

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Joseph MUKOZI

Field of studies: Faculty of art and social sciences,
Department of English language and literature.

Country of origin: Burundi

Country of residence: France, Marseille.

Date of arrival in France: 10/09/2018

Refugee status since: 25/11/2019

My Story

I started working with refugees as an interpreter at RSC Africa (Resettlement support center) in 2014. Before fleeing my country I was a UNV (United Nation Volunteer) at UNHCR where I worked as an interpreter and protection clerk in Congolese refugee camps in my country, Burundi, since July 2015. I had to leave my country because of threats to my life and I asked for political asylum in France. These threats were due to social and political research works I carried out at the United States Embassy in Burundi and to my positions in various UNHCR programs in Burundi.

Having served refugees and returnees for more than 3 years and currently being myself a refugee, I still nurtured the will and the passion to be at the service of the most vulnerable, especially victims of conflict, war and natural disasters as well and also the choice to devote myself exclusively to humanitarian work.

However, the numbers of years I worked in the field of humanitarian action have made me understand that only goodwill and action alone are not enough, that humanitarian action also requires precise and refined theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

The Summer School on Immigration and Asylum Law and Policy is a golden opportunity for me to refresh my insight and add some theoretical-practical knowledge to the field experience that I have.

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Anonymous Testimony

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I am a young law student. I am 24 year old. I am a political refugee in Belgium. It has been 2 years since I have arrived here. I have finished my Bachelor of Law in Ankara, Turkey and I just finished this year (2020) my masters of equivalence in public and international law at ULB, which is taught in both French and English.

I had to leave Turkey because I was in opposition to the Erdogan Regime and there was a lot of oppression against those who did not agree with the unlawful practices of the government. Human rights violations drastically increased after 2014 in Turkey and have gotten worse since then.

My Aim here is to integrate to Belgium society in the best possible way. My dream is to become a Human Rights and Refugee lawyer, by finishing my masters of equivalence in law I have come closer to this dream.

Anonymous Testimony

YYYYY

Nationality: Turkish

Degree: Bachelor in Law

Profession in origin country: Junior Research Assistant

Fields of study: Human Rights, European Law

Year of arrival in Europe: 2018

The Member State which has granted the protection: Belgium

I have obtained my degree at Ankara University Law Faculty. I had begun my master in Turkey but unfortunately, I could not graduate. I had to flee my country as a result of the witch hunt conducted against political opponents of the current regime.

I have been learning Dutch and French nowadays. My plan after learning languages is to resume my academic carrier and I want to have a master degree at one of Belgian universities. This summer school is a great chance for me to enter into an academic sphere again.

Immigration and refugee issues have been causing more and more impacts on European politics. As a refugee and jurist, I have already some real life experiences from the field and some theoretical knowledge in this topic. To understand better how the immigration phenomenon affects the legal systems in Europe and how the legal systems affect refugees and local citizens, the summer school will give me new perspectives.

#REFYOUNGEES

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