

2022

ODYSSEUS SUMMER SCHOOL

Refugee VOICES

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



#REFYOUNGEES



Odysseus Network

Academic Network for Legal Studies on Immigration and Asylum in Europe

ULB

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 seventh time, able to host 18 refugee-students at the Odysseus Network Summer School taking place in Brussels from 4 July to 15 July 2022. 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 **#REFYOUGEES**

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 2022 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 contains sensitive and private information.

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 a pu, pour la septième fois, accueillir dix-huit étudiants-refugiés au Cours d'Été Odysseus qui a lieu du 4 au 15 juillet 2022 à Bruxelles. 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 **#REFYOUGEES**

Cette brochure permet aux bénéficiaires de raconter leur histoire et 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



Tetiana Anakina

Nationality: **Ukrainian**

Field of studies: **International Law**

Profession: **Associate Professors of the EU Law
Department at Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University
(Kharkiv, Ukraine)**

Date of granting refugee status: **26/03/2022**

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

My Story

I am one of the millions of Ukrainians who was forced to flee her home in Kharkiv, an Eastern City of Ukraine located about thirty kilometers from the border with Russia, which is under constant massive shelling since the active phase of the war. The memory of 5am in the morning of February 24, 2022, is still very fresh. This day started with the sounds no one expected to hear, sounds of explosions. It was the scariest experience for me, especially as a mother of a child (who was 1,5 years old at that time) who I had to get to safety. Amidst the February talks about the possibility of Russian invasion I prepared the emergency suitcase with all the items my family would need in case we would have to move fast. And when the strong panic began in Kharkiv with many people starting to only think about leaving, I was already ready to jump on the first train and leave to my hometown in Khmelnytsky region to stay with the relatives there. We did not have tickets for the train; however, we were allowed to board the train free of charge. The train was delayed and changed directions several times to avoid shelling zones. It was a nerve-racking ride... I kept waiting for the bomb to fall on us at any moment. After 23 hours on the road (instead of regular 14), we got to the destination, exhausted, but alive! Unfortunately, the security situation in Ukraine was not improving so my husband and I decided to explore the options of getting me and our daughter to a safer place while my husband would stay in Ukraine defending my country. Despite long lines at the borders and what seemed to be a mission impossible, my daughter and I boarded the evacuation bus to Warsaw. The volunteers kindly offered their help, fed us, gave my daughter toys, and found us a family we could stay with. During my 3 days stay with this incredible family I was able to organize delivery of some emergency items to Ukraine from Polish volunteers while setting up everything I needed to get to Spain to my mother who had been living there for many years now. There, my daughter, and I received temporary protection under the Directive 2001/55/EC and Council Implementing Decision 2022/382.

Why choosing the Summer School?

My interest in the Summer School is driven by various factors. Firstly, by my professional background as a researcher of the European Law Laboratory of the Scientific and Research Institute of State-Building of the National Academy of Law Sciences of Ukraine and the Scientific Laboratory of the Military Law Institute and currently am an Associate Professor of the European Union Law Department of the Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University, where I obtained my PhD degree in International Law.

Nowadays, I am a lecturer and a tutor in EU Law, EU Migration Law, Legal Regulation of EU-Ukraine Cooperation, European Convention of Human Rights and Legal Practice.

Secondly, as a person supporting Ukraine's goal to join EU and its ambition to demonstrate and contributing European values, I participated in various international and local projects sharing universal standards of human rights protection. Such as the EU Project "Support to the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement", where I provided legal support in the process of the approximation of Ukrainian legislation to EU Law, for instance in the field of EU migration and asylum policy. In addition, my team and I sent monthly "Review of European Union Law and EU legal approximation developments and analyses" newsletters that covered such topics as freedom, security and justice and outlined the most current important developments in EU Law and provided analysis of EU Law and harmonization of Ukrainian law to the law of EU.

Thirdly, as a lawyer who wants and can provide information to as many people as possible to my students, co-workers, friends, and general public while working with the NGO "Commission on Legal Education and Awareness". NGO provides free legal assistance on topical legal issues under the support of the OSCE. In particular, my personal contribution since the beginning of war was developing and speaking at the webinars hosted by NGO, namely, "Refugee status and temporary protection: what you need to know" (24.05.2022) and "Crossing border in light of war and staying in EU countries: practical advice" (26.05.2022). In this respect, my participation in the Summer School will give me the outstanding opportunity to receive deep theoretical and practical knowledge of the recent migration developments.

"It is my duty to the people of Ukraine not only as someone who is affected by the war, but also as a university professor and a lawyer, to do everything in my power to learn and understand as deeply as possible EU immigration and asylum policies and the latest developments in the light of current events, acquire in-depth knowledge, so that I am able to provide a much-needed support to my fellow citizens and their families"



Amiri Farida

Nationality: **Afghan**

Field of studies: **Political Science and Public Administration**

Profession: **Program Assistant, Search for Common Ground (INGO)**

Date of granting refugee status: **01/10/2021**

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

My Story

I am an Afghan woman peace activist, one among thousands of women from Afghanistan who were forced to escape war, violence, and misogyny. In early September 2019, my resilience and passion about peace led me to find an initiative called “Peace Friends”, a volunteer non-profit initiative. It is a youth-led and youth-focused initiative that focuses on the young people, particularly young women to promote peace and harmony in the society and help them become change-makers through designing and conducting fruitful programs and events. “Peace Friends” also aims to raise awareness and promote UNSCR 2250 and UNSCR 1325. In order to make the voices of Afghan women and youth heard, I have spoken about the inclusion of young people and women in decision-making and peace processes on national and international platforms, like ‘The First International Symposium on Youth Participation in Peace Processes’ Helsinki, Finland. Therefore, I was recognized as one of the nominees for 2019 UNDP N-Peace Awards. I was also recognized as one of the Afghan civil society representatives to the 2020 Afghanistan Conference. Prior to the August 2021 I worked at the INGO Search for Common Ground, Afghanistan. I also worked at the Office of H.E. the First Lady of Afghanistan Rula Ghani as an Assistant to her Advisors where I was one of the key organizers of a national peace forum called “Afghan Women National Consensus for Peace”. It was August 2021 when I like hundreds of other Afghans who experienced being refugee not only once, but several times, managed to flee the country. I am currently living in Slovenia although restarting a life is always a challenge.

Why I want to study at the Summer School?

As a graduate of the political science and public administration and a female young peacebuilder, I, like thousands of my fellow Afghans have never thought of being forced to flee the country and wonder so much how the immigration/refugee law work specifically in Europe. Since I have been settled in Slovenia after August 2021, I have come across circumstances in which I felt like I lack the necessary information in relation to immigration law. Therefore, this summer school does not only give me the space and platform to be better knowledgeable and educated about law and policies concerning the refugees, but it will also help me find the correct direction of my career life in the very new context that I started to live in.

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Ahmed Bazoon

Nationality: **Iraqi**

Field of studies: **Engineering**

Profession: **Representative of an association Refugee Advisory Board, and Community Manager in Humans in the Loop Foundation**

Date of granting refugee status: **2016**

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

My Story:

I studied and worked as an electrical engineer in Iraq. I worked in the independent press for 8 years, in addition, to my work in construction and decoration. I've been living in Bulgaria since 2015. I worked in humanitarian organizations in Bulgaria (Caritas Sofia) for 4 years as a coordinator of the integration program (orientation program) and the employment program (Career Center). Through my work I have gained vast experience in the humanitarian field. The work consisted in finding companies who hire refugees with the knowledge they have and to help them in the process of integration and have a job in Bulgaria.

This included families', women and men seeking for a job. It was a big challenge to find a proper job for every single beneficiary and establishing trust between the companies and the refugees that are interested in having job and skill.

Now my job as Representative of the Refugee Advisory Board association is that we, as a group of refugees, aim to build a strong network among refugees living in Bulgaria, help them for better integration procedure and providing the right information about their rights in the country. The Refugee Advisory Board (RAB) also supports refugee leadership through their participation in

the policy-making process that has a direct impact on the well-being of refugee communities with a focus on local integration.

My other job is as Community Manager in Humans in the Loop Foundation, I'm also responsible for career development of our annotators, both within Bulgaria and at our partner organizations, organizing a variety of social events to build a sense of community amongst our team including permanent staff, freelancers, trainees, and volunteers and developing opportunities for integration and personal development. I also work in the recruitment of participants for training and employment programmes in Bulgaria.

Why choosing the Summer School?

I firstly found the announcement on the Facebook page and it looked interesting for me as I am working and fighting for the rights of Refugees and Migrants in the country, and I know the law about the country but I would like to know more about law in EU level because it will help me to know more about my job and the best way to claim the right of refugees/ immigrants. As an educated person, I believe that a person remains a student throughout his life. As a refugee I will remain ignorant of all my rights and duties and need to know more until such time as this name is no longer used.

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Imal Beyzanour

Nationality: **Turkish**

Field of studies: **Dual degree on Business Administration and Laws**

Profession: **Volunteer in UNCHR, Casa Turca and Arco Forum**

Date of granting refugee status: **May 2019**

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

My story:

Everything started in 2013 when we internally displaced due to political persecution and my father had to leave Turkey and ended up in Senegal. In the summer of 2016, when my mother and I went to Senegal from Turkey to visit my father, the political situation went worse, and a coup attempt occurred in Turkey. From then on Turkey was not safe not only for my father but also for the rest of the family. Therefore, I had to stay permanently in Senegal. My school in Turkey has been closed along with many other schools and I had to find a way of continuing my education.

Adapting myself to this unexpected situation, I continued my education in Senegal where I found an opportunity of interacting with people from different cultures. However, in the middle of the new academic year (2016- 2017) my school has been shut down by the persecution of Turkish Government. It was a second obstacle to my education. Thanks to all manifestations and firm campaigns organized to prevent the closure, education continued till the end of the academic year and that way I was able to get my high school diploma.

The problems did not end, over months, everything went worse and in November 2017 we had to leave Senegal for our security. After unsuccessfully trying to go to Belgium, Germany, France, and Sweden my journey ended up in Spain where we asked asylum and I faced another serious obstacle for my education. In Spain, due to my passion for starting university I acted very fast. I applied for the equivalency of my high school diploma. In 6 months, while waiting an answer from Ministry of Education, I learned Spanish, did an exam for foreign diploma holders, and admitted into a public university conditionally. However, they rejected my diploma. So, all my dreams were postponed. Not cancelled, just postponed until I overcome the new barriers. To be able to study 12th grade in Spain, I applied for the equivalency of my 11th grade and secondary school. They rejected both, because at that time I was not yet granted a refugee status. I ended up with the options of repeating all classes in Spain or waiting during an unknown time for a respond of asylum. Even I had to start from the beginning, I opt for studying. But, at the same time, I made contacts with human rights activists, associations, lawyers to solve this problem. After all these efforts, I was granted refugee status and equivalency of my 11th grade in May 2019.

Therefore, finally after two years of my arrival to Spain, in 2020 I studied last year of the high school in a public Spanish school distance education and did Spanish National exam obtaining a high grade. All these efforts and my passion on education served for being granted a full ride scholarship to study dual degree on Laws and Business administration at IE University in Spain. I decided to study Laws and Business because, in my early ages I understood the basis of a country: JUSTICE. If there is no justice, there is nothing. And, I have an innovative soul which I can use best in startups, companies, NGO to make a positive impact in the society. Apart from my university life, in line of my purposes and passions, I am volunteering in UNHCR, Casa Turca, and Arco Forum working on the topics such as, but not limited to refugees, universal peace, dialog, human rights, interculturality, diversity, immigration and education.

My story thought me that sometimes the crisis and stress bring totally unexpected new opportunities. And the most important to manage the crisis is keeping yourself mentally healthy, believing in yourself and never giving up. Since then, I don't afraid of facing any kind of problems in my life and know that I'm capable of dealing with them if I really want to, and I see future obstacles as opportunities to take lessons to go further.

Why choosing the Summer School?

The Odysseus summer school is the combination of many of my interest fields: asylum, law, immigration, education, networking, dialog, diversity, investigation, and research. Therefore, I cannot imagine a better place than this summer school to make the most of my summer and learn with joy. Furthermore, I want to contribute to improve the asylum system in EU, therefore, I need to learn as much as possible in this field together with learning how to do critical thinking, come up with a theory and investigate. Also, the knowledge I will obtain from the summer school will be useful to do better my volunteer jobs and help people around me who are passing through asylum procedures in EU.

"I cannot imagine a better place than this summer school to make the most of my summer and learn with joy"

Zakaria Djibrine

Nationalité : **Centrafricain**

Domaine d'étude : **Droit et Relations Internationales**

Profession : **Étudiant en Licence 3 en Droit Privé**

Date d'octroi du statut de réfugié : **2003**

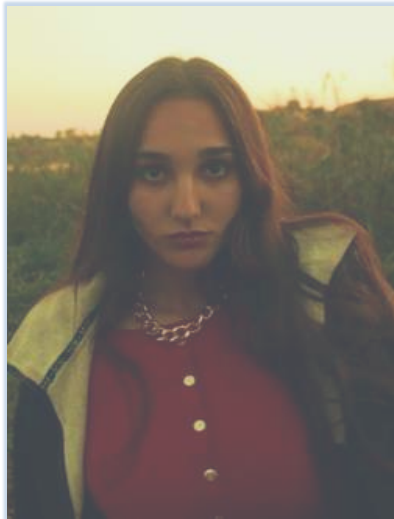
Pays d'accueil : **Tchad**

Mon parcours :

Je m'appelle : Zakaria Djibrine, je suis un réfugié bénéficiant d'une protection internationale au République du Tchad depuis 2003. Je suis de la nationalité Centrafricaine et je vis actuellement à N'Djamena.

Je suis un étudiant de niveau 3 de licence en Droit Privé. Je suis trop passionné par les études et vu que le cours d'été dispense une bonne éducation au profit des étudiants réfugiés et donc cela m'encourage à fournir un engagement adéquat pour pouvoir être formé et gagner une expérience au profit de la société. J'ai travaillé comme président des jeunes au camp de réfugié pour une durée de deux ans s'était en 2017 et en 2020 J'ai réussi une embauche de la société TTA pour être leur agent enquêteur sur le terrain.

“Cela m'encourage à fournir un engagement adéquat pour pouvoir être formé et gagner une expérience au profit de la société”



Ilakha Hakhramanova

Nationality: **Ukrainian - Azerbaijan**

Field of studies: **Law**

Profession: **4th year student in Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University in Ukraine, Kharkiv**

Date of granting refugee status: **13/03/2022**

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

My story

The morning of 24th of February 2022 was the most unexpected one in my life. I woke up earlier than usually because my mother screamed that war began. These words were full of pain and astonishment, and nobody could even imagine how Russian (Ministry of Culture of Ukraine allowed to write Russia with lowercase letter) aggression changed our life. Me and my younger brother went downstairs directly to shelter and there we were waiting for our parents. All my neighbors who were there with us were crying because they did not know what will happen. We hoped that war will end in two days, and we will be able to turn back to our peaceful life. Someone of us worked as a doctor, lawyer, entrepreneur, others were students. And now it is another world for us. Because our life is ruined. I do not have my friends anymore, I cannot communicate properly with my groupmates anymore, my father is far away from me. And I do not even know who I am anymore, because my mental health and not only mine is broken down. All Ukrainians now are distracted and the only thing what we need is releasing of our land. Experience that I have earned during my work in Ukraine in legal company "Riyako and Partners" plays an important role in my education and awareness in legal sphere, according to this I can assume that I have developed strong expertise in Civil Law and Corporate Law. I was involved in process of communication with clients and the whole judicial system during my work. Moreover, the work in Legal Clinic of Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University granted me a great opportunity to improve my skills in organizing and analyzing a big amount of information. Currently, I am a member of European Students' Law Association and this fact gives me an opportunity to continue my development in legal sphere. Besides, I am a volunteer in "Big Brain" language school, and I teach children of Ukraine English language. Thus, it is important for me not to forget about my education even in such challenging times, because I have a responsibility to bring a big improvement in Ukrainian legal and political system.

Why choosing the Summer School?

As I mentioned before I feel responsible for future of Ukraine, that is why I chose to take part in Summer School on European immigration and asylum policies. Now a lot of people are suffering from armed conflicts from all over the world and it is important to work out a plan how to help refugees to feel safely and comfortable even in host country. Now the only thing that I can do, except the fact that every day I urge all people to protect Ukraine, is to continue to develop my awareness and skills. Because I know that Ukraine needs me to be enough strong, smart, and self-confident to make this country as successful as countries of European Union are now.

“I feel responsible for future of Ukraine, that is why I chose to take part in Summer School on European immigration and asylum policies”



Sayed Shir Hussain Honaryar

Nationality: **Afghan**

Field of studies: **English Literature and Project Management**

Profession: **Professional PMP**

Date of granting refugee status: **23/09/2001**

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

My story

In August of 2021, I had to flee Afghanistan, after the Taliban took over. It was all very sudden and unexpected. The country fell and we simply had to run for our lives. I was shocked at the realization that it had to come to that. I was pained at the thought of having to leave behind a life that had taken me over three decades to build. But these thoughts and feelings were dwarfed by the problems we faced once we moved to Portugal. Even though logically, I knew moving to Portugal is one of the best things that has happened to me and my family, the cultural adjustment, and the fact that I had to start over.

When I left Afghanistan, I had been working at the ICMPD for almost four years - a position that I still hold. Therefore, I knew much more than an average citizen about migration, but I still faced many anticipated, and unanticipated challenges. My personal experience with immigration has motivated me to learn more, and to be more effective in what I do. My line of work has the potential to directly impact people's lives, and I take that seriously.

Why choosing the summer school?

As part of my job, I provide online counselling for Afghan potential migrants as well as Afghans who are living abroad and have question about migration or asylum seeking. Your summer school is exactly what I need to learn more about EU immigration and asylum to improve my knowledge on this field and help me be more effective at my job.

“Your summer school is exactly what I need to improve my knowledge on EU Immigration and Asylum Law and Policy”

Khrystyna Horetska

Nationality: **Ukrainian**

Field of studies: **Science of Law, academic interests in legal socialization of the person; protection of human rights**

Profession: **PhD Dozent, Head of the Department of civil Law and Procedure**

Date of granting refugee status: **2022**

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

My story

I am Ukrainian, I was born in the West part of my country. I am engaged in scientific and teaching work. Due to the war in Ukraine, my family as millions of Ukrainian families was forced to leave home and go abroad. I hope to return as soon as possible to my independent homeland, I believe in the victory of the Ukrainian people and like my compatriots, I feel me as a part of the European community, and I want to express my gratitude for the grate support at this difficult time for Ukrainian to all European people as well as governments of European countries. I came to Belgium because I have friends here, so I have the opportunity to help other Ukrainians. In Belgium I joined a group of Ukrainian and Belgian lawyers on a voluntary basis, with whom we provided free legal aid, advice, and support to Ukrainian refugees. I believe that everyone should be on their place and do everything they can, including professionally, for the earliest possible time to return to Ukraine. As a scientist in the field of human rights protection in cooperation with scientists from the University of Vienna I decided to start a scientific research "Investigation of the peculiarities of asylum and migration processes of Ukrainians in the EU. Doctrinal and philosophical aspects".

This project includes the following aims: the investigation of migration and asylum processes as complex jurisprudential fields at the level of the legal-philosophical vision of freedom of choice from the perspective of reasonable disagreements, as well as general scientific research in the field of public law (European law), including the analysis of the European migration network as an effective source of legislation based on the impact of the political situation in the country on the example of the 2022 war in Ukraine.

Why choosing the summer School?

When I got the information about the summer school organised by the Odysseus Network for Legal Studies on Immigration and Asylum in Europe, I applied for the participation, because it provides an excellent opportunity to spend an intellectually stimulating time in a group of participants specialised in the area of asylum and immigration. I decided to join this unique European environment with participants from different countries, who includes PhD and graduate students, researchers, EU and Member State officials, representatives from International Organisations, lawyers, judges, social workers. I am at the beginning of my research, I want to collaborate and collect opinions and scientific visions of different people, I

also have my own visions which I am ready to share with participants and I expect to become from this school an interesting scientific experience in migration and asylum field and expand my professional competencies.

“I applied for the participation, because it provides an excellent opportunity to spend an intellectually stimulating time in a group of participants specialised in the area of asylum and immigration.”



Mohammad Kabbani

Nationality: **Syrian**

Field of studies: **Bachelor degree in Law (Damascus University)**

Profession: **Community psycho-social worker in Greece**

Date of granting refugee status: **2019**

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

Why choosing the Summer School?

As a law graduated student, and as someone who have been working in the Humanitarian field that is related to refugees and asylum seekers in Europe, the summer school will be a huge assist helping me understand the immigration and asylum policies of the EU. I always believed that by having the awareness and knowledge of the European laws of asylum and immigration and its mechanism, I can understand the dynamic that is used in the policy making of these subjects, and the core base and values that was adopted by the EU which gave the influence on both the local level and Brussels level, and by our understanding of these laws and where they came from and how they were influenced, we can build on that a strong and solid structure that will be used as tool that is accurate and effective in order to manage different and multiple tasks like (advocacy-integration and inclusion- case/social working etc...) which could make a huge impact in the life of immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in Europe.

“I always believed that by having the awareness and knowledge of the European laws of asylum and immigration and its mechanism, I can understand the dynamic that is used in the policy making of these subject”

Houssam Kokach

Nationalité : **Syrien**

Domaine d'étude : **Droit Public, Culture et Langue Française**

Profession : **Chargé de communication – prestations de service chez Plateforme Refugies.info à Paris**

Date d'octroi du statut de réfugié : **2013**

Pays d'accueil : **France**

Mon parcours :

Je m'appelle Houssam KOKACH. Je suis d'origine syrienne, de la ville de Damas. Je suis réfugié en France depuis 2013. J'ai dû partir parce que j'étais appelé par le régime de Damas pour assurer la conscription au service du président et pas au service du pays. C'est pourquoi, je n'ai pas souhaité participer à cet engrenage syrien.

Avant mon départ de la Syrie, j'étais enseignant de français à l'Institut supérieur des langues de l'Université de Damas. J'assurais la formation au français académique pour les futurs boursiers Syriens dans les universités françaises. Travaillant dans la transmission de la culture et la langue françaises à des étudiants, je ne me voyais pas être asservi par un régime autoritaire. En effet, la langue véhicule la culture et cette dernière est le reflet de la devise liberté, égalité, fraternité. Dans ce contexte et en conformité avec les valeurs que je porte, je me trouvais obligé de refuser de prendre parti pour le régime Assad.

En France et grâce à l'accompagnement et aux services de traduction auprès de l'administration, j'ai repris mes études en droit public, pour avoir des bases théoriques qui renforceraient ma pratique quotidienne dans le conseil et l'accompagnement tant pour l'administration que pour les bénéficiaires étrangers en quête d'asile.

Pourquoi le Cours d'Été ?

Je suis intéressé de partager mes expériences au sein du parlement européen.

En effet, grâce à ma maîtrise du français et à mon engagement auprès du tissu associatif et de l'administration, en tant que transmetteur culturel et consultant, j'interviens régulièrement dans les tables rondes organisées par l'administration pour aborder les questions de l'intégration des réfugiés, sous ses différentes facettes : emploi, apprentissage, logement.

J'anime également une formation mise en place par la DIAIR, Délégation Interministérielle à l'Accueil et à l'Intégration des Réfugiés et par le CNFPT, centre national de la fonction publique territoriale. Cette formation est destinée aux travailleurs sociaux qui accompagnent les bénéficiaires de la protection internationale en France dans leur insertion socio-professionnelle. Cette formation s'intitule "La parcours des réfugiés : de l'asile à l'intégration". L'accent est mis, durant cette formation, sur l'accès aux droits des réfugiés. J'expose les droits ouverts aux BPI, bénéficiaires de la protection internationale, et je réponds

aux différents questionnements que se posent celles et ceux qui sont en première ligne face aux bénéficiaires en quête d'informations.

Cette formation est intéressante dans la mesure où les agents territoriaux d'État apprennent de la part d'un réfugié expert le vécu des bénéficiaires. Jumelant des connaissances d'ordre juridique et des éléments du quotidien des réfugiés en France, cette formation très concrète bénéficie à des dizaines d'agents tous les mois.

Par ailleurs, pour faciliter l'accès à l'information simple et traduite aux BPI, je collabore avec une plateforme soutenue par le ministère de l'Intérieur. Elle s'appelle Réfugiés.info. Disponible sur web et sur appli, elle est disponible en 7 langues : Arabe, Anglais, Tigrinya, Persan/dari, pachto, ukrainien, russe et le français. La plateforme recense les dispositifs et les démarches que doivent faire les réfugiés, une fois reconnus comme tels en France.

Je m'occupe de plusieurs volets dans ce projet :

D'abord, je suis expert traducteur pour la langue arabe. Je vérifie et valide les traductions des bénévoles. Deuxièmement, et dans le but de renforcer la collaboration Etat/associations, je suis chargé de construire des partenariats. Grâce à l'équipe de 17 personnes, la plateforme contient aujourd'hui plus de 520 fiches d'informations.

Troisièmement, je m'occupe du volet communication sur les réseaux sociaux communautaires. Récolter les retours de celles et ceux qui en bénéficient et les informer sur leurs droits, dispositifs et formations qui leur sont dédiés. C'est un accompagnement virtuel à couverture nationale des bénéficiaires dans leur langue d'origine, afin de leur venir en aide et faire un partage d'expérience.

Enfin, j'ai participé au COSTRAT, Comité stratégique de pilotage de l'évaluation de la politique d'intégration des étrangers. Mis en place par le Ministère de l'Intérieur, j'ai pu apporter mes observations sur des sujets, tel l'enjeu de l'apprentissage du français, les obstacles de l'emploi et la validation des diplômes étrangers, et tant d'autres sujets.

“La langue véhicule la culture et cette dernière est le reflet de la devise liberté, égalité, fraternité”



Lamine Farouk

Nationality: **Malian**

Field of studies: **International Relations – Business Administration at Webster University in Athens**

Date of granting refugee status: **28/03/2019**

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

My Story :

I am a citizen of Mali, A country in West Africa and currently a refugee in Greece where I have been granted international protection. My education has been interrupted as I became displaced. This was due to both Ebola outbreak in West Africa as well as the politically unstable situation in Mali. I am from the North part of Mali. Because of the instability and insecurity in the region due to the Islamic rebellion movement where my family were living my father decided to move with me to an English-speaking country called Sierra Leone and in 2015 my father passed away because of deadly virus Ebola.

After the death of my father and the insecurity of my country I tried to move to Europe for studied purpose, but it didn't go to plan and, I found myself in Turkey, and then in one of the Greek Island Lesbos. In Lobos it was like a nightmare, the asylum procedure was so slow that it took me a year and a half in the camp after my interview for my asylum claim. I became so stressed at the situation as many other refugees. I then decided to volunteer with NGOs as they required volunteer Interpreters (French/English and some other Africans native language: Susu, Bambara, Creole and Malinke). After a long time living at Lesbos my geographical restriction was lifted meaning I can move within the Greek territory. In early 2019, I heard about Webster University that provide humanitarian scholarship, after my application I found out it was only 50 percent of the scholarship they offer for refugee student. I explained the situation to very good friend of mine about the scholarship and that I want to continue my studies if she can help me, luckily, she and her partner (Pleuntje and Michael) accepted to sponsor me on the 50%. And here I am now at the end of my study in 2022. In 2020 I got a part-time paid job with Medicine Sans Frontier (MSF) contract for 3 months and my contract was renewing for a full time till the 15 th March 2022. After the end of my contract, I am engaging myself with advocacy group called Expert by Experience (EBE) that is on-going.

Why choosing the Summer School?

As a refugee student in Europe, it is my great pleasure to have the opportunity to participate in a unique study program that will impact my life and the life of my fellow refugees. In the year 2017, I arrived in Greece by boat on the island of Lesbos from Turkey. Due to my prior experience with different immigration policies for refugees and immigrants, I believe this program will be the perfect addition to my existing knowledge and will help me gain a deeper understanding of the European Union Immigration Policy and laws. Furthermore, I am also aiming for a career in the humanitarian sector, and I strongly believed this is one of the best opportunities to start with.

“As a refugee student in Europe, it is my great pleasure to have the opportunity to participate in a unique study program that will impact my life and the life of my fellow refugees”

ANONYMOUS TESTIMONY

Nationality: **China**

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

Why choosing the Summer School?

I am very passionate about (transnational) human rights law, especially migration and refugee law, and I am committed to develop my career in the humanitarian sector to help those people who are at the periphery of our society. I always consider myself very lucky to be able to continue my study without any interruption, and I am very excited to apply for a second Master's in law to dedicate myself to the protection and promotion of human rights.

Attending your summer school program will become the first step of my academic life and future career in the field of humanitarian law, which I believe can substantially benefit my own personal growth as well. Furthermore, from a more personal standpoint, I sincerely hope that I can have a more comprehensive understanding of EU asylum procedures so that I can help empower the refugee community around me who have little (access to more) practical knowledges which narrowed down the scope and space for them to negotiate with authority for better resources.

“Attending your summer school program will become the first step of my academic life and future career in the field of humanitarian law, which I believe can substantially benefit my own personal growth as well”



Alaaddin Uslu

Nationality: **Turkish**

Field of studies: **Slovak Studies, Intercultural Relations and Law**

Profession: **Student**

Date of granting refugee status: **January 2018**

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

Why choosing the Summer School?

I wanted to join the Summer School, because in first it is very related to my social work in Slovakia. I am as a refugee, not only I will learn about my legal status and my rights and obligations but also eventually I can use this information, that I will be equipped with during the Summer School, for other refugees/migrants that I am get in contact in Slovakia. So, it won't be an only personal gain, but I would like to use the outcomes from this education, wider in my community in Slovakia. Secondly, I believe lots of academics and practitioners who works in related to migration in Europe will come to the Summer School that would mean there will be a great opportunity to establish new contacts and to expand my network within my interest area. Thirdly, apart from being a refugee now in Slovakia, I was a student of law in Istanbul, Turkey. During my study of law, I was a passionate student, and the legal way of thinking is something that motivates me. I believe we can understand lots of cultural practices from legal perspectives. So, I am expecting that within Summer School I will not only learn legal frameworks, but a spirit that shaped the way of thinking. Lastly, I had an experience of my asylum application in the one corner of Europe, I am curious about how other countries practices their asylum law to their applicant. Since I had a tremendous amount of experience from Slovakia, it would be horizon widening to hear other cases from other countries.

"I am expecting that within Summer School I will not only learn legal frameworks, but a spirit that shaped the way of thinking"



Camila Alvarez Vargas

Nationality: **Salvadorian**

Field of studies: **Bachelor's Degree in Communication Sciences**

Profession: **Social educator on LGBTIQ+ rights, asylum, and migration process**

Date of granting refugee status: **June 2020**

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

My story

I was born in El Salvador, one of the most dangerous countries around the world. I grew up in the west area, where a lot of things can be new. A person like me, can't be understood at all. Like the others, I didn't know who I was. I started living my true self as a woman in 2016, when I transitioned. People never believed that I can be someone, so I did a lot of things happen that year: I started my Bachelor's Degree in Communication Sciences and besides that, I discovered the world of human rights defending. Visiting a couple of NGOs, I found a position as social educator to teach about human rights (specifically LGBTIQ+ rights) sexual health and activism. That's where all started. Growing in other areas, started working with migrants and internally displaced persons, but I never thought I was going to be in a similar position.

In 2017, NGOs participated in the 161th period of sessions of the IACHR in Washington, D.C. to report the lack of investigation by the Salvadoran state into hate crimes against LGBTIQ+ people and the criminalization of human rights defenders. Raising my voice as an activist and reporting all the violence in my country through mechanisms and different events put me in danger, so I had to leave my country. Being in Spain has allowed me to think different, that I can finally do it. I'm thinking on studying French or finish my career; I would love to work again in my area and help people, have a normal life, with the same rights, that's what I wish the most. Like, I have a lot to do. "Thank you, for helping me and save my life". Those are the greatest words I can hear from someone who is safe out of my beautiful country. I never regret doing all this. It built the confidence to the person I am today.

Why choosing the Summer School?

As a refugee, this is a big step to continue my career. I promised myself, that from my possibilities, I'm going to guide the others that are in need, like I did years ago. The Summer School means a new chapter, where I can expand my knowledge on the New Migration and Asylum Pact, and approach other realities.

"The Summer School means a new chapter, where I can expand my knowledge on the New Migration and Asylum Pact, and approach other realities"



Muhammed Hasim Yilmaz

Nationality: **Turkish**

Field of studies: **European Law**

Profession: **Student in a Bachelor's Degree (2nd year) at the University of Maastricht**

Date of granting refugee status: **March 2020**

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

My story

I seek asylum in the Netherlands because of the political pressure in Turkey. It was a process that led to my decision. I was a Police College student at the age of 14. I was going to become a detective after 8 years of boarding school education. Following the events of the "corruption investigation" against the government on 17-25 December in 2013 and later, 15 July failed coup attempt my plans were interrupted. Long story short, the government was enraged by the corruption investigation they accused the police officers who were affiliated with Fetullah Gulen as terrorists. Later they framed all the Gulenist movement as the perpetrators of the 15 July failed coup attempt and declared all the people affiliated with Gulen as terrorists.

Afterward, step by step, my father who was a teacher, and my mother who was a chemical engineer in public institutions were expelled from their jobs. My mother was detained for a 2-month period. Both of my parents had terror investigations. They eventually fled from Turkey to Germany as illegal immigrants through Greece, my father in 2018, and my mother in 2019. In 2019 terror investigations and arrests started taking place against my peers. Some of my former colleagues got 6 years and 3 months. I still had my passport. So, I decided I do not want to pay human smugglers to get across Evros River in a boat as my parents did. So, even though I had no ongoing investigation I took my chance and fled to the Netherlands in March 2020. I was granted asylum after a period of 10 months. While I was in the Netherlands, I was summoned by the court to testify against a friend in Turkey, luckily, I was not there. Later, I learned from my aunt that the police came multiple times to detain me for the alleged crimes that I am accused of when I was 14. Right now, Turkey does not have an independent judiciary and the public is divided by Erdogan. I became a minority in the country where I was born as part of the majority. I became an alien. I am sorry for the "purge" that still going on in Turkey. I am glad to be here.

Why choosing the Summer School?

I heard about Odysseus Summer Program from a friend who was also a refugee. For many of the refugees, it is not easy to own the identity of being a refugee. Because the term "refugee" has a lot of negative connotations. But I am trying to accept the fact that I am a refugee as well as now trying to be part of this society as an equal member. This summer was over EU immigration law which combines my refugee side and law-student side. So, the scholarship seemed like a perfect opportunity for me to gain professional knowledge and grow as a person.

"The scholarship seemed like a perfect opportunity for me to gain professional knowledge and grow as a person"

Maria Adli

Nationality: **Afghan**

Field of studies: **International Relations and Diplomacy**

Profession: **Second year Ph.D. Student of International Relations at Western Caspian University**

Date of granting refugee status: **29/01/2022**

The State which granted my protection: **Azerbaijan**

Why choosing the Summer School?

My purpose of writing this is to apply for the summer school on EU Law and Policy on Immigration and Asylum at ULB. I am very interested in Public Law & Immigration, and I desire to take part in, that will help me to extend my knowledge about essential matters of the above subject which will be a key for my future goals as a researcher.

This program is a valuable chance for me to enrich my academic background. Furthermore, collaborating with highly motivated people, give me expertise for law and immigration interest towards. Moreover, I'm confident that attending this program, will give me the opportunity to share my experience with other young people regarding EU Law and policy on immigration and being a summer school member, will give me the opportunity to develop or enhance ties, connections and sharing ideas with other students and scientists internationally.

During my Master and Ph.D. studies in International Relations, I have completed a variety of courses, which gain me thorough knowledge in different aspects, like law and policies for migrants and I have published several research papers regarding migration on different int'l journals.

“This program is a valuable chance for me to enrich my academic background”

Muhammad Najeem Zarabi

Nationality: **Afghan**

Field of studies: **Conflict and Development Studies**

Date of granting refugee status: **February 2016**

The State which granted my protection: **Belgium**

Why choosing the Summer School?

Since the beginning of my higher education in Belgium as a refugee student, I had the goal of being able to access the policy-making table, especially when it comes to migration - voluntary or non-voluntary. My positionality and my experiences as a first-generation refugee will bring added value to the process of policymaking. My enrolment in the Odysseus Summer School on EU Immigration and Asylum Law and Policy will help me come one step closer to the realization of my goal.

“My enrolment in the Odysseus Summer School on EU Immigration and Asylum Law and Policy will help me come one step closer to the realization of my goal.”

#REFYOUNGEES

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