

Psychosocial Association Rhine-Main- Help for Refugees

The Psychosocial Association Rhine-Main (PSV)

is a cooperation of five organizations:



- the Sigmund Freud Institute (SFI) with its PSV-project,
- the Regional Lutheran Association Frankfurt (ERV) with its Specialist Service Counseling and Therapy for Refugees,
- the Frankfurt Working Group Trauma and Exile (FATRA) with its counseling centre,
- the Frankfurt Psychoanalytic Institute (FPI) with its International Clinic as part of its outpatient clinic,
- the Anna Freud Institute (AFI) with its outpatient clinic.

The association aims to provide psychosocial support for refugees and to expand and improve psychosocial care for refugees, especially in the region of Rhine-Main. The PSV is one of four Psychosocial Centers (PSZ) in Hesse, Germany, that are funded by the Hessian Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration (HMSI).

The PSV-project of the Sigmund Freud Institute has been providing psychoanalytical support in the Rhine-Main region through weekly individual and group offers in a first reception camp for refugees since 2018. The work with the refugees is based on a pilot project, which is called STEP-BY-STEP. This project was realized from January 2016 to April 2017 in the first reception camp „Michaelisdorf“ in Darmstadt, Germany.

The help of the PSV is aimed at refugees, who are suffering from the psychological consequences of war, violence, torture and other traumatic experiences. Psychosocial services should support children, adolescents, adults and families to manage their traumas and hence their lives, in order to promote integrative participation in the society of arrival from the very beginning. For this reason, the following counseling, education, care and support services are provided at the first reception camp by SFI employees:

- Consultation Hours:

The consultation hour for the residents of the first reception camp is an offer of psychosocial help for stressed and traumatized refugees. With the help of language mediators, a supportive and protected space should be realized on an individual basis, taking care of social and cultural habits of the refugees.

- Consultation Hours for Parents:

The parents consultation hour offers residents of the camp advice and help with their children and their parent-child relationships. With the help of language mediators, family specific topics can be discussed and psychosocial help offered.

- Outreach Social Work:

Outreach social work is a low-threshold opportunity for residents of the first reception camp to meet one-to-one and be referred to other services. On the one hand, residents are actively sought out at the centre, and on the other hand, they can visit the staff themselves if necessary and help shape the time they spend together.

- Support for Children and Youth Programmes:

In close cooperation with the first reception camp's resident social services, particularly vulnerable minors can be identified in a targeted manner thanks to the support provided by its child and youth services. This collaboration enables the specific needs and challenges of these young people and their families to be recognised and appropriate psychosocial support to be offered. If necessary, the children and young people are referred to other local care services.

- Painting Group for Children:

The painting group offers children at the camp a supportive working space in which they can express themselves in a creative way. Painting groups open up an alternative and age-based opportunity of communicating and dealing with their own past and present issues, so that the traumatic experience does not affect their thoughts, actions and feelings.

If necessary, refugees are supported beyond the time of accommodation in the first reception camp, for example by being placed to one or more PSV network partners as well as a local organisation or municipal institution in Hesse, Germany. Furthermore there are continuous case discussions and intervision sessions with the contributors of the first reception. Additional there are workshops offered for them and other collective accommodation centres in the Rhine-Main region. At the end of each year, a full-day conference is organized for volunteers and employees with refugees. All offers and the work of the SFI team are continually attended by weekly inter- and supervision.