

Psychosocial Association Rhine-Main – Help for Refugees

The Psychosocial Association Rhine-Main (PSV)

is a cooperation of five organizations:

- the Sigmund Freud Institute with its PSV-project,
- the Regional Lutheran Association Frankfurt with its Specialist Service Counseling and Therapy for Refugees,
- the Frankfurt Working Group Trauma and Exile FATRA e. V. with its counseling centre,
- the Frankfurt Psychoanalytic Institute e. V. with its International Clinic as part of its outpatient clinic,
- the Anna Freud Institute e. V. 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 in Hesse, Germany, that are funded by the Hessian Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration.

The PSV-project¹ 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-STEP². 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 psychic 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.

- Silent Learning Room for Adults

This offer is aimed at residents with a need of support with tasks of language and learning courses. The participants can work on their assignments with the help of their adviser in a calm and low-stimulus area. In this way concentration- and learning difficulties, which are psychic induced, can be faced.

- Creative Group for Adults

In the creative group for adults, adult residents of the camp can focus on their past traumatized experienced and their current stressed situation in a visual and artistic manner. On this path they are able to express their own feelings and suffer in a creative way.

- Painting Group for Children³

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 cooperation 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.

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- ¹ Witzel, Hauke (2020): Neues zur Praxis einer ‚aufsuchenden Psychoanalyse‘ mit Geflüchteten. Das Sigmund-Freud-Institut im Psychosozialen Verbund Rhein-Main. In: Schulz, Andreas / Schwertel, Tamara (Eds.): Der lange Sommer der Flucht – 2015 und die Jahre danach. Diskurse, Reflexionen, Perspektiven. Opladen, Berlin, Toronto: Verlag Barbara Budrich, pp. 261–281.
- ² Leuzinger-Bohleber, Marianne / Hettich, Nora (2018): »Fremd bin ich eingezogen ...«. STEP-BY-STEP: Ein Pilotprojekt zur Unterstützung von Geflüchteten in einer Erstaufnahmeeinrichtung. Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag.
- ³ Poholski, Corinna (2021): Rahmen für die Bilder der Flucht. Reflexionen aus der Praxis einer psychoanalytischen Malgruppe für Kinder in einer Erstaufnahmeeinrichtung für Geflüchtete. In: Psychologie & Gesellschaftskritik. Volume 45, No. 177, Issue 1, pp. 107–129.