

Making Family while Seeking Asylum.
Renegotiating Kinship and Gender against European Asylum Regimes
23-24 April 2026

Marc Bloch Centre, Berlin
Germaine Tillion Room

Asylum-seeking in Europe reshapes not only legal trajectories but also family relations. Household transnationalisation, renegotiations of status among siblings and generations, changing gender roles within couples and families, and new forms of parenthood are all part of these transformations. Asylum and migration policies play a key role in this process, as they create specific systems of opportunities and constraints that deeply affect the way asylum seekers and refugees do and imagine family life. This workshop examines how asylum-seeking in Europe transforms family relationships once asylum seekers and refugees have reached the continent. Drawing on the anthropology of kinship, transnational studies and street-level approaches to public policy, it explores how families adapt to asylum procedures, which strategies they deploy, and with what transformative effects. Particular attention is paid to the gaps between policy assumptions about kin relations and the social reality of lived family ties. While a focus on Afghans - one of the largest refugee populations in Europe - ensures strong coherence and dialogue among the papers, theoretical contributions and case studies focusing on other asylum-seeking populations provide a broader perspective. The empirical studies cover a range of European countries and analyse the effects of different policy frameworks - including family reunification, the Dublin system and resettlement - on family relations, particularly gender relations, generational dynamics, and sibling relations.

23 April 2026

2:00 – 2:30 Welcome and coffee

2:30- 6:00

Session 1: Afghan Perspectives on Making Family under Asylum

Introduction et moderation: Giulia Scalettaris (Centre Marc Bloch/AMORE)

Narges Ghandchi (Aarhus University), Power dynamics of kin relationships among Afghan refugee families in Denmark.

Giovanni Penna (University of Antwerp), Reconfiguring Responsibility: Shifting Gender Roles in Afghan Family Reunification.

Mursal Rasa (University College London), Afghan Resettlement in England: Gender and Generation.

Semih Nargül (Van Yüzüncü Yıl University), Mobility strategies against the Dublin Regulation. The role of kinship networks.

Nina Khamsy (University of Neuchâtel), Making Family through Digital Practices: Rethinking Polymedia among Afghans Living in Legal Precarity.

7:00 Dinner

24 April 2026

8:30 – 9:00 *Welcome and coffee*

9:00-12:30

Session 2: Comparative and Theoretical Perspectives on Kinship, Gender, and Asylum

Moderation: Nina Khamsy (University of Neuchâtel/AMORE)

Hala Abou-Zaki (Université Paris Cité), Scattered Palestinian Families: Family Life and Practices across Multiple Statuses

Shaden Sabouni (Fulda University of Applied Sciences), Renegotiating Kinship, Gender, and Authority under Asylum Regimes: Syrian Families in Germany.

Giulia Scalettaris (Marc Bloch Zentrum Berlin), Bridging Policy and Anthropology: A Scoping Literature Review on Afghan Family-Making in Europe

Laura Odasso (Paris 8 University), Ascribed, Performative, Transformed. Exploring Kinship Redefinition and Its Materiality in Refugee-Related Formalities.

Benjamin Etzold (Bonn Centre for Dependency and Slavery Studies), From Displaced Families to Translocal Lives in Times of Conflict - Empirical insights and Conceptual Reflections.

12:30 -2:00 *Lunch and coffee*

2:00 – 5:00

Session 3: Mobility-related Categories and Belonging. A Dialogue with Heike Drotbohm

Heike Drotbohm (University of Mainz) discusses with the AMORE research members around her article:

Heike Drotbohm (2025), “Categories as learning practice: navigating contested belonging along transatlantic mobile trajectories”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 48:4, 812-835.