



Universität  
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## Research Project

# Neglected Views on the Swiss Asylum System: A Critical Analysis of Asylum Seekers' and Refugees' Participation Possibilities on Different Levels of Societal Living Together

### Project funded by own resources

**Project title** Neglected Views on the Swiss Asylum System: A Critical Analysis of Asylum Seekers' and Refugees' Participation Possibilities on Different Levels of Societal Living Together

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**Organisation / Research unit**

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Although Switzerland's direct democracy is strongly based on the principle of participation, this does not mean, however, that everybody has the right to participate. For asylum seekers far-reaching, partly legally determined participation restrictions on different levels of societal living together, such as economic, political, social and cultural, are set in place. The possibilities of direct interaction between asylum seekers and local populations are therefore very limited and the majority of the Swiss population bases its opinion about asylum seekers solely on the mostly negative and one-sided images conveyed in media. When asylum procedures get evaluated the main concerns mentioned in Switzerland usually are the costs caused by the system, the speed legal decisions on asylum claims are taken, and the possible security risks for the local population. In political and public discourses asylum seekers and refugees are mostly treated as numbers to be managed and problems to be solved and they hardly ever get the possibility to express themselves, to participate in the discourses about them. Consequently, the Swiss asylum system never really gets officially evaluated by the people that are in or went through the procedure.

It is the aim of my inductive PhD endeavour to gain insights in asylum seekers' and refugees' perspectives on and experiences with the Swiss asylum system. The focus is set on their possibilities to participate on different levels of societal living together within an environment of legal restrictions, media misrepresentation and a high level of resentment prevailing in the local population.

### Financed by

University funds

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