



Academics at Risk e.V.

2025 NETWORK MEETING  
& RETREAT REPORT



**2<sup>nd</sup> International  
Network Meeting and Retreat  
for Displaced Academics**

**Main Theme: Voice of Resilience**

**27-28 September 2025  
Olive Inn (Airport Global) Hotel - Frankfurt**

**Academics at Risk e.V.**





## PROGRAM

September 27th, 2025 - Saturday	
09:00 – 10:00	Breakfast
10:00 – 11:00	Registration
11:00 – 11:05	Opening Ceremony - Moderator
11:05 – 11:20	Opening Speech - Chairman of the Executive Board
11:20 – 12:30	1. Session: Panel - The Road to Success in DFG and MSCA Projects
12:30 – 13:00	Coffee Break + Snacks
13:00 – 14:15	2. Session: Panel - Private Sector Experience and New Horizons
14:15 – 14:30	Coffee Break
14:30 – 15:45	3. Session: Guest Speaker - Visionary Development Strategies
15:45 – 16:30	Coffee Break
16:30 – 17:30	Interdisciplinary/Disciplinary Working Groups Workshop Activities
17:30 – 18:15	Presentation of Workshop Results
18:30 – 19:30	Dinner
September 28th, 2025 - Sunday	
08:00 – 09:00	Breakfast
09:00 – 09:15	Opening Ceremony - Moderator
09:15 – 10:15	1. Session: Guest Speaker - Education and Socio-economic Resilience
10:15 – 10:30	Coffee Break
10:30 – 11:30	2. Session: Guest Speaker - Start-ups and Resilience in Business Life
11:30 – 11:45	Coffee Break
11:45 – 12:45	3. Session: Guest Speaker - Migration, Trauma, and Recovery
12:45 – 13:00	Coffee Break
13:00 – 14:15	4. Session: Panel - Teaching at European Universities
14:15 – 14:45	Prof. Dr. Haluk Savaş Encouragement and Appreciation Award Ceremony
14:45 – 15:00	Closing Speech – Chairman of the Executive Board



**Dear Member of Academics at Risk e.V. and dear Participants,**

On 27–28 September 2025, numerous participants, invited speakers, and panelists gathered at the Olive-Inn Hotel for the AaR 2025 Network Meeting and Retreat. The event opened with a keynote address by Dr. Lokman Alpsoy, Chair of the Board of Directors of Academics at Risk e.V.

In his opening speech, Dr. Alpsoy reviewed the association's key activities over previous years and outlined its future vision under three strategic objectives:

1. Institutional growth of the association through a transition to a project-based organizational structure,
2. Transformation of the association into an institute offering certificate programs and online training courses,
3. Internationalization of the Journal of Human Rights and Refugee Studies (JHRRS), published under the association, with the goal of inclusion in major international academic indexing databases.

### **Sessions on International Funding and Project Development**

Invited academics from various European countries shared their experiences with international research funding and projects, particularly focusing on Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA). Participants gained in-depth insights into project development strategies, challenges encountered during funding application processes, and the pathways followed by successful researchers.

### **Thematic Sessions on Migration, Trauma, and Resilience**

Expert-led presentations and discussions addressed socio-economic resilience, migration, and post-trauma recovery. Given that many participants had personal migration experiences, practical recommendations were provided on coping mechanisms and adaptation strategies. An invited psychiatrist offered professional guidance on trauma and integration processes. These sessions examined the psychological, social, and professional impacts of war, forced migration, and academic exile, as well as support mechanisms and adaptation strategies developed in different countries. Speakers emphasized the importance of psychosocial support networks, community-based approaches, and international solidarity, sharing best-practice models that enhance resilience in post-trauma reconstruction within education and academia.

### **Academic Opportunities in the United States**

Invited speaker Dr. Ferhat Öztürk, joining from the United States, delivered a comprehensive presentation on academic life and opportunities in the US. He explained in detail which visa categories are available to academics who face difficulties securing positions in Europe. Dr. Öztürk also provided guidance on mentoring and support for researchers interested in applying for academic positions in the US and offered one-on-one consultations during coffee breaks. Key topics included scholarship and research funding structures at US universities, the importance of mentor–mentee relationships, academic freedom, and diversity-oriented working environments. These discussions enabled participants to better understand both the opportunities and challenges associated with international academic mobility.



### Panel Discussions on Academic Careers in Europe

During panel sessions, experienced academics currently working at European universities explained the pathways to securing such positions, detailed application procedures, and outlined the distinctive characteristics of European higher education systems. Panelists shared the major challenges encountered in academic and professional life, along with their original solution strategies, fostering an interactive exchange of knowledge.

### Career Transitions Beyond Academia

Professionals who transitioned from academia to the private and public sectors—working as social consultants, IT specialists, and managers—shared their experiences regarding available opportunities, adaptation processes, and challenges. These contributions offered valuable insights into how academic skills can be transferred to non-academic sectors and how scholarly experience can be effectively leveraged in professional environments.

### Interdisciplinary Workshops

Interdisciplinary workshops were conducted under eight main thematic areas, during which participants developed original project ideas and collaboration models. Each group presented its outcomes and recommendations to the broader audience. These sessions fostered creative scientific and social approaches and laid the groundwork for potential future collaborative projects and networks.

### Award Ceremony

At the closing award ceremony, the “Young Academic Award” was presented to Dr. Nahide Yıldırım in recognition of her academic productivity and social engagement. Dr. Yıldırım has published internationally in the fields of molecular biology and stem cell research, with a particular focus on drug resistance mechanisms in cancer, and has also been actively involved in initiatives addressing social integration and anti-discrimination in Frankfurt.

### Closing Remarks

The event concluded with a closing address and overall evaluation by Dr. Fatih Çelebioğlu, Chair of the Organizing Committee.

### General Evaluation

Overall, the event made a strong positive contribution to participants' sense of solidarity and motivation. Numerous positive feedback messages were received following the meeting. We extend our sincere thanks to all participants, supporting association members, and guests joining from Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands, and the United States, with the hope of coming together again at future events.

### Organizing Committee Academics at Risk e.V.