

At the University of Göttingen -Public Law Foundation-, RTG 2987 Mobility rights in the Global Context of Multiple Crises, there are 10 positions as

PhD researchers(all genders welcome)
Entgeltgruppe 13 TV-L/75%

to be filled. Starting date is 10/1/2025. The positions are limited to four years (until 30 September 2029).

Research Training Group (RTG) [Mobility Rights in the Global Context of Multiple Crises](#)

Research Focus: Our RTG examines how mobility rights are being defined, challenged and transformed during a time when migration is often framed as a crisis. We investigate these developments on the basis of diverse regional and thematic perspectives.

Interdisciplinary Approach: As a PhD researcher, you will conduct your own research project related to one of our key research areas (RAs, see below). By engaging with different disciplinary perspectives from the Social Sciences, Cultural Science as well as Law Studies, you will learn to understand legal dynamics and complexities in diverse migration policy-related fields. Our goal is to develop an innovative socio-legal framework which recognises how legal systems and societies shape one another.

What we offer:

- Personalised supervision and disciplinary training
- Collaborative interdisciplinary coursework
- Career-development support and mentorship
- Commitment to equal opportunities and diversity
- Exchange with international experts, including two distinguished judges

The University of Göttingen and its [Centre for Global Migration Studies](#), among other bodies, offer a vibrant research environment and access to different networks – from the local level for fieldwork or internship opportunities to international partnerships supporting research stays abroad.

We are seeking highly motivated candidates who wish to conduct their PhD training in a rich interdisciplinary environment. Previous research experience in collaborative contexts is beneficial. Successful applicants are expected to work together with others in this interdisciplinary environment by, among other things, sharing their own disciplinary perspectives, preliminary research insights as well as data with peers. They are also able to convince via excellent critical-thinking and communication skills.

Meeting the following prerequisites is expected:

- **Degree:** Completed academic university degree (Master's or equivalent, rated good or very good) in the following (or related) disciplines: Sociology, Political Science, International Relations, Global Governance, Social and Cultural Anthropology, Cultural Anthropology / European Ethnology, Philosophy, Intercultural German Studies, Criminology, Law, Human Geography, Human Rights Studies and similar.
- **Language skills:** Fluency in spoken and written English, as the RTG's main working language. German or other language skills when required for the individual research proposal.
- **Admission to the Doctoral Programme:** Fulfillment of all requirements regarding the doctoral regulations in the respective discipline. **Please check the requirements for your respective discipline here:** <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/696117.html>.
- **Research Proposal:** Must be innovative, feasible and self-designed. Making a relevant contribution to the RTG's overall foci as well as one or more of our research areas (RAs, see below) should be demonstrated, including via the promising implementation of cross-disciplinary socio-legal perspectives.
- **Subject-specific or methodological skills:** Fulfillment of all requirements to conduct research in the relevant RAs (see below). **Please check the requirements in the description(s) of the RA(s) you would like to contribute to.**

Supporting material to be submitted (in English or German):

- CV
- Application letter (max. 1 page) stating your motivation for completing a doctorate as part of the RTG

- An outline of the proposed project (max. 2 pages). **Please clearly indicate which RA(s) you wish to contribute to.** You can submit up to two different research proposals should you wish to apply for more than one RA.
- A writing sample (10 pages in length, e.g. an excerpt from a Master's thesis or other publications)
- A list of publications (if applicable)
- Proof of language skills (if required), such as relevant certificates
- Certificate of the academic university degree
- Names and contact information for two references
- Answers to the questions listed in the application portal

Further information:

- To introduce the RTG and answer questions in relation to the application process, there will be an online information event held from **12 noon to 1pm (CET) on 25 April 2025**. To register, please send an email to: rtg2987@uni-goettingen.de.
- If you have any questions regarding the advertised positions or RAs, please contact the main supervisor(s) involved (see the RA descriptions below).
- If you have any general questions regarding the application process, please send an e-mail to: rtg2987@uni-goettingen.de.
- More information on the RTG 2987 and its RAs can also be found online at: www.uni-goettingen.de/rtg2987.

Application deadline and procedures:

- **Please upload your application as one consolidated PDF file by 9 May 2025 via the University of Göttingen's application portal.** This can be accessed via the following link: <http://obp.uni-goettingen.de/de-de/OBF/Index/74876>.
- Interviews are expected to take place on **13, 20 or 27 June 2025**. Depending on geographic distance and practical feasibility, applicants will be invited to attend interviews either in person or online. Travel expenses can be reimbursed up to an amount of 300 euros.

RTG 2987 is strongly committed to promoting equal opportunities and diversity. We consider diversity and a diversity of perspectives as particularly enriching of our work, especially from among those underrepresented in academia (or some of the disciplines involved in the RTG's work). We therefore welcome applications from all individuals irrespective of gender, social status, religion, ethnic origin, nationality or migration background.

RESEARCH AREAS (RAs) FOR PHD PROJECT PROPOSALS

RA 1. Limits of feasibility: The right to mobility in migration ethics

The aim of this RA is to analyse normative issues pertaining to migration ethics and to mobility rights in particular through the lens of non-ideal theorising. Possible research topics include (but are not limited to): which political-feasibility considerations give rise to legitimate constraints on migration (especially under the condition of multiple crises), and which do not?; what does it mean for a state to do its fair share within the international migration regime given that more and more refuse to do so?; how to do justice to the specific vulnerabilities of certain social groups (for instance with regards to gender, sexual orientation, religion and similar, as well as their intersections) in the context of migration?

Required subject-specific or methodological skills: Doctoral students in this RA are expected to have experience in normative theorising and a background in political, moral or social philosophy, political theory or legal theory. Given the methodological focus on non-ideal theorising, a willingness to participate in interdisciplinary discourse and to take empirical findings closely into account while engaging in normative theorising is strongly encouraged.

Supervisor/contact: [Prof. Dr Christine Bratu](mailto:christine.bratu@uni-goettingen.de), Seminar for Philosophy (christine.bratu@uni-goettingen.de).

RA 2. Pathways to legal migration: Policies of international and regional organisations

Regional and international organisations – including the European Union, the International Organization for Migration and UNHCR – have developed “complementary pathways for safe admission”. These pathways – such as family-reunification and labour-mobility schemes – target individuals both with and without international protection needs. While presented as innovative solutions, these initiatives often blur the boundaries between established legal categories previously defined by human rights, asylum or resettlement law, and generally lack enforceable legal status. The RA aims to analyse, then, how regional organisations develop and implement these policies on “pathways to legal migration”.

Required subject-specific or methodological skills: We seek doctoral students with an excellent master's degree in Political Science, International Relations, or related fields, with expertise on international organisations, international migration law and / or the national laws of Germany and Australia. Candidates must demonstrate strong qualitative and/or quantitative research skills. Previous experience working with international organisations or expertise in relevant regional studies is highly valued.

Supervisor/contact: [Prof. Dr Anja Jetschke](mailto:anja.jetschke@sowi.uni-goettingen.de), Institute of Political Science (anja.jetschke@sowi.uni-goettingen.de).

RA 3. The EU's external border as the scene of escalating legal conflicts

In this RA, we want to shed light on the EU border regime and its recent dynamics in relation to the question of de jure and de facto mobility rights at the external border zones in the Aegean Sea, the Balkans or in Eastern Europe. We seek to examine how the different actors involved (state, quasi-state, civil society and migrants as actors) relate to and practise rights and legal norms, as well as how they navigate them in the context of legal uncertainty and violent terrains. This RA is especially interested in understanding practices of "rights mobilisation" from below.

Required subject-specific or methodological skills: Doctoral students in this RA are expected to have experience in Critical Border or Migration Studies, and in qualitative, ethnographic research methods, as well as regional expertise on the Aegean Sea, the Balkans or Eastern Europe. Own research experience in one of the mentioned regions is highly valued.

Supervisor/contact: [Prof. Dr Sabine Hess](mailto:shess@uni-goettingen.de), Institute of Cultural Anthropology/ European Ethnology (shess@uni-goettingen.de).

RA 4. Crime and the criminalisation of people smuggling

This RA sheds light on how the laws to combat people smuggling are enacted along European and national borders. It sets out to illuminate the effects of criminal-justice interventions which are conducted in the name of so-called humanitarian attempts to combat smuggling on migrants' and refugees' right to enter, and the accompanying intensification of border regimes. Further, we are keen to explore empirically and jurisprudentially how the law and law-enforcement practices can be improved to focus specifically on the business models of highly organised people-smuggling gangs without undermining the right to enter.

Required subject-specific or methodological skills: Doctoral students in this RA are expected to have experience in Legal Anthropology or Political Anthropology, Criminology, Law or Critical Migration Studies, and should be trained in qualitative methods (interviews, participant observation, discourse analyses), quantitative methods and/or legal doctrine-related methods.

Supervisor/contact: [Prof. Dr Friederike Faust](mailto:friederike.faust@uni-goettingen.de), Institute of Cultural Anthropology/ European Ethnology (friederike.faust@uni-goettingen.de); [Prof. Dr Alexander Baur](mailto:alexander.baur@jura.uni-goettingen.de), Chair of Criminal Law and Criminology (alexander.baur@jura.uni-goettingen.de).

RA 5. Language regimes, migration and mobility control In this RA, we will explore the nexus of language (rights) and the governance of population movements by shedding light on how language requirements and policies are intertwined with migration (control) rationales. Language (testing) regimes will be analysed across EU member states in order to track changes in discourse and to question the underlying rationales of a restrictive language-participation nexus.

Required subject-specific or methodological skills: Doctoral students in this RA are expected to have experience in linguistic-discourse studies and should be trained in qualitative, ethnographic research methods. Knowledge of additional languages is appreciated.

Supervisor/contact: [Prof Dr Andrea Bogner](mailto:andrea.bogner@phil.uni-goettingen.de), Department of Intercultural German Studies (andrea.bogner@phil.uni-goettingen.de).

RA 6. Mobility rights in the context of labour

This RA examines the dynamics and obstacles that arise as part of the current tension between a massive demand for labour in the societies of the Global North and increasingly restrictive border regimes. We focus on analysing the extent to which orders of mobility are modified in the ongoing reconfiguration of the border regime. We examine challenges and limits of labour laws and social regulations, especially in the context of a recomposition of workforces. Against the backdrop of the multiple forms of precarity facing new arrivals, different actors' possibilities to enforce labour law and mobility rights will be critically considered.

Required subject-specific or methodological skills: Doctoral students in this RA are expected to have experience in qualitative research methods (case studies, document analysis, interviews, participant observation), labour-market and labour-process analysis. Profound knowledge of labour law is highly valued.

Supervisor/contact: [PD Dr Peter Birke](mailto:peter.birke@sofi.uni-goettingen.de), Sociological Research Institute Göttingen (peter.birke@sofi.uni-goettingen.de)

RA 7. Social law and its regulatory rationales and effects

Social policy has increasingly become the focus of migration-control efforts despite the fact that the German Constitutional Court established some limits to the possibility of reducing social benefits for non-Germans. This research, based in legal science, will investigate – against the backdrop of national and EU law – how restrictions on social rights are discursively legitimised (for example, by reproducing the myth of social benefits being a pull factor) and used as a tool of migration control. The RA will also study the effects hereof for mobility rights given the ambiguities arising in terms of law and practice.

Required subject-specific or methodological skills: Doctoral students in this RA are expected to have experience in migration and social law, knowledge of social policy and/ or proficiency in using qualitative research methods (document analysis, analyses of case law and jurisprudence, interviews).

Supervisor/contact: [Prof. Dr Olaf Deinert](mailto:Olaf.Deinert@jura.uni-goettingen.de), Professorship of Civil Law, Labour Law and Social Law (Olaf.Deinert@jura.uni-goettingen.de); [Prof. Timo Weishaupt, PhD](mailto:timo.weishaupt@sowi.uni-goettingen.de), Institute of Sociology (timo.weishaupt@sowi.uni-goettingen.de).

RA 8. Interaction effects between welfare system and migration regime: Social and legal vulnerabilities

In this RA, we ask how the interplay of discrimination, precarious housing and employment, and limited (access to) social rights affect migrants' and refugees' individual vulnerabilities and experiences of social exclusion. Taking a socio-legal perspective, we pay particular attention to how migrants and refugees can use de jure rights to fight injustice and exploitation as well as how landlords, employers and bureaucrats interpret, shape, disregard or even bend existing rights in practice.

Required subject-specific or methodological skills: Doctoral students in this RA are expected to have experience in qualitative research methods (document analysis, interviews, participant observation), (German) social policy and Migration Studies. Knowledge of languages such as Arabic, Bulgarian, Persian, Polish or Romanian is of advantage.

Supervisor/contact: [Prof. Timo Weishaupt, PhD](mailto:timo.weishaupt@sowi.uni-goettingen.de), Institute of Sociology (timo.weishaupt@sowi.uni-goettingen.de).

RA 9. Between church asylum and social advocacy: Religious communities as agents and advocates of mobility rights

This RA explores the role of religious communities as agents and advocates of mobility rights. While there has been ample research on faith-based organisations as providers of refugee aid, their role in supporting mobility rights has so far received little attention. The practice of church asylum offers a promising avenue of research for furthering the RTG's overall socio-legal approach. Another such avenue could be the involvement of religious communities in asylum decision-making in order to confirm a given applicant's belonging to a persecuted religious minority.

Required subject-specific or methodological skills: Doctoral students in this RA are expected to have practical experience in qualitative research methods (interviews, participant observation, focus groups) and social-scientific research at the intersection of religion and migration.

Supervisor/contact: [Prof. Dr Alexander-Kenneth Nagel](mailto:alexander-kenneth.nagel@sowi.uni-goettingen.de), Institute of Sociology (alexander-kenneth.nagel@sowi.uni-goettingen.de).

RA 10. Negotiating the right to stay within criminal-justice institutions

In this RA we ask how mobility rights are negotiated, enforced or forfeited within criminal-justice institutions such as the prison or under probationary assistance. Criminal-justice institutions are designed to serve their main purpose for existence, namely the reintegration of offenders into society ("resocialisation") and thus have great leeway to influence an offender's future politico-legal status. In consequence, we want to further research their potential impacts on how an offender's residence status is negotiated. Further, we aim to critically examine legal and practical understandings of resocialisation, reflecting on this approach's ability to account also for non-German citizens as well as offenders of uncertain residence status.

Required subject-specific or methodological skills: Doctoral students in this RA are expected to have experience in Legal Anthropology or Political Anthropology, Criminology or Law, and should be trained in qualitative methods (interviews, participant observation, document analysis), quantitative and/or legal doctrine-related methods.

Supervisor/contact: [Prof. Dr Alexander Baur](mailto:alexander.baur@jura.uni-goettingen.de), Chair of Criminal Law and Criminology (alexander.baur@jura.uni-goettingen.de); [Prof. Dr Friederike Faust](mailto:friederike.faust@uni-goettingen.de), Institute of Cultural Anthropology/ European Ethnology (friederike.faust@uni-goettingen.de).

The University of Göttingen is an equal opportunities employer and places particular emphasis on fostering career opportunities for women. Qualified women are therefore strongly encouraged to apply in fields in which they are underrepresented. The university has committed itself to being a family-friendly institution and supports their employees in balancing work and family life. The University is particularly committed to the professional participation of severely disabled employees and therefore welcomes applications from severely disabled people. In the case of equal qualifications, applications from people with severe disabilities will be given preference. A disability or equality is to be included in the application in order to protect the interests of the applicant.

Please upload your application in one pdf file including the usual documents until 5/9/2025 on the application portal of the university using this link: <http://obp.uni-goettingen.de/de-de/OBF/Index/74876>. For more information get in touch with Jelka Günther directly via E-Mail: Jelka.Guenther@phil.uni-goettingen.de, Tel. +49 551 25358 .

Please note:

With submission of your application, you accept the processing of your applicant data in terms of data-protection law. Further information on the legal basis and data usage is provided in the [Information General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#)

