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Biographical Note

Ralph Janik is an adjunct professor at the University of Vienna, Webster University Vienna, and Danube University Krems. His research focus is on international human rights law, the law of armed conflict, the use of force, economic law, as well as the history and theory of international law. After completing his studies in law and political science at the University of Vienna and the Universidad Alcala de Henares (Madrid), he has worked inter alia as a researcher in the project “International Law through the National Prism: The Impact of Judicial Dialogue”, as a research assistant at the Law Faculty of the University of Amsterdam (where he also obtained his postgraduate LL.M. degree in EU law and public international law), and as a researcher at the University of Vienna's Faculty of Law.

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Biographical Note

Isabella Buber-Ennser received a doctorate in Technical Mathematics from the Vienna University of Technology and a Masters of natural sciences from the Vienna University of Technology for studies in Mathematics and French. She is deputy group leader of “Demography of Austria” at the Vienna Institute of Demography of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Her research focuses on fertility, family formation, ageing and forced migration. Her analyses are based on micro level data, partly with a specific focus on Austria and partly from a comparative perspective.

Lecture Abstract

“The Refugee Crisis and Forced Migration Flows into Austria”
November 23, 2017

Given the social impact of the large number of individuals applying for asylum across Europe during the last years, it is important to study who these persons are in terms of their skills, motivations, and intentions. Accordingly, the first part of the lecture explores forced migration flows into Austria, with special focus on socio-demographic characteristics of the persons seeking refuge in 2015. Results are based on a survey called DiPAS (Displaced Persons in Austria Survey) - the first of its kind not only in Austria but also in Europe - mainly among persons originating from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Particular focus is on human capital, attitudes and values. Further, previous labor market participation and experience as well as family context of asylum seekers and family reunification potential are explored. Results indicate that the surveyed population comprised mainly young families with children, particularly those

coming from Syria and Iraq. Their educational level is high compared with the average level in their country of origin. A vast majority of respondents are Muslims, rating their religiosity at medium levels. Judging from stated attitudes towards gender equity, interviewed men seem to have more liberal attitudes than their compatriots.

The events of fall 2015 also showed the limits of municipal, international and EU law, which the second part of the lecture will focus on. It was clear that, to name just two examples, the Schengen area and the Dublin regulation are not designed to deal with times of crisis. While states with external borders argue that they have to bear the brunt of the costs associated with forced migration due to the "first country" principle, richer countries (in particular in central Europe and Sweden) have seen the largest numbers of actual asylum applications. Europe not only needs a fresh political but – relatedly – also a new legal approach to deal with refugees and migration. The lecture will outline the current legal situation and its weaknesses. Secondly, some of the proposals already made by governments and the EU itself will be discussed.