

# Towards structural responses to the displacement of scholars

## The Mapping Funds project

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Academic freedom is individual, collective and institutional. . . In fact, academic freedom is intellectual freedom in academic roles and contexts (Moshman, 2017, p. 12).<sup>1</sup>

War and anti-democratic pressure impose unprecedented impacts on freedom in academia, once again reminding us that academic freedom is an indispensable part of human rights. Since 2015, first the migration crises because of the war in Syria, then the coup attempt in Turkey and its discriminative domestic politics, and finally with the aggregation of political pressure all over the world, this issue has been reignited in Europe. In many parts of the world, scholars have lost their jobs, been imprisoned, and/or have had to flee, while others are still working in their home countries under authoritarian rule, facing life-threatening risks. One example is the political oppression of the Academics for Peace (AfP) organization from Turkey. The AfP network comprises around 2,200 academics who have signed the petition entitled “We will not be a party to this crime” (Academics for Peace, 2016)

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1 Moshman refers to an interdependent and multi-layered definition of academic freedom in this statement. He further clarifies: “Academic freedom exists at multiple levels. Its legitimacy at each level depends on whether it protects academic freedom at all levels. The academic freedom of individual faculty members should be respected provided they are respecting the academic freedom of their students. The academic freedom of the collective faculty should be respected provided they are respecting the academic freedom of individual faculty members and students. The academic freedom of academic institutions should be respected provided the institution is respecting the academic freedom of its faculty and students, and thus operating with academic integrity.”

and who have been relentlessly criminalized by the Turkish government as traitors, terrorists, and complicit supporters of the Kurdish struggle for freedom at the southeast borders of the country.

Since the launch of the petition in 2016, many organizations, foundations, federal and state bodies, universities, and institutions in Europe have declared their support of AfP.<sup>2</sup> It is noteworthy that the case of AfP is only one of many rights violations and interventions against academic freedoms in the last decade. Thus, the structural responses need clear analysis without geographical or contextual limitations.

The chapter examines the third-party funding sphere for at-risk scholars. Third-party funding, such as postdoctoral and other scholarships, has grown considerably since 2015, and different initiatives have been created to support at-risk and refugee scholars. My analysis is based on the Mapping Funds project, which was created in October 2017 and assesses different funding and support instruments. We then focus on similar projects/initiatives and eventually arrive at the identification of the structural gaps that exist in the landscape of current support and self-help initiatives for these scholars. Finally, the chapter demonstrates possible trajectories for overcoming these gaps through bottom-up, collaborative, digital platforms of action that facilitate peer dialogue and transnational solidarity.

I will begin by presenting an analysis of the Mapping Funds project,<sup>3</sup> which I supervised and coordinated from 2017 to 2019, to illustrate the state of the art in the support and funding ecosystem for displaced researchers. This mapping effort also introduces current issues and inquiries into the third-party funding landscape. In a general sense, there are a number of ways to provide support to at-risk and displaced scholars: Providing funding and refuge for research, volunteering for proofreading initiatives, supporting campaigns for persecuted researchers, and joining advocacy campaigns for

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2 One example of such support came from the Academia for Equality members' organization of 400 academics dedicated to advancing the equality and democratization of Israeli academia and society: <https://afp.hypotheses.org/372>. Another example is from BdWi, The Association of Democratic Scientists in Germany, which sent a support letter addressed to Heiko Maas, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, to bring attention to the repression against critical scientists in the AfP network: <https://www.bdwi.de/show/10707775.html>

3 The Mapping Funds project (<https://www.mappingfunds.com>) was generously funded by the Consulate of Sweden in Istanbul and supported by auxiliary research funds from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation PSI program from 2017–2019.

global academic freedom are the most noteworthy. More detailed support options are accessible on the Scholars at Risk (SAR) website.<sup>4</sup> Often, initiatives such as SAR call for “network diversity,” that is, different forms of support coming from various institutions such as federal governments, foundations, universities, and peer networks. This so-called network diversity has its advantages, but as the results of the Mapping Funds project illustrate, this diversity can also have its drawbacks. We will also identify structural gaps in the support landscape by referrals to the current findings in the SAR’s *Freedom to Think 2020* report, the Global Public Policy Institute’s (GPPi) Academic Freedom Index 2020 report (Kinzelbach et al., 2021), and the InspirEurope 2020 report, entitled *Researchers at Risk: Mapping Europe’s Response* (EUA, 2020).

### Mapping Funds as a case study

The aim of the Mapping Funds project, which was kickstarted in October 2017, is to analyze the support network and funds available to at-risk and displaced scholars in Europe. The project exists for the purpose of generating a road map for scholars and to discuss the institutional and grassroots roles for enhancing open spaces for knowledge exchange. The initial focus has been analyzing the networks of support and funding received by at-risk scholars from Turkey since 2016. However, during data collection, researchers’ encounters with funding institutions have shown that the support and funding networks cannot be limited to a specific geography and need to cover the mobility of displaced scholars from other locations to Europe, taking into account the tensions of the war, poverty, and climate change as reasons for the flight and displacement of scholars.

To expand the project’s geographical span, the research team chose the 2020 *Scholars at Risk Report* as the best tool. The approach in that report within the framework of structural responses was developed in the form of institutional recommendations to geographies where pressures and violations against academic freedom are at higher levels. As a concrete case in point, in the *Global* section of the report (Scholars at Risk, 2020, p. 114), SAR urged states, higher education (HE) leaders, civil society, and the public

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4 For individuals who would like to get involved, go to: <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/get-involved-individuals/>; for organizations interested in supporting, go to: <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/get-involved-institutions/>

at large in all countries to “ensure the security and integrity of virtual higher education spaces, assist threatened scholars and students and contribute to efforts aimed at reinforcing principles of academic freedom and institutional autonomy,” among other recommendations. In the case of Turkey, SAR urged the state authorities and higher education leaders to “suspend and reverse actions taken against HE institutions and staff, ensure an effective and transparent review and due process for all HE staff and restore and strengthen institutional autonomy.” Thus, the global call was made to the public and the states at large, while the call to Turkey was mainly directed to the state of Turkey concerning its complicit measures with the authoritarian government.

Keeping this significant paradigm in mind, the research team expanded their map to include funds and support networks available in Europe in connection with transatlantic ties so that the organizational network would be holistic and would be useful for at-risk scholars in general. The team also especially kept their focus on funds available to at-risk scholars from Turkey since the case of Turkey had unique characteristics in terms of the rigorous assault on academia. This way, the project could then serve the internal needs of the AfP network without excluding the larger cohort of at-risk scholars in other geographic areas seeking support in Europe as well as outside Europe with transnational ties to European institutions. Under these conditions, two different maps have been created on the Graph Commons network mapping platform to illustrate support mechanisms: one of them publicly available, the other one private due to the confidentiality of data involving at-risk scholars.<sup>5</sup> The public map, entitled “Support Networks of At-Risk Scholars,” illustrates the general overview of declared funds and support mechanisms by the institutions; it is publicly accessible and open to public contribution. The private map, entitled “Mapping Funds for Endangered Researchers from Turkey,” shows the funds and their institutional supporter network, attributed specifically to at-risk scholars from Turkey; it is only available to the project team due to data protection and confidentiality measures. This second map is regularly updated with the collaboration of supporter institutions, either filling in the form on the website<sup>6</sup> or sending the research team email updates.

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5 The Graph Commons platform can be accessed at <https://graphcommons.com/>

6 The form on open calls and possible contributions can be accessed at <http://mappingfunds.com/en-US/Collaborate>

The purpose of the network map is to graphically illustrate the relationality among different actors. In this realm, actors are taken to mean different funding and grant-giving organizations. After conceiving the relationality, it is possible, in a network map, to recognize leading/core actors and understand the central nodes as well as the intermediary pathways, bridges, and actors at the edge with periphery roles. The *network visualization approach* facilitates the investigation of key points in the subject matter and the actual research question. The first step of the project was collecting the data from websites via email inquiries to funding organizations and from personal connections. The public map contains only public data from websites. The private map includes both publicly available data and information retrieved via email contacts with various institutions. After data collection, the *Graph Commons* online platform was used for visualization. This platform was chosen since the software it runs on is open source, and it abides by the tenets of scientific integrity and ethical guidelines of the digital network mapping method; it is also familiar among those in the scientific commons in Turkey.

During the visualization, the idea was to clearly understand the main actors and their relations. To be well prepared for later stages of the mapping framework, specific details such as gender, level of academic career, and research area focus were also embedded in the map as “properties,” a platform feature used for filtering and deeper investigation. The last part of the project covered an overall analysis of the maps to frame the research and, more specifically, to define the structural responses and underlying gaps. A structural response refers to fellowships available at host institutions, that is, universities or research centers, and the funding offered by each organization. A few examples of underlying gaps are related to the accessibility of these funds, challenges regarding matching of the at-risk scholar with a host, and the limited duration of stipends.

On a techno-methodological level, the web visualization approach on its own has its challenges in terms of its legibility, interpretability, and accessibility of the host interface. As a result, the following narratives are the priority for Mapping Funds:

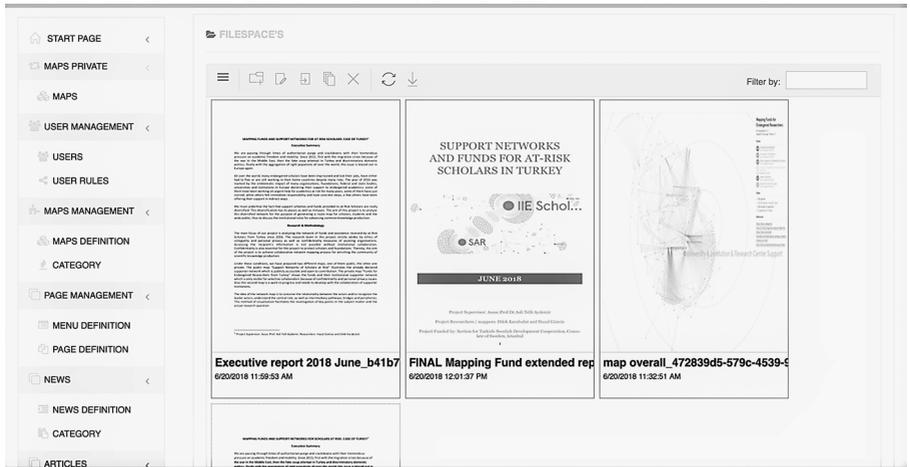
- Communicating implicit but feasible funding structures to donors, supporting organizations, funders, and scholars,
- Identifying matching and bridging complementary support mechanisms (e.g., infographics and kits),

- Dissemination of vital information for social good in altered media formats (audio-books for the information and communications technology (ICT)-poor, multimedia trailers for ICT advanced areas, and hybrid publications),
- Revitalization of exchanges between the Global North and South by using scalable maps for highlighting network relations and defining gaps among diverse support mechanisms,
- Simple, legible design for discussion and exchange, and
- Possibility to crowdsource for sustainability through a protocol for the Graph Commons and Mapping Funds interface. Such a protocol would enable interoperability and provide a dashboard for visitors to the Mapping Funds webpage so they can update the site with information regarding new calls and opportunities.

These priorities have been met to various degrees, except for the last item on crowdsourcing. Even though the host interface is Graph Commons with a relatively simple template for network mapping, the project team has not been able to create a community of interested potential mappers. Thus, prior to the final reporting in 2019, the team considered options for embedding customized devices preceded by the protocol mentioned above, or possibly curating a customized app for potential mappers among knowledge workers and third-party funding staff. However, this was not possible due to lack of funding and other life priorities of the core research team. It is important to stress that the team remains open to ideas and potential funders for sustainability.

Figure 1 provides a snapshot of the Mapping Funds digital interface as a working space and a hub for collaboration.

**Figure 1.** Interactive platforms – working space for confidential collaborators and institutional agents. The Mapping Funds website backend. The interface and backend of the Mapping Funds website provides a customized repository and tools for individual as well as institutional collaboration.



The findings and outcomes of Mapping Funds will be further discussed in terms of the other related initiatives, programs, and projects in the parts to follow. The funds and support networks' landscape has been covered in a relational network in the project to gain a view of the structural responses within the existing power structure and to identify the underlying gaps.

## Structural responses within international trajectories

While displaced lives of at-risk scholars involve both short- and long-term implications, they are also a part of international debates and studies around academic freedom. In that regard, the Academic Freedom Index (AFI) (Kinzelbach et al., 2021) provides a state-of-the-art mapping of academic freedoms around the world, crowdsourced by collective efforts of scholars nominated as experts for specific regions. I consider the index a roadmap for what can be done by a plurality of actors in the higher education and human

rights fields to ameliorate the dignity of scholars at large. Here is a conceptual description taken from the introductory text of the 2020 report:

The Academic Freedom Index (AFI) provides manifold opportunities for research, but also for policy debates among government officials, parliamentarians, research funders, university administrators, academics, students, and advocates alike. This report aims to inform such debates. After introducing the objectives and the dataset, it provides specific recommendations on how key stakeholders can apply the index to protect and promote academic freedom (Kinzelbach et al., 2021, p.4).

This report's contribution to operationalizing academic freedom is significant for a number of reasons. First, it has to be made clear that in related legal frameworks worldwide, academic freedom must also secure the right to political exercise and action as long as such exercise points to freedom of speech regarding human rights, public good, and civic responsibility. Second, the right to political exercise and action, when undertaken by academics, must not jeopardize their status, job, or position in any way. Third, this political exercise and action must be for the public good without any exceptions and must not incite hate or discrimination against certain communities. Fourth, academics' freedom for mobility to perform their research and teaching must also be guaranteed by transnational as well as national laws. Mapping the state of academic freedom worldwide is, however, a complex endeavor—due to not only diverging definitions but also the difficulty of assessing whether it provides a sufficient base to debate specific support mechanisms for displaced scholars. Support mechanisms and funding attributed to the research and teaching of academics in the higher education sphere must take the principles of academic freedom as a basis, integrate them into their infrastructure, and provide necessary structures for safeguarding decent research, teaching, learning, and public outreach.

In the Mapping Funds project, we show that the abovementioned support mechanisms form organic networks and contingencies with other institutional actors on the edge (nodes as central actors and edges as actors at the margins). This creates autonomous spaces for collaboration and academic exchange. However, there is a significant catch at this point. The governance of higher education in the Global North has been designed with a hierarchical mindset in order to maintain its rigorous power structures, that is, higher education institutions (HEIs) of the twentieth century and the modern state

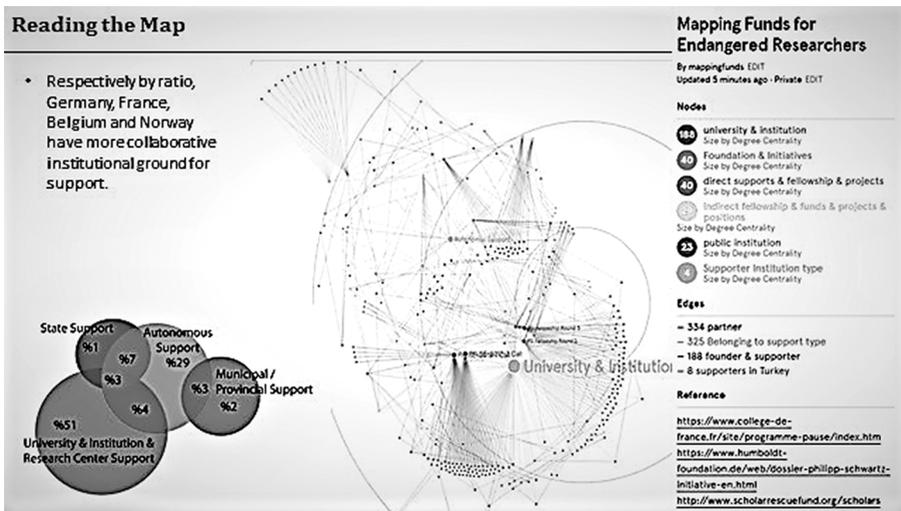
(Zapp et al., 2018, pp. 7–8). In that regard, the autonomy of the university is in perpetual contention that exists among the managerial powers, the state, and the third-party funders. The last two decades have introduced new aspects to this scheme with the advent of internationalization in higher education. However, the authoritarian purge of scholars, enforced displacements, and exile, mostly concentrated in the Global South, have caused asymmetric challenges. Thus, the structural responses as the main theme in this chapter refer to the network relations of support mechanisms in today's higher education sphere attributed to displaced scholars, the power dynamics caused by these relationalities, and their impact on displaced scholars. Further to be explored are international trajectories facilitated by the friction among conventional, democratic HEIs, third-party funders, some of whom have neoliberal stakes, and scholars seeking autonomy.

In this regard, collaborative institutional schemes are significant. Such schemes become noteworthy when the main supporting actors collaborate with the dispersed edge actors in the network to form alliances of support. An example of that would be the collaboration between Off-University<sup>7</sup> as an edge actor and host institutions as core actors in Germany. Through tandem teaching in host institutions, displaced scholars continue their teaching careers while they co-teach remotely with a colleague in their field. The funding for this initiative comes from a few prominent organizations in Germany, most recently the New University in Exile Consortium and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation via the Philipp Schwartz Initiative (PSI) lump-sum budgets of research fellows. The following figure, taken from the Mapping Funds project's extended report, dated 2018, depicts this situation well.

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7 Off-University creates new strategies to uphold and sustain academic life and knowledge threatened by anti-democratic and authoritarian regimes. It was established for and by academics from Turkey yet addresses itself to academics all over the world: academics who have been purged from their institutions, forced to resign, who are legally and politically persecuted and even imprisoned because of their opinion and research. For further info: <https://off-university.com/en-US/page/about-us>

**Figure 2.** *Reading the Map: Institutional Network Collaboration featured with infographics. Mapping Funds 2018 Report. The intersecting parts of these circles refer to collaborative schemes among national and federal state actors, municipal actors, civil society organizations, and charities' support (labeled as autonomous) and the higher education landscape. The mentoring schemes provided by host institutions would be a good example of such collaboration since their funding comes from multiple actors in clusters represented by colored circles. As a concrete example, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH) and Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG; German Research Foundation) are the most relational actors, and they both have bridging roles among municipal support, PSI clusters, and state support. The Network of European Institutes for Advanced Study (NETIAS) is another important bridge actor at the edge as it connects the clusters of the universities, Université Catholique de Louvain, and third-party funding. It also plays a significant role as an EU organization to connect actors from other countries.*



The Mapping Funds project outcomes related to support networks and funding mechanisms would be helpful in expanding on structural responses. Collaborative schemes such as the mentoring schemes by host institutions or peer networks like Academics in Solidarity (AiS) are significant because the varying needs of displaced scholars can be met in time. Related program staff

must keep in mind that the displacement of these scholars lasts much longer than the initially planned one-to-three-year stipends and consider options more durable than short-term bridging funds (Telli-Aydemir & Diner, 2021). This places the responsibility on universities and research centers as host institutions, hosting mentors, and institutions for the funding and support landscape.

As for the responsibility of institutional actors, the Global North–South nexus is an imminent framework that requires dialogue among diverse actors; thus, the project team organized two face-to-face workshops (one in Brussels with EU commissioners and the other in Kassel with the Off-University core team and volunteers) to elaborate the issues at stake and continued the dialogue with larger networks of workshop participants through online interactions. Both project workshops as well as the correspondence with staff in funding institutions revealed that at-risk scholars face challenges regarding integration into the HE landscape in the countries in which they settle. The main causes of these challenges are lack of fluency in the primary academic language, lack of academic networks, low literacy in systemic relationalities, and lack of social relations in their daily lives. In the case of the displacement of scholars with families, these challenges cause distress for all family members and an extra burden on the displaced academics. In the case of individual displacement, loneliness and isolation factors may trigger mental health problems and even lead to trauma.

However, in addition to outlining the challenges faced by displaced scholars, the Mapping Funds project also identified the benefits of successful integration of displaced scholars in the host country and the benefits for the development of its research system. Among them are the revitalization of exile knowledge as a significant game-changer in the path toward decolonizing higher education.

The following are the issues arising in interactive platforms initiated by autonomous exile networks:

- a) Well-being at the level of human dignity (alliances with civil society, support networks, and HEIs to prevent human rights violations and the shrinking of critical thought as well as the emancipation of at-risk scholars) (Civil Rights Defenders, 2018),
- b) New perspectives for internationalization (DAAD, 2020) (formulating policies that integrate at-risk scholars into the international HE landscape),

- c) Transitional disciplines across borders (better science communication and vital dialogue in cross-cultural intersections) (Philipp Schwartz Forum, 2020), and
- d) Dealing with trauma (daily life challenges as well as resilience of scholars and their families, socio-psychological sharing and caring initiatives, memory workshops, transversal stories, and narratives that create empathy) (Telli, 2021).

These issues are also emphasized in the GPPI report on the AFI, in which they are categorized as effective practices for cooperation among organizations in the academic freedom network. It has been stated that organizations in democracies must develop more mindful, thoughtful, and well-informed cooperation procedures to address the risks of cooperation in an increasingly volatile environment and still maintain productive cooperation projects (Kinzelbach et al., 2021, pp. 22–23). According to GPPI, doing so requires a clear vision of the objectives of cooperation as well as the risk assessments and other due diligence measures that need to be in place before cooperation projects can launch. In line with this principle, and resonating with internationalization, gender diversity/inclusion/equality perspectives of European universities, training for career development, and mentoring networks such as Frauenspezifisches Mentoring Siegen (FraMES)<sup>8</sup> or those focused on at-risk scholars (Career Mentoring-SAR at Uni-Cologne) have been established. Thus, one can say that the debate on academic freedom worldwide and the improvement of support mechanisms for displaced scholars are strongly complementary and have to be discussed in the same context.

It is necessary to discuss the role of specific institutions. The responsibility is not only on funding institutions alone but also on host institutions and mentors. According to Mapping Funds mapping and monitoring reports, welcome offices in most hosting institutions have created special opportunities for individual and family counseling. However, peer networks are a significant missing factor in this picture. While it is true that such peer work must be at a grassroots level and initiated by the at-risk scholar community itself, the structures of hosting institutions, such as common spaces for socialization and exchange, assisting staff, and compensation

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8 FraMeS – Frauenspezifisches Mentoring Siegen: <https://www.uni-siegen.de/gleichstellung/karriere/frames/index.html>

budgets, are definitely not there. With many challenges to overcome upon settlement in a new country, at-risk scholars need a long time before they can make contact with their peers and close communities for the existing capacities of the country, the means to collaborate, and the available resources to support their well-being and resilience.

In this regard, it is worth examining initiatives that have been created elsewhere. A case in point is the International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP) Twinning Program as a special effort to help scholars from Turkey working in the field of political psychology (ISPP, 2017). ISPP members among scholars under threat are matched with a volunteer mentor, also in the member pool, as a way to show solidarity as a partner. It is an attractive opportunity for political psychologists since they get the opportunity to build transnational alliances and collaborative knowledge production when facing difficult times during their career. The distinct characteristic of this effort is the three-tier approach: 1. The program offers support for “letter writing” to authorities when a member scholar faces threat; 2. A donation scheme provides small funds for career support; and 3. A job matching scheme helps to find potential hosts for scholars under threat. The scale of this program is limited; however, it provides a working model and inspiration for potential peer networks in other disciplines.

As another case in point, Academics in Solidarity (AiS) also features a solidarity network, but it is positioned more in intra-university cooperation compared with that of the ISPP. It is administered at Freie Universität Berlin, and the following is stated on their own website:

AiS is a peer-mentoring program that connects exiled researchers and established scholars in Germany, Lebanon and Jordan. It seeks to create a network of solidarity, strengthen the value of cross-cultural research cooperation and open up new perspectives within the academic environment of the host country.

The main services provided by AiS are mentoring, academic counseling, systematic network building, and funding of small research endeavors. Thus, with its trans-regional outreach for creating safe zones for knowledge exchange and career support for endangered scholars,<sup>9</sup> AiS touches upon

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9 The Knowledge Hub of AiS is an active repository of useful information for at-risk researchers: <https://www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/academicsinsolidarity/Knowledge-Hub/index.html>

significant challenges of academic freedom and mobility. The recent efforts of the network for making policy recommendations to relevant higher education actors and their encouragement of active engagement of at-risk scholars show that the issues at stake require durable solutions and active dialogue on the part of all intramural and extramural actors involved.

## Exclusive responses, gaps, and challenges

As reflected in the InspirEurope report as well as the Mapping Funds executive summary, the EU does not currently offer a dedicated fellowship program to at-risk scholars. A further complication is that while at-risk scholars technically have access to EU funding schemes for international researchers, there is clearly a lack of awareness of these possibilities. It is true that current efforts, such as the InspirEurope project, are addressing this issue of awareness; however, it is not completely up to support organizations and (potential) host institutions per se. The findings of the InspirEurope project suggest that the eligibility criteria and the high competitiveness cause low application and success rates among at-risk scholars. It is further emphasized that the requirements and conditions of European programs might hinder or delay at-risk scholars' integration and career development. The best example of this is the mobility restriction under the Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions of the European Commission, wherein the researcher may not continue residing in the host country of the first settlement while carrying out the project. Especially once researchers unite with their families, resettlement to a new country becomes a more complex challenge.

As for the self-reflective findings in the InspirEurope 2020 report, the top five challenges identified by researchers at risk in Europe all relate to employment and professional development. Here is a summary of these challenges rated as "very challenging or challenging" according to the report:

- Finding employment that matches their academic and professional background (84%),
- Finding employment in general (77%),
- Temporary nature of placements and employment contacts (75%),
- Issues around the resulting transitions into different employment (65%), and
- Learning the local language (64%).

The main challenge noted was making a smooth transition to academic careers or other positions in the host country. The issues surrounding this challenge are also striking. Especially when no prior foreign language skills exist, learning the local language up to a level favored by the job market requires a long time and may be a burden along with other duties. The cultural drawbacks may also be a determinant in the social isolation of newcomer researchers and prevent them from feeling a part of the surrounding community.

In terms of policy recommendations, the InspirEurope project stands out as an initiative that supports, promotes, and integrates researchers at risk, which consists of 10 partners. The project's recent report provides a comprehensive framework. In a survey distributed to at-risk scholars and supporting institutions, which received 260 responses, there was a special category of "portals, services, support mechanisms used by researchers at risk." Under this category, the services available were identified as specific services for at-risk researchers/refugee scholars/asylum seekers, general portals for researchers/immigrants, national/local support services, and informal networks of peers and support via civil society organizations. These services were evaluated by researchers via an online survey, and the results were reflected in the report as such:

When asked to rate the portals, services, and support mechanisms they used, those targeting specifically at-risk researchers were rated as (very) good, and 21% said these could be improved. As for general portals, a further 41% gave positive feedback on portals or services specifically addressing those in a refugee-like situation; however, around one-third were not aware of any such services or portals. Informal exchanges, such as peers and informal networks, were highlighted as one of the most useful and frequently used resources and play a crucial role for many of the respondents. 80% of researchers have in the past gathered information and support via an informal network of peers, but 44% said that these could provide even better support if enhanced (14% not sufficient, 30% could be improved), perhaps with a more formalized network structure (EUA, 2020, p. 32).

As mentioned earlier, from this brief finding, one can easily infer that supporting peer and informal networks is essential. In the same report, these portals, services, and support mechanisms were categorized as those provided by hosts and those by support organizations and projects. While those provided by the hosts aim at career/capacity and skills

development, such as language and teacher training or job placements, support organizations focus more on fellowships, networking, matchmaking, and mentoring schemes.

Resetting lives and settling into new socio-cultural environments may create unexpected externalities for displaced researchers. Additionally, due to short-term funding opportunities, there is a substantial need for complementary support mechanisms. Thus, cooperation among different institutional actors in the network is required to operationalize well-defined support with intermediary actors, as in the case of Scholars at Risk NY and Europe. For example, the SAR main office in New York works with other SAR liaisons in Europe, the universities in Europe, the federal state agencies, and career development organizations in order to help sustain the academic careers of at-risk scholars.

A few of the mechanisms that are used to tackle externalities are explained here to give an idea about what can be done in a decentralized fashion. One such example is AuthorAID,<sup>10</sup> a free pioneering global network that provides support, mentoring, resources, and training for researchers in low- and middle-income countries. It supports over 20,000 researchers in these countries by helping them to publish and communicate their work. The network offers personal mentoring by highly published researchers and professional editors, online training workshops on scientific writing, a forum for discussion and questions where researchers can benefit from advice and insight of members across the globe, access to a range of resources on writing and publishing, and networking. AuthorAID also has a southeast Mediterranean branch that offers publication support and editing services.

Another interesting case in point is a peer network called Chance for Science,<sup>11</sup> which was initiated by Carmen Bachmann, a professor at Leipzig University. Even though there was no interest from refugee scientists in the initial stages, as a result of Bachmann's personal efforts, there are currently more than 500 subscribers, of which one-quarter are refugee scientists. The related search and profile match platform was realized by Bachmann's graduate students. She is personally engaged in the endeavor as she mentions in the podcast; she paid the first visit to a formerly abandoned building (former psychiatric hospital) where 1,000+ refugees lived during

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10 For the website: [www.authoraid.com](http://www.authoraid.com); for the East Mediterranean branch: <http://www.authoraidem.org/>

11 For the website: <https://home.uni-leipzig.de/~chanceforscience/index.php?lang=en>

their application for residential status. She called to see whether there were any scientists/researchers in the house and handed the self-made flyers to some of those who approached her. Still, the platform she initiated for exchange between refugee researchers and their German colleagues was not frequented until almost a year had passed; nevertheless she continued her efforts to raise awareness about its significance. It was as late as 2019 that the platform became known among refugee scholars and their German colleagues interested in research collaboration. Thus, this recent experience<sup>12</sup> is an indicator of how much daily life's struggles can get in the way of keeping up with research and academic careers in the case of displaced researchers. It also underlines the need for awareness-raising both among the newcomers as well as the German academics eager to show support and solidarity over the long term.

According to the Care Advancement for Refugee Researchers in Europe (CARE, 2020) project findings, continued existential uncertainties due to prior risks as well as ongoing precarity often have an impact on the mental health and well-being of researchers at risk and their families. The psycho-social counseling units at universities provide good opportunities for regular mental health care for the researcher and their family at least in the first years; however, a sustainable solution would be better.

*Toplumsal Dayanışma İçin Psikologlar Derneği* (TODAP; Psychologists for Social Solidarity) in Turkey is a good case in point. The TODAP community offers pro bono counseling and open seminars for communities in need; they have also shown solidarity with AfP since 2017. TODAP volunteers also offer individual counseling. Another recent example from Turkey is the Birarada Association, which launched its digital platform in June 2020, thanks to its supporting organizations. Birarada unites all solidarity academies in Turkey, initiated by dismissed academics in the AfP network. The digital platform also hosts the Mentoring Support Working Group, which currently has around 300 members. The group recently organized well-being seminars comprising three different sessions, which were attended by interested parties. The pandemic has apparently created an extra mental burden, so the extended lockdown periods can be a good time to connect with peers. The first event of the working group was an experimental one to determine what comes next

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12 For a more detailed account of the story and the podcast: [https://home.uni-leipzig.de/~chanceforscience/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=21&Itemid=160&lang=en](https://home.uni-leipzig.de/~chanceforscience/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=21&Itemid=160&lang=en)

and what the communities' needs are. Working group members are eager to invite other knowledge workers – authors, poets, and artists from different geographies to the well-being events. Especially for graduate students, the lockdown situation in tiny on/off campus student flats has been very tough since March 2020. Thus, peer support groups are essential for graduate students and a high priority for postdocs and senior researchers.

According to the findings of Mapping Funds as well as other cited and mapped projects in this chapter, bottom-up action toward policy formulations is essential for creating and sustaining decent work and life conditions for displaced scholars. Thus, a new initiative called Share the Platform<sup>13</sup> founded by a group of scholars and practitioners with refugee and non-refugee backgrounds, calls upon refugee colleagues to deliver their expertise on the unique needs and experiences of refugee populations in a wide variety of fields. Founded in the US and endorsed by SAR, they aim to consolidate the expertise of refugees to improve policy, programs, and practice. The platform is a transnational advocacy hub and acts as a model that serves as a point of exchange and training for institutions and people from refugee backgrounds to move toward full partnerships to create meaningful change in program design, policymaking, and action. Such consolidation efforts for expertise and experience of displaced scholars and practitioners in policy-related fields must be multiplied. The collaborative work of scholars with practitioners in the field would also be an asset in the efforts toward achieving better policies, thus illustrating how the expertise of scholars with refugee backgrounds animates the entire higher education ecology.

## Concluding remarks

This chapter focused on structural transnational responses to dismissed and repressed academics whose lives are displaced in some cases geographically and in some mentally, while in other neglected cases, in both ways. The prominent issue regarding this focus is “finding a way out,” both for career sustenance as well as for social lives. As highlighted by Vatansever (2020, pp. 127–128), the general tendency is to create fragmented and widespread micro-organizations to challenge a huge and multi-centered systemic power. Social movements of our time, as well as the sphere of intellectual subjectivity

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13 See <https://www.sharetheplatform.org/>

and resistance from within the ranks of academia, have adopted this formula on an ad hoc basis. Vatansever defines this formula of resistance as one that creates networks of solidarity based on shared precarity and further specifies that most of her interviewees agree with this definition. While this resistance provides endurance and hope, one must not forget that solidarity academies, critical knowledge networks, volunteer mentoring schemes, and mutual support groups are faced with major systemic challenges. After presenting the results of the Mapping Funds project and a presentation of additional bottom-up experiences to support displaced scholars, I believe there is a need for sustainable action plans that include the following support mechanisms:

- Remote fellowships, including digital repository and library access<sup>14</sup> where mobility is restricted, keeping in mind that brain drain of knowledge workers may create a detrimental impact in authoritarian states where all freedoms are under attack.
- Grants, funds, and special programs for graduate students who are facing similar threats in their early careers must be increased. The recent DAAD scholarship initiative (Hilde Domin Programme) (Academic Cooperation Association, 2021) is a good example in this regard.
- Considering the fact that decent labor conditions and diversity are common problems in the current higher education landscape, critical space-place pedagogies, which facilitate the coalescence of social justice endeavors, must be curated. This would make room for more meaningful alliances among displaced scholars, their colleagues, and peer networks.
- Increasing lecturer/teaching positions and research opportunities for specific area studies in a Global South–North comparative perspective would be a feasible plan in this regard.
- Host institutions must take responsibility for the career sustenance and well-being of at-risk scholars as well as their families. Keeping in mind the fact that fellowships and stipendium programs provided by foundations and federal state structures are limited in time and scope, the academic community, as well as the services in universities and research centers,

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14 A case in point in this regard is the New University in Exile Consortium efforts. For more: <https://newuniversityinexileconsortium.org/programs/programs/> and <https://newuniversityinexileconsortium.org/programs/library-access-initiative/>

must be prepared for the long-term integration of these scholars (Telli-Aydemir & Diner, 2021).

- As mentioned in this chapter, significant steps toward relevant policies are already in place; however, the involvement of at-risk scholars themselves in the policymaking process is a must. Only then can the actual needs and mutual expectations be identified and related measures be devised in terms of democratic equity.

Thus, the outcomes of the Mapping Funds project once again underline that durable policies must be in place to win back human dignities and mitigate the deprivation of displaced scholars. However, the policymaking process must not take place behind closed doors or be controlled by privileged actors. Inclusion of displaced scholars in all stages of policy negotiations and the policymaking process is vital. Thorough mechanisms for active inclusion and open spaces for dialogue are the primary factors that must be considered. On November 29, 2018, the European Parliament, after engaging in negotiations with the AfP international affairs working group, released a special report on academic freedom which stated that human rights must be a consideration in the EU's foreign policy framework. The report calls for EU-funded action to ensure the protection of at-risk students and scholars (European Parliament, 2019; see also SAR, 2018). This report is fully in line with the findings of the Mapping Funds project: It finally opens the way for collective action in Europe toward protecting critical scientific knowledge and recognizing scholars who are the producers of that knowledge as essential and students as its standard-bearers for an informed, democratic future.

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