



SOMA [] CEGES



Seminar "Das andere Deutschland" Immigration of German refugees to Belgium from 1933 to 1940

A common project, regarding the biographies of the refugees,
of Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste Belgien,
Centre for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Contemporary Society
and Ghent University.

Thematic conference and first working group meeting.
With the support of the 'Europe for Citizens Programme' of the European Union.

Monday, 6th of December 2010

Place:

Centre for Historical Research and Documentation
on War and Contemporary Society (CEGES-SOMA)
Square de l'Aviation 29, 1070 Brussels
Tel 02 556 92 11
www.cegesoma.be

Registration:

Please **register latest on Friday, 3rd of December** by sending an email to Myriell Fußer who coordinates the seminar and currently works as ASF Belgium volunteer at the CEGES-SOMA: myriell.fusser@cegesoma.be

About the seminar:

This one-day seminar offers an overview of the issue of immigration of German refugees to Belgium from 1933 to 1940. Participants will get to know the involved institutions as well as the working group members. The objective of the project is to form a group of motivated volunteers and students to work on refugee biographies and to trace immigration from Germany to Belgium during that period.



'This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.'



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Presentation:

The seminar starts with two presentations about the reception of political immigrants from Germany in Belgium and other West-European democracies held by professor **Frank Caestecker** (Ghent University) and **Gertjan Desmet**, student from the history department in Ghent.

In the afternoon, **Gert De Prins** from the Directorate-General War Victims will introduce participants to the study of documents on immigrants and refugees in the 1930s. Afterwards, participants will get a digital introduction to the database and will then have the occasion to visit the CEGES-SOMA archives and library; they will be guided by **Dirk Martin** and **Gerd De Coster** from the Centre for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Contemporary Society.

The thematic and methodical inputs will enable participants to finally work out the project in small groups. The seminar day will end with more information about the project activities and the timeline.

The seminar is open to students from the Social History working group or related working groups, ASF Belgium volunteers as well as persons interested in the project itself who work on similar topics. Presentations and workshops will be held in English and the archive visit will be done in German with Dutch translation if necessary. Translation support will be offered by the ASF coordinator and some of the ASF volunteers. The seminar is organised in a participative way and the project participants are invited to take part in the discussions and share their ideas.





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Speakers and institutions:

Dr. Frank Caestecker is a history teacher at Ghent University. He belongs to the research group Social History and he particularly works on migration in the beginning of the 20th century.

Gertjan Desmet is a student of history at the Ghent University.

The **research group Social History** is part of the history department at the **Ghent University**, which is one of the major universities in the Dutch-speaking region of Europe.

Gert De Prins studied history at Ghent University and works now as an archivist at the Directorate General War Victims.

The **Centre for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Contemporary Society** is a public federal research institution, which collects documentation and carries out research on the wars and conflicts of the 20th century and their impact on Belgium.

Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedendienste Belgien (**ASF Belgique Service de Paix / ASF België Vredesdienst**) is a non-profit which organises peace services and activities in Belgium. The organisation's objectives are to fight against racism, anti-Semitism and any form of discrimination. It works as the Belgium office for the German organisation Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste (Action Reconciliation Service for Peace).



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Programme

Morning: Information - speeches and discussions.

** Moderation: Rudi Van Doorslaer, Director of SOMA-CEGES.*

09:45 Reception

10:00 Introduction / Review over the project's objectives

- Presentation of the institutions (CEGES-SOMA, ASF België/Belgique, Ghent University)
- Presentation of the participants (volunteers, students, speakers) – What are your motivations and what do you expect from the project?

10:40 “The reception of ‘Das andere Deutschland’ in Belgium and other West-European Democracies“

- Lecture by Frank Caestecker (20 min)
- Questions and discussion

11:20 Coffee break

11:30 “How to study the reception of political refugees in Belgium, 1933-1940”

- Lecture by Gertjan Desmet
- Questions and discussion

12:10 Lunch break



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*Afternoon: Introduction to the research project.
Information about archival work and working groups.*

** Moderation: Esther Sommer, ASF Belgium coordinator and Myriell Fußler, ASF volunteer at
SOMA-CEGES*

13:00 “The documents about the German immigrants and refugees in the 30s”

- Lecture by Gert De Prins (15 min)
- Presentation of an exemplary document

13:30 How can we use the library and the archive for our research?

- Introduction to the data base “Pallas” (Dirk Martin)
- Tour through the archive and the library (Gerd De Coster, in German)

14:00 How will we proceed with our work?

- Introduction to the working groups
- Group work assisted by Rudi Van Doorslaer, Esther Sommer, Gertjan Desmet and, Gert de Prins.

15:15 Coffee break

- Presentation of the results from each working group and comparison of the different suggestions

16:00 Future prospects

- Project plan presentation
- Task division
- Communication among group participants

16:30 Closure

