

# Radboud Honours Academy

Honours Programme for Master's Students 2016 - 2017

think tank 'The Rights of Refugees'

## Think tank

Five students from Radboud University (RU), Nijmegen, the Netherlands, and five students from Pázmány Péter Catholic University (PPCU), Budapest, Hungary, will form a so called 'think tank'. Together they will carry out research within the subject of European Culture. The think tank is open to Masters' students from all academic disciplines.

## Topic

Refugees come to Europe, including Hungary and the Netherlands, in large numbers. They flee, in the majority of cases, from a situation in which their rights (as citizens and / or as humans) are not, or not fully, respected or protected. When they arrive on the borders of the European Union, they are sometimes admitted, sometimes kept out. Few people will argue that refugees should not be helped, but we can perceive a tension in the way in which they are helped. Once on the territory of the EU, even if they still have to apply for a temporary or permanent status, the human rights conventions that EU member states have signed apply to them as well, at least as a matter of principle. This means that they have rights which they can claim, and they can go to court if those rights are denied or violated. This contrasts with another, arguably more traditional approach which is practiced, for example, by churches and other religious organizations, that turns around the notion of charity (caritas). More broadly, including but not limited to religious organizations, we can point to civil society as a field of activity and association that is concerned more with actually helping refugees than with their formal status or rights (even if they assist them in claiming their rights, they will tend to do so from a pragmatic perspective).

The think tank will compare the perspectives of politics and legislation on the one hand and ethics and charity on the other, considering the differences between Eastern and Western Europe. The research should result in a report and policy advice for an external organization.

## Supervisors

Research supervisors: Prof. Evert van der Zweerde & Gaard Kets, MA (RU)  
Dr Orsolya Varsányi & Dr Tamás Nyirkos (PPCU)

Process supervisors: Noortje ter Berg, MA (RU), Tímea Gutveiler, MA (PPCU)

## Official deadlines

- October 10: individual paper on how your academic background can contribute to the topic of your think tank. Purpose: learning to understand each other's perspectives.
- December 12: paper by a small group of students on a more defined topic related to the assignment. Purpose: more focus, teamwork, working towards the final paper.
- May 1: group paper as a final product of the think tank. Purpose: result of combining talents and perspectives, useful for an external organization.

## Working weeks

Participants will have weekly meetings at their own university.

There are three joint working weeks for which attendance is mandatory.

- 1) arrival 17 - departure 25 August (Nijmegen)
- 2) arrival 27 November - departure 4 December (location to be announced)
- 3) arrival 9 - departure 15 April (Budapest)

During the rest of the programme participants will communicate by e-mail and Skype.

**Radboud University**

