



Reception and conference

Against gender apartheid!

Promoting Afghan women and girls through education and work

May 23 - 24, 2025

(29 years of Akis Kulturverein and 25 years of Banu Frauen Magazin)

Since the Taliban took power again in 2021, the situation of women in Afghanistan has deteriorated dramatically. This has a negative impact on the lives of women and girls in Afghanistan, but women and families in the diaspora are also affected socially, politically and emotionally. In particular, the situation with regard to education, from 7th grade onwards, as well as access to universities and basic facilities such as recreational and medical facilities, is extremely worrying. Added to this is the humanitarian disaster that the country is experiencing, which is hitting women and children particularly hard.

Therefore, we will organize a conference with an evening reception again in 2025 in cooperation with the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation - VIDC, the Vienna Chamber of Labour and the women's department of the Austrian Trade Union Federation. The reception and conference will address the situation of gender apartheid, in particular the catastrophic educational situation of Afghan girls and women. The event will kick off with a formal reception hosted by the Mayor of Vienna, Dr. Michael Ludwig, in the Vienna City Hall basement on May 23rd, which will be followed by a one-day conference on May 24th.

Planned

May 23, 2024, 6:00 - 8:00 pm: Reception at Wiener Rathauskeller (Salon Lehar)

- Opening: Municipal Councillor Andrea Mautz
- Welcome words: Ghousuddin Mir (Chairman AKIS), Magda Seewald (VIDC)
- Brief statements: Asiye Sel (Vienna Chamber of Labor), Karin Zimmermann (Federal Women's Secretary at the Austrian Trade Union Federation), Municipal Councillor Şafak Akçay, Manizha Bakhtari (Ambassador of Afghanistan to Austria), Friha Sadeq (Banu Magazine)
- Statement in relation to the Vienna Afghanistan Process: Wolfgang Petritsch (President of the Austrian Institute for International Affairs)
- Panel:
 - Tahmina Salik (Danish Afghan Women Diaspora Forum) and Shagofah Ghafori (Human Rights Activist): On the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan and the status of the initiative to recognize gender apartheid
 - Maryam Singh (Counseling Center for Migrants, Austria): On the situation of Afghan women and girls in Austria
 - Palwasha Kakar (former Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Afghanistan) and Forozan Zamani (Student): Solidarity with Afghan women and girls
- Video presented by Palwasha Hamzad: "AKIS education initiatives in Europe and Kabul."
- Rabi-Balkhi-Award: Fereshteh Sama

- Special prize for diaspora engagement in Austria: Zahra Hashimi, OMID Online School
- Moderation: Sharmila Hashimi (AKIS), Michael Fanizadeh (VIDC)
- Musical accompaniment (Hadis Rostami and Masih Shadab)

May 24, 2024, AKIS conference on empowering Afghan women and girls through education and work (Austrian Trade Union Federation)

13:00 - 14:30: Opening with speeches by the international guests of honor (languages: German, English and Farsi)

Ghousuddin Mir (Chairman AKIS), Michael Fanizadeh (VIDC), Asiye Sel (Vienna Chamber of Labour), Elisabeth Kerndl (ÖGB Bundesfrauenabteilung), Dr. Alema Alema (former State Ministry for Peace in Afghanistan), Friba Sadeq (journalist, Germany), Saida Tolo (women's rights activist, Netherlands), Tabib Zadeh (Banu Magazine), Shagofa Ghafori (Afghan Diaspora Organizations, NADOE)

14:30 - 14:45: Coffee break

14:30 - 16:00: Workshops

Workshop 1: How can the educational situation of women and girls in Afghanistan be improved?

Support for teachers, online schools etc., Moderator: Rafi Ahmadi (ÖIF) (Languages German and Farsi)

Workshop 2: How can the educational situation and access to the labor market of Afghan women and girls in the diaspora be improved? Moderator: Maryam Singh (Counseling Center for Migrants, Austria) (Languages German and Farsi)

Workshop 3: Activities and initiatives of Afghan women in the diaspora

Moderator: Najila Zamani (Banu Magazine) (Farsi language)

16:00 - 16:30 Feedback from the workshops

16:30 - 17:00: Panel, proposals and demands from committed women for the future of women in Afghanistan

Moderator: Golchera Naim Yafthaali (women's rights activist, Netherlands)

17:00 – 17:30 Book Presentation Ghousuddin Mir

17:30 - 19:00 : Presentation of the Rabi-Balkhi-Award

- For women who are involved in cinema and theater
- For women who are involved in Banu magazine
- For women who are active in the media sector
- For women in the social sector
- For women who are active in poetry and literature
- Special prize for Gazal and music

19:00 - 20:00: Dinner

Afterwards: Traditional music (Hadis Rostami, Frehsta Sama and Masih Shadab)

Aims of the conference:

1. **Raising awareness:** By discussing educational limitations and challenges faced by Afghan women and girls, the aim is to raise awareness of the need for increased support.
2. **Promoting dialog and cooperation:** The conference serves as a platform to intensify dialog and cooperation between members of the Afghan diaspora in the EU.
3. **Developing solutions:** Participants will work together to discuss and develop solutions and support measures for Afghan women and girls.
4. **Building bridges between countries of origin and destination:** Using the knowledge and resources of the diaspora to create an effective "bridge" between Afghanistan, the country of origin, and the EU host countries.

Topics of the conference:

1. **Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan:** Analysis of the current situation and challenges.
2. **Education as the key to self-empowerment:** Discussion on the transformative role of education.
3. **Cooperation and partnership:** discussing opportunities for cooperation between the Afghan diaspora in the EU.
4. **Role of EU countries (Austria) and international NGOs:** assessment of support by host countries and NGOs.
5. **Empowerment through education:** Emphasizing the importance of education as a tool for self-empowerment.
6. **Looking to the future:** discussion of long-term prospects and sustainable measures.

Participants:

We are inviting 30 women from the Afghan diaspora from European countries. There will also be up to 70 participants from Austria. Overall, we aim to use this conference not only to raise awareness of the educational limitations of Afghan women and girls, but also to take concrete steps towards a better future. We hope for broad support for this initiative and look forward to a fruitful exchange.

Binding registration with Ghousuddin Mir:
office@akiseu.org, Tel:004366035445469