



CCIS | Center for Comparative
Immigration Studies

Organizing Live-in Care Workers in the U.S. and in Germany

Tuesday, November 19, 2024 | 11:00AM - 12:00PM Pacific Time
In-person Event Only | ERC Conference Room 115



Gülten Gizem Fesli

Gizem Fesli (she/her) is a PhD candidate in Sociology at Bayreuth University, Germany, with a focus on Intersectionality Studies and CCIS Visiting Graduate Student at UC San Diego. Her dissertation titled “Labor Union Organizing Strategies of Transnational Care Workers in Germany and the USA” is the first comparative study of contemporary labor union organizing of transnational care workers in both welfare states.

She studied at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg (FAU) and San Diego State University (SDSU). She holds a Bachelor’s degree in Teaching (English, Political Science, Pedagogy), and a Master’s degree in Sociology from FAU.

This lecture explores the challenges and strategies involved in organizing live-in care workers in Germany and the U.S., focusing on the intersection of care, migration, and labor regimes. Transnational care workers, primarily from Eastern Europe, often face socio-spatial isolation, irregular working conditions, and limited access to social security in Germany. While unionization efforts in Germany are hindered by structural barriers, the U.S., particularly through the Domestic Workers Union (DWU) and the United Domestic Workers (UDW), has made significant progress in organizing undocumented and Black care workers using intersectional approaches. Drawing on empirical data from interviews with unions and worker centers in both countries, this research analyzes how race, class, and gender shape the experiences of migrant care workers and examines cross-national lessons for improving labor protections and policy outcomes.

For more information please email w2tam@ucsd.edu