



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Postdoctoral Researcher (x2) - ERC Project, Balkans Case Studies

Building Conceptual and Methodological Expertise for the Study of Gender, Agency and Authority in Islam (BILQIS)

(Work Package on Islamic Family Laws in 19th/20th century political, social, legal transitions in the Balkans Case Studies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, and Greece)

Irish Centre for Human Rights, School of Law

Ref. No. 010304

JOB ADVERTISEMENT

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for two full-time, fixed term position as a Postdoctoral Researcher on the European Research Council funded project 'Building Conceptual and Methodological Expertise for the Study of Gender, Agency and Authority in Islam (BILQIS)' with the [Irish Centre for Human Rights](#) at the University of Galway, Ireland.

These positions are funded by the European Research Council and are available from 1st September 2024 for 24 months (2 years).

Building Conceptual and Methodological Expertise for the Study of Gender, Agency and Authority in Islam (BILQIS) emerges from a critical concern around Muslim women's access to justice in Europe. BILQIS will be driven by methodological advances in Islamic feminism and will be primarily distinguished by its systematic and rigorous inquiries into questions of gender in relation to Islamic family laws (IFL) and IFL-related socio-religious and socio-legal power structures. The project will engage in a comparative study how Muslim women in Europe have navigated agency and authority over time from the long 19th century to the present day across diverse European peripheries, specifically the Ottoman Balkans, the post-Ottoman Balkans, and the territorial spaces that are currently governed by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Ireland, Norway, and Sweden. BILQIS will interrogate how the gendered development of IFL in each of these peripheral contexts can be better understood in terms agency and authority through studies of legal texts and authorities (e.g., *qadis*, *sijills*, *muftis*, *fatwas*, *istintâk*, national court judgements) and will produce new critical, contextual, conceptual, and constructive knowledge in this regard. As a result BILQIS will break significant epistemic, conceptual and methodological impasses around *shari'a*, conflict of laws, and cultural pluralism in Europe. Finally, BILQIS will aim to use the sum of this new knowledge to construct a new methodological framework to transform the study of gender gaps and power imbalances related to agency and authority. The Post-Doctoral Researcher will be based at the Irish Centre for Human Rights and will work closely with the PI.

Salary: Postdoctoral Researcher salary scale €42,782 - €54,965 per annum, (subject to the project's funding limitations), and pro rata for shorter and/or part-time contracts.

The default position for all new public sector appointments is the 1st point of the salary scale. This may be reviewed, and consideration afforded to appointment at a higher point on the payscale (subject to the



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project's funding limitations), where evidence of prior years' equivalent experience is accepted in determining placement on the scale above point 1, subject to the maximum of the scale.

[\(Research Salary Scales - University of Galway\)](#)

Closing date for receipt of applications is 17:00 (Irish Time) on 16th May 2024. It will not be possible to consider applications received after the closing date.

Please review full job description for further details and essential requirement

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Description:

The successful candidate will work with Professor Roja Fazaeli at the Irish Centre for Human Rights, University of Galway, Ireland to study and advance knowledge on gendered aspects of Islamic family laws during 19th and 20th century political, social, and legal transitions across the Balkans, with a specific focus on the national contexts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, and Greece.

The successful candidates will work closely with the principal investigator and other researchers in the team on the European Research Council funded project 'Building Conceptual and Methodological Expertise for the Study of Gender, Agency and Authority in Islam (BILQIS).'

The Postdoctoral Researchers will work closely with the PI on the Work Package 2 (WP2) "IFL (Islamic Family Laws across Balkan Transitions."

WP2 will use socio-political, socio-historical, and socio-cultural analysis to engage the question of how 19th and 20th century Balkan transitions between different forms of governance affected conceptual understandings of Islamic authority and Muslim women's agency in relation to IFL. Additionally, WP2 will ask how Muslim women engage with newer forms of religious authority, including transnational religious influences on IFL in the Balkans, and whether any historic methods of navigating governing transitions are observable in their responses. WP2 will focus on three case studies of Bosnia, Bulgaria and Greece, all of which are uniquely marked by long term indigenous Muslim histories extending back in time more than half a millennium and centred on institutional ideas of Islam anchored by *ulema* and religious schools.

The relative constancy of shifting social contexts across the Balkans has meant that practices of minority politics have become important to how Muslim women have accessed justice. WP2 also aims to discover how these minority practices developed or were eclipsed with regard to the functions of *muftiate* frameworks in contexts of communism and nationalism, including their relationship to constitutional and legislative structures within state frameworks

Duties: The initial portion of WP2 will conduct critical textual analysis of primary and secondary sources describing and analyzing 19th and 20th century Balkan transitions. In the second portion of WP2 the PDs will conduct interviews with muftis, women religious and civil activists, religious leaders, civil society actors, academics, as well as legal and state actors.

The Postdoctoral researchers will:



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- conduct critical textual analysis of primary and secondary sources describing and analysing 19th and 20th century Balkan transitions
- conduct interviews with muftis, women religious and civil activists, religious leaders, civil society actors, academics, as well as legal and state actors in Bosnia/Bulgaria/Greece
- Write and prepare papers for presentation and publication, including single authored and co-authored publication
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- Prepare a co-edited essay collection
- Contribute to the project website and online dissemination platforms, including social media
- Organise workshops and seminars on the topics related to WP2
- Any associated administrative duties
- Any other duties assigned commensurate to this level of post.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Essential Requirements:

- A PhD in Law and society, Area studies, Gender studies, Comparative law, History of law, Cultural studies, Islamic studies, or a related field.
- Fluency in at least one of the following languages: Bosnian/Bulgarian/Greek
- Experience in qualitative research
- Knowledge of academic and civic society: Bosnia/Bulgaria/Greece
- Excellent writing and communication skills
- Ability to work well both collaboratively and independently
- Highly motivated, with excellent organisational skills

Desirable Requirements:

- Ability and ambition to produce single-authored publications that reflect the subject and methodologies of the project
- Experience in the reading/editing of manuscripts
- Peer-reviewed publication record
- Experience working with databases
- Computer literacy / IT skills

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Continuing Professional Development/Training:

Researchers at University of Galway are encouraged to avail of a range of training and development opportunities designed to support their personal career development plans. University of Galway provides continuing professional development supports for all researchers seeking to build their own career pathways either within or beyond academia. Researchers are encouraged to engage with our Researcher Development Centre (RDC) upon commencing employment - see [HERE](#) for further information.



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Further Information/Links

- **To apply:** [Jobs - University of Galway](#). Applications must be submitted online.
 - [Internal Applicant - How to apply guide](#)
 - [External Applicant - How to apply guide](#)
- For informal enquiries, please contact Professor Roja Fazaeli, Email roja.fazaeli@universityofgalway.ie
- [University's Strategic Plan](#)
- [Working in Research at University of Galway](#)
- [Moving to Ireland \(Euraxess\)](#)
- We reserve the right to re-advertise or extend the closing date for this post.
- University of Galway is an equal opportunities employer.
- All positions are recruited in line with Open, Transparent, Merit (OTM) and Competency based recruitment.

