

The Indianapolis Eric M. Warburg Chapter of the American Council on Germany,  
Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies at Harvard University, and the  
Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy

cordially invite you to a

**Discussion**

with

**Dr. Sebastian Koos**

John F. Kennedy Memorial Fellow  
Center for European Studies, Harvard University

on

**“From Streets to Charities: Explaining Altruistic Giving to the Poor in Europe”**

**Tuesday, April 12, 2016**

4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Lilly Family School of Philanthropy  
University Hall 3011  
301 N. University Boulevard  
Indianapolis, IN 46202

There is no cost to attend. Space is limited, RSVP are required [here](#).



**Dr. Sebastian Koos** is this year’s recipient of the CES John F. Kennedy Memorial Fellowship. He is Assistant Professor of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the Department of Politics and Public Administration of the University of Konstanz, Germany, and serves as an external fellow at the Mannheim Centre for European Social Research, University of Mannheim, Germany. His research focuses on sustainable and political consumerism, CSR, employment relations, the moral economy of capitalism, and pro-social behavior. At CES, he will be working on a project studying the varieties of gift economies across Europe. The project analyzes the institutional and organizational structures of giving money, time, human blood, and organs in a comparative perspective. He received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Mannheim after studying consumer and corporate responsibility across Europe. Dr. Koos serves as Chair of the Economic Sociology Research Network of the European Sociological Association based in Paris.

**Abstract:** Despite developed market economies and welfare states, poverty remains a pivotal social problem in most European societies. The financial and fiscal crises of some countries and the recent massive influx of refugees have further increased the number of people in need. Where markets and welfare states fail to provide sufficient income to these people, private help by individuals and nonprofit organizations constitute a crucial mechanism of support. Only recently, the refugee crisis in Europe has shown the importance of private giving. Helping people in need by providing goods or services can be understood as a prime example of altruistic behavior, the explanation of which has long puzzled scholars from different disciplines. Explanations of who gives range from specific individual resources to altruistic identities and the “warm glow” of giving. Yet, such microscopic understandings of altruism are challenged by extensive differences in the degree to which people give to the needy across Europe. In this presentation, Dr. Koos will review some of the existing explanations of altruism, and offer an institutional perspective on giving patterns across Europe. After providing some analysis on donations to and volunteering for the poor in Europe using empirical data from 2009, he turned to the recent refugee crises in Europe, with a special focus on Germany. He will discuss the emergence of an immense wave of help and support for refugees in summer 2015 and provide some insights into who helped and why they did so.