

Presentation of the

Peace Transfer Center Augsburg

at the UN Peacebuilding Week 2026, June 26th 2026, New York

Side Event „Strengthening Peacebuilding Partnerships at Local and National Levels in Conflict-Affected and Non-Conflict Settings“

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Why do we call this center the „Peace Transfer Center“? It refers to the scientific expertise in the field of peace and conflict studies and its transfer into the related fields of practice. By establishing the Peace Transfer Center, our goal was to make this scientific expertise available—through various formats of presentation and forms of collaboration—primarily to Augsburg’s urban community. At the same time, we are working on ways to improve and streamline the transfer of our expertise *overall*. And one particular insight is crucial for this: the transfer of scientific expertise succeeds, when we have a good understanding of the practical needs for expertise—we refer to this as “multi-directional transfer”, meaning a two-way exchange between academia and practice.

For many years, my chair has already been conducting practice-oriented peace and conflict research, and in 2022, we secured funding from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research for a big research consortium. This enabled us to establish the “Bavarian Center for Peace and Conflict Research” (Bayerisches Zentrum für Friedens- und Konfliktforschung - BZeFK) in Augsburg. This is an inter-university research consortium, which is funded for six years, through 2028, with a total of approximately 3 million Euro. However, the vast majority of this funding is allocated to basic research about “Deutungskämpfe” (*struggles over meaning*), and only a very small portion is earmarked for knowledge transfer. But it is sufficient to carry out the transfer in the Peace Transfer Center (PTC).

How did the Peace Transfer Center come into being? With the help of numerous contacts within the Augsburg city government, I initiated the establishment of the Peace Transfer Center in Augsburg in 2022. In 2023, the Augsburg City Council passed a resolution for the establishment of the PTC, followed by an agreement with the University of Augsburg. This agreement stipulates close collaboration between my chair, the Office for Municipal Prevention, the City of Augsburg’s Peace Office and the Office for social integration, regarding the activities of the Peace Transfer Center.

At the Peace Transfer Center, we have developed **three formats for the transfer:**

- public educational events;
- target-group-specific training and qualification programs;
- scientific support for projects concerning municipal issues.

For better illustration, let me give you some examples of **public educational events:**

- Every year, we are holding an event to present the annual “Peace Report” of the four big German Instituts of Peace Research; or we organize lectures and discussions on escalated conflicts in other regions of the world, such as Sudan or Palestine and so on.
- The “Peace Summer School”, a three-day educational program on a different topic each year is another example; this year’s theme is: “Creating Peace Together Ourselves!”
- And in this summer, we have a series of workshops titled “Practices of Peace,” featuring, for example, workshops on constructive conflict resolution in everyday conflicts.

And some examples of **training and qualification programs tailored to specific target groups** are:

- Conflict resolution skills courses for educational professionals in child daycare centers;
- Anti-discrimination workshops addressing forms of group-focused enmity, such as racism, anti-Semitism, or sexism;
- And we developed an online course about preventing sexual violence among young people.

Activities in the format of **Scientific support for projects concerning municipal issues** are:

- We conducted several participatory research projects, for example on the effects of municipal conflict consulting in cases of urban conflicts at risk of escalation;
- In 2023, the City of Augsburg commissioned us to carry out a participatory project to further develop the Augsburg Peace Festival program each summer.

In the meantime, the Peace Transfer Center's **work extends far beyond Augsburg:**

- we collaborate with similar institutions in other cities, such as in Bayreuth and in Landau;
- we have founded a working group for knowledge transfer between researchers and practitioners within the "Platform Peaceful Conflict Transformation" - an important non-governmental network in Germany -, where knowledge transfer is discussed and implemented – and this working group is also linked to the „German Association for Peace and Conflict Research“ (AFK);
- We also cooperate transnationally with the Human Rights Center at the University of Dayton, as Dayton is one of Augsburg's sister cities.

The Peace Transfer Center is based in Augsburg because Augsburg is a city of peace. In commemoration of the Augsburg Religious Peace of 1555 and the end of the Thirty Years' War in 1648, Augsburg celebrates the Peace Festival every year on August 8th since 1650. In the weeks leading up to the festival, there is a cultural program featuring numerous events on the theme of "peace." And the only chair for peace and conflict studies in Bavaria is located at the University of Augsburg, the "City of Peace."

Our activities are currently focused, amongst other things, on the threat to democracy posed by far-right political forces and the lack of willingness to engage in discourse about current political conflicts as the key peacebuilding challenges in Germany at present. There is a lack of conflict resolution skills and the competencies needed to address conflicts constructively. The Peace Transfer Center contributes to addressing this through its programs.

Another important task for the coming year is: institutionalizing the Peace Transfer Center. The agreement between the city and the university provides for a three-year pilot phase, which will end next year. That is why we are already working on extending this agreement and, at the same time, seeking to expand our network of cooperation partners.