



International Talk Seminar by the Institute for Social Ethics



# "Learning from Germany: Minimum standard of living"

- To consider what a "healthy and cultural minimum standard of living" should be in Japan -



Date and time: Wednesday, **October 9, 2024**  
**13:35-15:15 (3rd period)**

Location: Nanzan University **room Q501**

Speaker: **Alexander Graser**

(Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Regensburg, Germany)

Title: "The Long Road to Justice: Recent Case Law on Minimum Living Standards in Germany"

Speaker: **Akiko Toyoshima**

(Associate Research Fellow, Institute for Social Ethics / Professor, Faculty of Law)

Moderator: **Madoka Miwa**

(Professor, Faculty of Policy Studies, Nanzan University)

Currently in Japan, lawsuits regarding "the minimum standard of wholesome and cultured living" in Article 25 of the Constitution are being filed and are ongoing all over the country. This lawsuit was filed by plaintiffs who were recipients of welfare benefits whose benefits had been reduced due to the government's "lowering of welfare standards policy." The current outcome is an unusually high rate of victory for plaintiffs in administrative litigation (18 out of 28 judgments issued by district courts and high courts have been in favor of plaintiffs as of September 1, 2024), and the outcome of the trial in the future is attracting attention.

Meanwhile, in Germany, reforms to the "social assistance" system, which is equivalent to Japan's public assistance system, were carried out in the early 2000s. However, since 2010, the Federal Constitutional Court has ruled that the resulting reductions in benefit levels are unconstitutional. In light of the current problematic situation in Japan, some interesting developments are already underway.

We recently had the opportunity to have Professor Alexander Graser, an expert on this topic, visit us in Nagoya. Therefore, we would like to take this valuable opportunity to learn from the situation in Germany and think about what guarantees a "minimum standard of living" worthy of human dignity are, and what challenges lie in achieving this.

Host: Institute for Social Ethics, Nanzan University  
Co-organized by: Nanzan University School of Policy Studies

