

Workshop reports: Online-Conference “Sharing beyond borders 2020”

Workshop 5 Effects of Migration on People remaining in Countries of Departure in Eastern Europe

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Our workshop “Effects of Migration on People remaining in Countries of Departure in eastern Europe” has shown clearly that the notion of vulnerability is accompanied with the empowerment. We heard two presentations and had opportunity to share an interdisciplinary session.

Dr. Ana Luleva presented the results of her anthropological, ethnographic research dedicated to the status of migrant women from Bulgaria in a temporary work in Italy. The respondents worked as caregivers. Through numerous interviews with older women and research on working conditions in Italy, but above all the “familialistic social contract” in Bulgaria (historical socialist background in Bulgaria) Dr. Luleva showed that people who decide to take this step are not only victims of society and the system, nor are irresponsible mothers and wives as most stereotypes provide. It is primarily a matter of persons who voluntarily and consciously entered new social contracts, through which, as caregivers providing both moral and emotional support to their clients, they further self-realized. Those women also achieved the goal of economic empowerment of their families at home. Dr. Luleva proves that it is not just a matter of work, but that it is a question of the moral economy of the work related to care.

The second research was presented to us by Ema Staicut, an artist, actress who, together with colleagues who also belong to the field of culture and art, researched the concept/notion of “home” and the psychological consequences that those who stay in Departure countries – in this case Romania, after Migrants have gone, face. Such extremely complex topics can and must be explored only interdisciplinary! The group of “Homing Project” has undergone actions in Romania, ie in Timisoara, live but also virtually in conversation with numerous actors of migrant stories around the world. Discussions and interviews led to the numerous programs: performance, exhibitions, workshops, film, talks, music events, gastro-event, etc. which were inspired by following questions:

In which direction is home? How does home sound like? Should I stay or go? How does home taste like? Have you arrived home? Why are we staying? Why is the grass always greener on the other side? So, where is home?

During the discussion, all participants of this Workshop agreed that these phenomena must be viewed in the broader context of EU policy, but that before we ask the European Union what it will do to reduce the problems in migrants' domicile countries, we must act personally, on a micro level, as the “Homing” project and Dr. Ana Luleva act.

The European Union needs a transformation, and this is clearly shown by different general and specific parameters all around Europe, as well as by two researches here, which certainly contribute to the re-thinking of Europe.