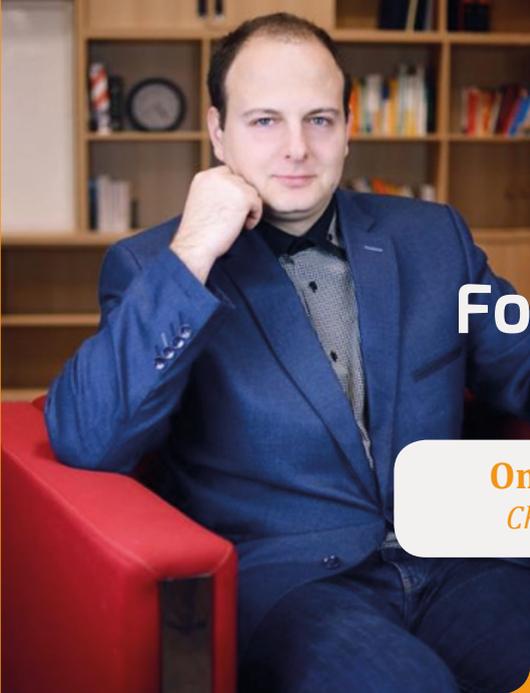




JEAN MONNET CHAIR IN MIGRATION:  
THE CHALLENGE OF EUROPEAN STATES

# MIGRATION: INTERDISCIPLINARY CHALLENGE IN LEARNING

**VOL. II**



## FOREWORD

**Ondřej Filipec, Ph.D.**  
*Chief Editor of the Issue*

Dear readers,

When we released our first issue six months ago we did not expect that our brochure will have such positive feedback. For this reason we decided to publish at least one more issue which will deal with migration in slightly different perspectives. While the previous issue dealt mainly with academic perspectives and research, this one will deal with non-governmental and citizen perspectives on migration. We think this is especially important because migration shall be not only be part of formal education at the universities or high schools, but also part of non-formal education within NGO's programmes and within informal education. However, formal education is not fully abandoned in this issue as well.

Learning is closely related to teaching and teachers often face challenges in dealing with migration. What challenges they face was the subject of the interview with **Jana Nováková**, a high school teacher from the Czech Republic who is teaching social sciences. She was very open with me and for this reason Jana is not her real name as we do not want to cause any problems to her. But be sure, there is a real person behind this interview, and I can vouch for her, since I have known her for some years.

A very interesting comment has been shared with us by **Michaela Němečková** – a social justice activist. She delivered some thoughts

on why are some people more equal than others and asked a simple question: what is the difference between migrant and expat? Her views are full of personal experience from her life in a big European city and in some aspects presented opinion is provocative. However, we decided to keep her contribution as it may stimulate interesting debate.

Then **RESEARCH highlight** is presented providing an overview of 10 interesting research items related to NGOs, migration and learning with the main focus on European issues.

**Jakub Miklín** from the European Youth Centre Břeclav wrote an essay about non-formal education and migration. It is very interesting topic as non-formal education is more attractive for some people. Moreover, Jakub Miklín is a youth worker, manager and NGO director. A director of a well established NGO which in 10 years have sent around 900 people to 340 international projects. Some years ago I was one of them.

A **VOLUNTEER** perspective has been shared with us by **Michaela Vyležíková**. Michaela is an interesting woman. She spent some 3 months on the borders helping refugees coming to Europe and she continues to work in the field of education. As a real practitioner with great experience her points provides interesting perspective on the issue of migration and education.

We present the profile of one NGO written by **Anda Upeniece**. The NGO is the Georgia based International Centre for Peace and Integration, a well established NGO with considerable activities in non-formal education and migration as well. Maybe this profile will be sort of inspiration for you and you may establish some cooperation.

And lastly, our security expert **Aaron T. Walter** made for you a review of few books about migration.

Many interesting contributions, with one fascinating and relevant topic! Enjoy the reading. And finally... we would like to thank Jean Monnet Chair for supporting our project.

**Ondřej Filipec, Ph.D.**  
*Chief Editor of the Issue*

# TEACHING ABOUT MIGRATION AT CZECH HIGH SCHOOL IS A CHALLENGE

*Jana Nováková (35) is a Czech grammar school teacher of social science. She has 9 years long experience in teaching. In order to keep her response anonymous her real name has been changed. In the following interview we asked her about teaching on migration and the challenges she faces with students and colleagues.*

**A very open  
interview with  
Jana Nováková**  
*Czech high-school teacher*

*Dear Jana, thank you for making time for this interview and that you openly share your views with us. I would like to ask you, what was your motivation to start teaching at the grammar school and why have you chosen to teach social sciences?*

Some years ago I started my Ph.D. at one of the Czech universities, but maybe as you know, the scholarships for Ph.D. candidates were not sufficient to secure basic needs. So I have decided that I will use one of the offers from my friend that I can teach several hours per week as a replacement for maternity leave. Originally, I had not expected what it will be like teaching high school students because I only had experience teaching university students during my Ph.D. programme in social sciences. But I liked it. I never expected that I will become full time teacher. Motivation came naturally with the time passed because I realised that I felt good with it and that i got along with teenagers well. Similarly, I had background in social sciences so teaching it at high school was part of the deal. Then I started to see teaching young people as a lot more meaningful for life than doing other professions.



*For already some years, migration is a hot topic of discussions in the public space. You have contact with young people. How do you evaluate their knowledge about migration and what are their attitudes to migrants or migration crisis?*

It is hard to motivate students (or at least my students) to watch the news or what is going on in the world. They are only exposed to big and most important things which get to them from social networks or from their parents. Because of lack of interest or information, they started to ask me about these issues during the lessons, especially the older pupils. I remember that first questions were formulated in a negative way, they asked me about conspiracy theories, that particular question was on 9/11 as the inside job. So I had to debunk some myths on a very sceptical basis, question the sources of these theories and to teach them that the issue is more complex than it seems at the first sight.

On the other occasion, they had impression that migration is organized activity by the USA. They thought that refugees are coming to Europe mainly because of economic reasons to get more money. So I tried to explain to them: when your house is burned and someone tries to kill you, you try to escape. I suggested them to imagine the situation in their daily life at the war zone. So then I started to use example of migration in my lectures of philosophy when delivering lectures on epistemology. Basically, in the beginning they liked conspiracy theories and did not trust mainstream media. There was a challenge to

explain them that there is big difference between mainstream media, social media and alternative media. I advised them to check and verify information presented anywhere. This was something I highlighted also later when migration was used also within propaganda context. Finally, I have taught them that any view taken is necessarily limited.

*I appreciate your dedication, but teaching about migration at school is one part of the process. To what degree are students influenced by their families? Because it seems that especially older people, like their parents, are very sceptical and use less relevant information. Have you ever had conflict with parents on what you teach students during your lessons?*

I think that opinions of parents and grandparents strongly influence students. But I never had problems with parents and I think this is because I always respected opinions of students and I have never undermined or downplayed their fears. I also think that when students are exposed to common opinions at home, school should provide them with opportunity to see public issues from a little different angle. When they say: Migration is a security threat, I never questioned this but I add the opinion that situation is much better in Europe compared to Pakistan or Nigeria. In these states a lot more people die because of terrorism and this is because their security forces are not as efficient as those in Europe. Similarly, I have compared number of terrorist attacks in Europe especially to 1970s and 1980s and compared to that, even today the number of terrorist attacks are low.

*What about your colleague teachers? Do they share fact based approach on migration or you have opinion fights with them? Are students exposed by diverging opinions or even conspiracy theories at your school from the side of your colleagues?*

Most of my colleagues, especially when teaching social sciences, history or geography, share my fact based approach. But there are also colleagues who are strongly influenced by conspiracy theories.

And from their opinions it is evident that they read disinformation websites. I have tried to avoid open conflict with them because we have other hot issues to solve. With students you can start a polite confrontation because they will leave in few years. But with colleagues, it is different. You meet them everyday plus you never know who of them will take the discussion too personally. Most probably you will work with them much longer than with students so I do not think the politics does belong to relationships with colleagues, especially when there are already enough and sometimes pretty hard opinion cleavages among us.

I know that my colleagues are very open about their opinions among students. On the

other side I think that students shall not be like fish in the aquarium and they should know arguments and opinions from the other side.

*"I think it is like one in ten of my colleagues who are influenced by disinformation and their opinions are motivated by fear or feeling that mainstream media are not telling the whole truth."*

*So, you think that high schools can offer "healthy" environment for teaching on migration? What are the main challenges and shortcomings at your institution regarding teaching about migration?*

It is very hard question. I still have a dilemma if these people reading conspiracy theories should teach or not. I often hear opinions that these people should not have access to students, although they don't teach subjects related to migration. On the other side it is not fair to fire people because of their opinions. Human resources policy still is the issue of the headquarters. The management knows about this, but from what I know, these propaganda victims have only been reproached and nothing else had been done. Maybe one of the reasons for this is, the colleague is older, has very good relations to headquarters and the director himself is open to conspiracy theories, although not as strongly as the mentioned colleague. In the end it is good for students to hear all the scale of opinions to show them how freedom of speech works. If the school would limit some of the

opinions, that would be from my point of view clearly unhealthy for teaching on any issue, including migration. So yes, I would say that if the student is able to advocate his opinions, base them on facts, question the opinions of authorities, there is rather a healthy environment and especially there is no reason to tell them what to think and what not.

*What can be done better during the education process? Or do you feel some institutional limits when teaching? I mean that teaching about migration is related to various other issues as you mentioned: history, geography or media education.*

One of the strongest institutional problems I see concerning migration or other serious contemporary public issues is the amount of responsibilities planned by the ministry of education. We have lots of compulsory topics to teach. Particularly in social sciences we are required to lecture them the basics in law, economy, sociology, environmentalism, cultural anthropology, religion studies, psychology, politics, European studies and of course some basics in philosophy. For all these topics we only have one, and later two 45 minutes lessons per week. In addition to all of that we are expected to give students civic, communication, social, economic and other 13 skills aside knowledge mentioned before. There is not enough time to be flexible and react thoroughly on contemporary public issues. From time to time we are very glad to invite people from universities, media and NGOs to give students a lesson or two. I am sure social science teachers, and of course not only them would welcome having a stronger say in choosing the topics to teach. The solution clearly is not to require students to stay in school for longer time, because they already have more than 30 lessons per week and in the remaining time they have to keep some time to study at home, doing sports, have hobbies, have the time to relax and of course spend some time with their families.

# WHY ARE SOME PEOPLE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS?

**By Michaela Němečková**

*Social justice activist and works as a project coordinator in a Brussels-based NGO.*

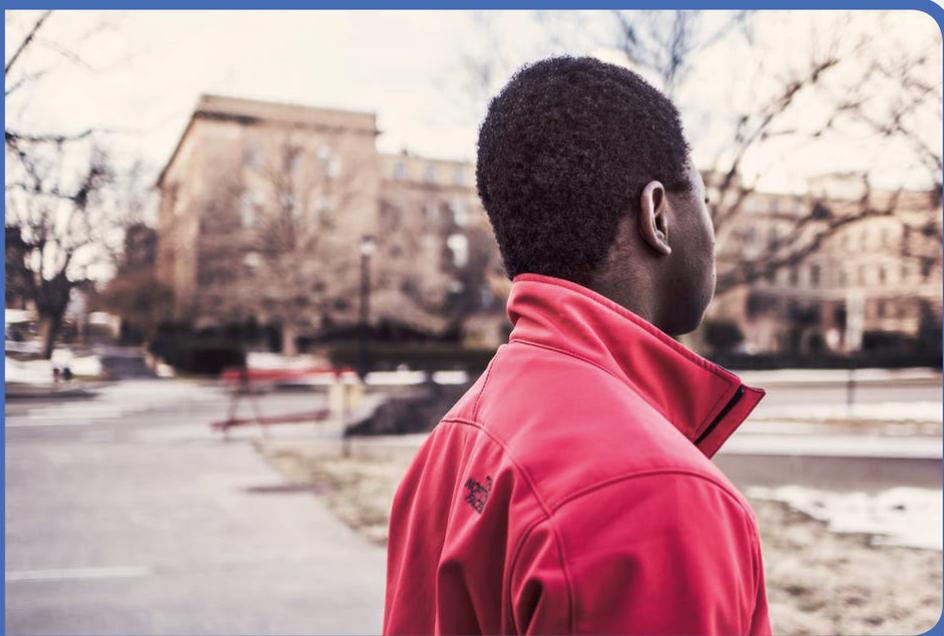


We, white, educated, middle class, English speaking Europeans, often do not realise how privileged we are. Wherever (in Europe) we are, we feel welcomed by others as if we were at “home” there. For some unknown reason we simply “belong” there. Just like that. We do not have to do anything to deserve it, and we take it for granted that it is the way it is.

We are part of a group of people that is not being challenged by anyone, our right to settle down anywhere in the EU is not being questioned, and nobody labels us as “immigrants”. Even if we do move out to another country, we are still not immigrants, instead, we are “expats”, a term that would never be bestowed to a person working manually and/or a person of colour. The short form of expatriate is used to describe a well-educated, comfortably well-off professional working abroad in an office environment, while “immigrant” refers to a person sometimes also labelled as a “low skilled worker”, a manual worker, that is, and other people in low income positions. The term expat and immigrant has to do not only with skin colour, but mainly with class, and as such is a highly hierarchical term. However, in societies, typically western ones, where the number of skilled Europeans who moved there in order to work is higher than usual, the term expat is being heavily used by others and is considered to be neutral. There are events for expats, political parties are trying to engage expats in local life. There are shops and cafes for expats there. Expats, unlike immigrants, even

have fancy quarters in cities designed for them, with nice parks and services and decent living conditions. Interestingly enough, in the very same cities, there are often loads of people labelled as immigrants, they are often more numerous than expats, but nobody is trying to mobilize them, get them to vote in local elections, engage with them, there are no special cafes and gatherings or language courses for immigrants. Even though they constitute a substantial part of the same society, it seems like nobody really cares about them.

*Colour of skin can make difference between immigrant and expat.*



We, educated, white, English speaking, have the choice to choose where we want to study and work and start a family, and simply feel like home. When we travel abroad, nobody suspects us for blowing ourselves up into pieces at the airport. And because we do not wear a headscarf, we are never being searched for too long. We avoid all troubles just because we were born white and in well-situated family. Our whiteness makes us automatically subsumed into the local society, everywhere in Europe.

The more west we go in the EU, the more heterogeneous societies we see. However, even if the societies in Western Europe are diverse

at first sight, when we look into offices and institutions, surprisingly, we can't find anyone but whites. It is only if we wait until the whites have gone home that we can finally see non-EU citizens and people "of colour" (as if white is not a colour!) turning up with hoovers, coming in late in the evenings to clean our offices and pick up our litter. We, the whites, work in those offices, but blacks clean them. We enjoy decent salaries, while they are working hard for nothing, being cleaners, or running corner shops, selling vegetables on the market, or working as receptionists if they are lucky. But how did we merit all of this? Well, we were just born white to the right parents. We did not study too hard, well, yes - we could go to a university because our parents had decent jobs and could afford supporting us financially over the years - and we simply took up an office job later on.

And then, some years later perhaps, we decided to take up another office job in another country, and we became expats. In the meantime, guys of our age in this new country who were born to parents of colour who did not go to university became "immigrants" in their own society. How did this happen? Well, we just let it happen. Politicians, media, and the public accepted this labelling of people, we allowed racisms and xenophobia to sneak (back) in to our minds and slowly but surely it became normal to label people and divide them again, based on their look and their job.

In the meantime, we, the rich whites, are too busy with our own comfortable lives to be concerned about those who were not that lucky. Collectively, we are failing to realise that we live our easy lives just because we were lucky to be born into a privileged class, and we keep exploiting poorer ones.

And then, once we become bored in our new country, we may decide to move elsewhere in Europe again, just like that, and find another decent job. When we are interested in renting a flat, the landlord does not ask us how many siblings we have, assuming they will not turn up one day and move in with us. And then we meet another guy our age who works as a taxi driver, day and night. Yes, he may went to school for several years and speaks five languages, but he was born to parents of colour who run a corner shop and had little means to support him, so he did not enrol to study further. And even though they came here

decades ago and he was born here and grew up here, even though he follows the politics of this country while we're trying to figure out whether this is a kingdom or a republic and who's running it, he's still considered a foreigner – and we feel like home and welcome by others. Yes, it's true that we don't know any of the official languages in the country we live in, and he knows them all, but we are white and we work in an office, so we've got no problems whatsoever. People don't watch out their purse when we sit next to them on a public transport. Just by being white we're simply something more than our coloured, poorer neighbours. Nobody looks down their nose at us, nobody expects us to “go back to where we came from”. Quite the contrary, we other locals meet us, they may even start complaining about “the immigrants” from next door, isn't it outrageous! And, indeed, it is.

Thanks to the colour of our skin and conditions we grew up in, we are not being searched when going to a concert, and if so, then with an apologetic smile of the police staff. Thanks to the colour of our skin, we enjoy a better status. People expect us to be polite, nice, to have no evil intentions, not to steal, not to deal drugs and not to engage in any other illegal activity. When we do something we shouldn't do, like not paying for our ticket on public transport, we are more likely to be forgiven, because people are being nice to us, because we are white, and whites never have bad intentions.

The fact that some people are being treated nicely whilst others are treated as suspicious because of their looks and background, the fact that some groups of people are being taken care of while others are left behind, forgotten, the fact that some people are considered to be more valuable than others, is just wrong. We are in 2018 and in theory we are all equal. We should finally also live up to that theory and change this sick vision we have about “us” and “them”. In order to do this, we need to start with ourselves and challenge our own thoughts, habits and behaviour. It is a high time to start seeing people as humans who are equal instead of expats and immigrants.

## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT:

### Migration and the role of NGOs

Migration and the role of NGOs became an important research subject after 2015. Despite publishing academic articles; the academic environment is often delayed due to the review process and limited numbers of issues published. Nevertheless there are already some remarkable articles published.

We will start with the global picture of migration as a global phenomenon. In this area, there is a very interesting article written by **Stephanie A. Limoncelli** (2016) published in the *Journal of Human Trafficking*. Her article, “What in the World Are Anti-Trafficking NGOs Doing? Findings from a Global Study” is based on data of 1,861 NGOs worldwide whom identify themselves as dealing with the issue of human trafficking mostly from Asia and Europe. The author revealed that NGOs have a great variety of specializations, but children are mainly targeted with often the focus on both labour and sex trafficking awareness and policy advocacy, rather than direct service provisions.

A more detailed analysis focusing on Europe is presented by **Anna Marta Rosinska** who wrote an article entitled “The Gaps in the System of Combating Human Trafficking in Poland on the Basis of the NGO Strada” in the *Asian-Pacific Journal of Social Quality*. She stressed that the Polish system is relatively effective at the operational level including investigation and support for victims but is far from sufficient in the general concept of prevention. She also highlights the limited role of some enforcement agencies.

An interesting chapter appeared in the book “*Mainstreaming Integration Governance*” where the authors, **Ignacy Józwiak**, **María Sánchez-Domínguez**, **Daniel Sorando** wrote a chapter about “Mainstreaming by Accident in the New-Migration Countries: The Role of NGOs in Spain and Poland.” The authors here are analyzing how mainstreaming has occurred and what are the mechanisms about that

process. The authors claim that economic crisis led to phenomenon they call “mainstreaming by accident”. In both states economic crisis has caused economic cuts which resulted in the gap in the coverage of the need for immigrants and that in both state responsibility has been taken by the NGOs.

“Challenges and Opportunities for NGOs and Authorities Framing

Photo by Abraham Osorio on Unsplash



Irregular Immigration” is the name of the article published by collective of authors (**Øyvind Ihlen, Tine Ustad Figenschou and Anna Grøndahl Larsen**) in the *American Behavioral Scientist*. These authors focused on different frames promoted in the news and strategizing

behind the scenes among NGOs and public migration authorities. Their study is based on ethnographic fieldwork and qualitative interviews in which they analyze dilemmas and challenges the actors face in adapting communication strategies to the news media. The authors discovered that on one side media emphasis dramatic individual stories but struggle to balance efficient communication with bureaucratic regulations and values, but on the other side NGOs often exploit media conventions and pitch emotional, individual stories to journalists. Their article has important implications for fake-news and disinformation research.

**Paolo Cuttitta** (2017) published an article entitled “Repoliticization Through Search and Rescue? Humanitarian NGOs and Migration Management in the Central Mediterranean” in *Geopolitics*. He analyzed the search and rescue activities carried out by three NGOs (MOAS, MSF and Sea-Watch) in the Central Mediterranean. His principal question was whether and how far NGOs contribute to repoliticization of the EU maritime border. His contribution is very interesting as all three NGOs acts in different way.

The same topic is also found in the article “Migrants, the EU and NGOs: The “Practice “ of Non-Governmental SAR Operations” published by **Daniela Irrera** (2016) in the *Romanian Journal of European Affairs*. The author discusses the roles of NGOs in the search and rescue operations, discuss current trends and contributions of the NGOs. The author’s perspective is influenced by the expert survey research on the performance of Mare Nostrum and its capacity to manage the crisis.

An interesting article titled “NGOs and Health Services for Irregular Immigrants in Italy: When the Protection of Human Rights Challenges the Laws” was published in 2015 by **Maurizio Ambrosini** in the *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*. The author offers two case studies on NGOs based in Milan with focus on their political activities and provision of health services to irregular immigrants. He concentrates on practical functioning of services, cooperation networks and the role of volunteers. For this reason his article might be source of inspiration for other NGOS.

Maurizio Amborsini together with Joanne Van der Leun wrote the introduction to the special issue “Immigration and Civil Society” (2015) of the above mentioned *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*. There are other noticeable articles. For example **Joanne Van der Leun and Harmen Bouter** wrote about Inclusion and Exclusion of Irregular Immigrants in Dutch Civil Society. Based on fieldwork they discovered that NGOs plays an important supportive role in sheltering the needs of irregular migrants. In the same issue **Els de Graauw** writes about “Polyglot Bureaucracies: Nonprofits Advocacy to Create Inclusive City Governments”. In the chapter, the author provides a case study dealing with two immigrant friendly cities (New York City and San Francisco) and shows, that pressure from the side of NGOs was necessary to improve accessibility of administration to migrants.

# NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND MIGRATION

BY  
JAKUB MIKLÍN

The migration crisis begun in 2015, has made migration a hot issue in Europe in relation to many topics – security, international relations, social policy, economy etc. It is no surprise then, that education could not be left behind this trend, too. The European Union has been striving for strengthening intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding among European cultures and nations for a long time. The recent migrants' influx to Europe has become one of its top priorities.

One of tools that the EU uses to address this issue, is the Erasmus+ programme. While formal education plans are quite rigid and curricula stacked full of information and facts that need to be passed to pupils, it is therefore difficult for schools to react to new problems. Non-formal educational projects within the Erasmus+: Youth programme provide enough flexibility to do so and, in the same time, offers more attractive way of education.

Non-formal education (NFE) is voluntary, learner-centred education that takes place outside the formal education system. Though it is organised and planned, NFE is seldom structured by conventional rhythms and curricular subjects and is more focused on young people's needs than formal education. An emphasis is put on developing competences (combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes) rather than solely on knowledge. Therefore, team work and learning by sharing experiences of participants plays an important role in NFE. It uses highly participatory learning methods such as brainstorming, role-playing, simulations or discussions.

To see how non-formal education can positively contribute to educating (and learning) about migration, let's analyse one project in detail. Three questions will be answered: What were the (educational) aims and objectives of this project (training course)?

What methodology was used and how it contributed to fulfilling those objectives? What results were achieved during the training?

The Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility of youth workers (training course) “Waves of Migration” took place in Lapua, Finland, between 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017 and was organised by NooredÜhiskonnaHeaks<sup>1</sup> (Estonia) and Seinäjoenkaupunki / nuorisopalvelut<sup>2</sup> (Finland). It gathered altogether 24 youth workers from Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Spain. The training course addressed the main problems and challenges connected to migration with the general aim of developing more tolerant and inclusive society and supporting reflection of participants on different dimensions of migration and mobility.

In the beginning, the following learning objectives were set:

- development of a more tolerant, inclusive and egalitarian society;
- support the reflection among participants on the different dimensions of migration and mobility;
- exchange of good practice in the field of youth related to international migration, mobility and its influence on young people in the EU and in the partner countries and the opportunities arising;
- training of youth workers to better address problems and opportunities arising from migration;
- transfer and development of knowledge of European mobility programs in youth worker;
- promotion of European cooperation between NGOs that are in contact with migration and youth mobility;
- the development of new initiatives in the field of youth and mobility within Erasmus +, to give migrants and local youth the same opportunities.

It is obvious that these objectives are focused on developing both knowledge as well as, rather, skills and attitudes of participants.

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<sup>1</sup><http://nyhsharing.blogspot.com.ee/>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.seinajokki.fi/en/index.html>

Logically, all activities were thus based on non-formal education methods, often with a highly participatory approach and using sharing of knowledge and experiences of participants themselves.

The Erasmus+: Youth programme targets at young people between 13 and 30 years and youth workers. Its main aims are developing active engagement of youth in society, removing barriers and supporting inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in society, decreasing unemployment of young people by developing their competences and fostering intercultural dialogue and understanding. It also supports youth workers, their life-long education and creating new youth policies.

The Erasmus+: Youth budget covers all activity costs, 100% of food and accommodation as well as travel costs up to a set limit for projects' participants.

Some of activities were more theoretical and knowledge-based, such as *Introduction to Migration* or *Integration and Inclusion Policies* where participants became familiar with the basic terms and trends connected to migration and official policies addressing migration issues in European as well as global level. The Frontal method was however combined here with active contributions of the participants. This ensured the same level of initial knowledge of all participants.

Most of the activities were based on active participation and contributions of participants. During different role-playing, games and workshops, participants stepped into shoes of refugees or generally strangers in foreign country forced to face a new cultural, linguistic and social environment. E.g. during a *Movement of people* session, participants were asked to fill in an "Asylum Application Form" and later answer questions of an officer, both in foreign language that they did not understand. In another activity, they played card games divided into smaller groups, each sitting around another table. The winner of the game always moved to the next table. However, the rules at each table were slightly different from previous ones such as asylum policies are in each country...

Another important part of the training was sharing realities about (im)migration from participants' home countries, discussing

various problems linked to migration (e.g.: should a country accept immigrants only if there are enough free job placements? Under which conditions should a country accept immigrants? What should/could be done for their better integration into society? etc.), visits to organisations working with immigrants in Lapua and exploring the local reality in a project's venue.

One of the most important results of the training were two new games created by participants covering the topic of migration for youngsters. These games were tested during the project at a local primary school so the participants had a possibility to try a role of trainers themselves and apply what they learned during the training course.

All the sessions and workshops led to exploring migration from several points of view (migrants, officers, authorities and policy-makers, organisations working with migrants, local people) which enabled covering more aspects of migration and evolving not only knowledge, but also attitudes and skills of participants. Thanks to a variety of used non-formal education methods, intercultural environment, emphasis on regular reflections and debriefing, participants developed many competences necessary for their personal as well as professional life: communication in foreign language, social/interpersonal competences, cultural awareness, sense of initiative and creativity, learning competences etc. Finally, the project created tangible and intangible results that can be used for multiplication effect—new games that can be used in several countries around Europe and adapted to specific local conditions and a brochure<sup>1</sup> describing the training in detail (including all the activities) which enables the trainings repetition.

<sup>1</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4PZISNgBL-5ZFJpaHFUeG9IM0IXNBvWC1zTVhMZFBSSFhB/view>.





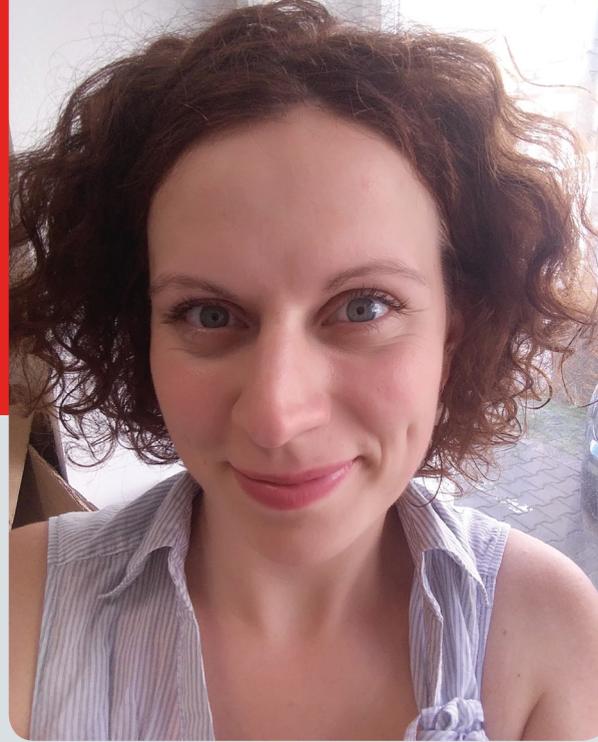
**European Youth Centre Břeclav (EYCB)** was a sending organisation for Czech participants of the training course described in this article. EYCB is non-profit non-governmental organization founded by young people for young people on 15 March 2007. Its main aims and activities are informing young people about EU and its educational programmes, supporting

self-realization and personal development of youth through educational programmes of the EU and developing non-formal education, intercultural dialogue, international cooperation and active civil society. Since its establishment organization send more than 1300 young people a 600 international projects to develop their skills.

# VOLUNTEER PERSPECTIVE

## AN INTERVIEW WITH MICHAELA VYLEŽÍKOVÁ

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*Dear Michaela, thank you for making time for interview. I am really honoured to talk with you as I know you are very busy and usually doing many important things for others. It is quite some time I met you last, maybe five years. At that time you were trying to protect rainforests in Borneo against the palm oil industry.*

It's not really that I was trying to protect the rainforest but rather was I focusing on social aspects that palm oil industry has on the local people. Since most of the farmers were forced to switch from various crops to palm oil exclusively because it's the most profitable (not always for them though), their food security could be harmed. To be dependent on one crop could be a great danger not only for farmers but for the land itself as well.

*I also know from your Facebook that you appeared on the borders in Balkan, helping refugees who were coming to Europe in 2015. What was the moment you decided to go and do something? What were your expectations? Did you have also some disappointment?*

It was a spontaneous decision. And a good one as I look backwards. I saw something horrible happening very close to us, something that we might once regret not acting on, so I decided to take action with the minimum knowledge I had. Although I didn't think that volunteers

should be doing humanitarian intervention since amateurism can sometimes do more harm than good, but it all seemed organized well enough to take part. I expected nothing.

As we were approaching the location and I saw them, real people with backpacks standing in the middle of a Croatian field, I just thought “how could this be even happening with all the resources we have?”

As our volunteer activities grew and more volunteers started coming, it became difficult to organize and make sure people understand the priorities of the action. My biggest contradiction was the presence of volunteers itself. The intervention itself was something new, something that normal person would never have the chance to get into and of course, that attracted people who wanted experience or answers for their current questions at the time. Yet I believe that was a case for just a few, most of the people came with the purpose of helping.

*And then you returned back to the Czech Republic which was at the time of the immigration crisis divided in two parts: while one having indifferent or a slightly kind attitude, there were also many people strongly opposed anything related to refugees. Due to your help and kind attitude you were most probably labelled as a “sluníčkář” (a Czech word used for “sunny person” with naive attitude and lack of rational approach). Did you met also some haters? How did you manage to deal with them?*

Of course, I was labelled immediately. But as isolation of social bubbles went further, I was isolated within my bubble as well. Most of my friends are university educated and pro-refugees oriented or at least open minded people. I met very few haters in person.

The most challenging but also the most efficient thing was to respect those with different opinions and the fears they expressed. I watched the media they were watching and I got scared as well, so I thought talking about their fears and insecurities could work.

*I know you were open about your experience and talked to other people. I also know you visited some schools and talked to the children and*

*students about what you have seen at the borders and what kind of help you provided. Did you had any conflict with teachers or parents for what you present or you did?*

I did, yes. But I mostly visited schools that invited us which kind of pre-sorts schools that are open to the topic. Still, there were teachers or students with different opinions on whether we should even be helping or not. I was very cautious not to present my own opinion or “preaching common good.”

If there would be a conflict after all, and there were some, I focused on the understanding of their opinions at an emotional level. A ‘knee-jerk’ reaction is not a rational decision so clarifying data wouldn’t do a thing to them. Trying to understand their fears, as hard as it is, and maybe showing them where or how to get proper data, was my final ambition.

*You are involved in education, so you have direct experience with teaching. How is this topic perceived among your students? What is the most challenging for you in teaching about migration?*

I’m not a teacher but a part of my job is going to schools and talking with students about topics such as media, stereotypes or migration. Students mostly repeat opinions prevailing within their social community, we all do. Interesting is to talk about what role does media play in this refugee hysteria and how it influences the perception of overall reality.

There is no such thing as ‘teaching about migration’, but we try to discuss with students what migration is, why would somebody leave their home and what does our reaction say about our society. We basically create space where students can form their opinions.

*I am also curious about your colleagues. Do they share your attitude or they have completely different narrative?*

Well, I work at a Multicultural centre so we all kind of share the same values such as solidarity or open minded attitude towards

other cultures. What we try to do is to contribute to a factual and non-emotional discussion about migration with no political agenda.

*Where do you see the main obstacle in the education system regarding the issue of migration? Or even better stated, if you were the minister of education, what would be the changes you introduced?*

I can imagine that topics such as migration or populism is something that teachers could be afraid to get into in their regular classes. They could be accused of propaganda or simply they don't feel they have all the answers. Yet, students perceive that society is divided, they can tell you their opinions but they are still treated as children in some aspects.

I believe that focusing on opinion-creating processes would be useful. Students don't need us to tell them what to think, but a discussion on which values do we want to protect as a society is crucial in this matter.

# PROFILE: International Centre for Peace and Integration

by **Anda Upeniece**  
*EVS volunteer from ICPI*



**International Centre for Peace and Integration (ICPI)** is a Georgian not-for-profit non-governmental organization with a mission to provide the platform for the development of self-aware, progressive and engaged youth in civil society.

We encourage personal growth, innovation and positive change through critical thinking, intercultural understanding, support for new initiatives and collaboration. We believe in the power of education as a means to plant the seeds of change in attitude and action.

The team of ICPI promotes democratic values, peace-building and social entrepreneurship for a more sustainable society.

ICPI was founded in 2011 by the young people with 9-10 years of working experience in NGO sector. We work in different social, educational and cultural fields with different target groups such as: youth, IDPs, youth with fewer opportunities, etc.

ICPI is actively involved in ERASMUS+ Programme (by European Commission) and cooperates with different state institutions, NGOs in Georgia, and in Europe.

The organization has been providing different activities on promoting peace, gender equality, personal development, active citizenship, environmental issues, healthy lifestyle/outdoor activities, social entrepreneurship, Collaborative consumption, sharing economy, Management of Migration etc.

Projects implemented by ICPI are designed in order to create sustainable network of the organizations linked to the migration/integration process and also to empower youth workers and youngster to contribute the integration process of migrants.

ICPI is cooperating with the State committee on Migration issues

of Georgia, International Organization for Migration, Open House (UNHCR) and Ministry of refugees and internally displaced people of Georgia.

Migration into Europe is increasing, and is now the largest component of population change. Migrants, moreover, come from a far wider range of countries, and bring a greater diversity of languages and cultures, than in the past. The purpose of the projects is to take care of the human rights of the citizens from all around the world.

People from International Centre for Peace and Integration (ICPI)



Main aim and objectives are:

- To bring positive change into the minds of people and support the introduction of the European policy agenda for the growth, peacebuilding, integration and social inclusion via non-formal education.
- To cover, explore, discuss and deal with integration related challenges linked to the migration process.
- To create a strong network of the active NGOs working in the different region, unite and empower them to create new initiatives for the integration process.

# BOOK REVIEWS

BY AARON T. WALTER



The subject of migration continues to be discussed and debated. Within the field of academia, scholars have sought not only to understand the forces that drive migration, but since the 2015 migration wave to Europe from North Africa and the Middle East, investigate further themes such as ethics, gender, ethnicity, class and the social value of hospitality.

In this effort, **Migration, Ethics and Power: Spaces of Hospitality in International Politics (2016)**, by **Dan Bulley** explores the practices of offering, governing and denying hospitality to various defined figures of the guest: refugees, migrants, tourists and external factors through hospitality. It is an insightful and provocative book on the ethics and politics of hospitality, surprisingly overlooked in international relations scholarship.

As the European Union struggles to reach consensus on a coherent immigration policy, Bulley's monograph, *Migration, Ethics and Power*, is timely. Bulley understands hospitality as an 'ethics of post-sovereignty' through which the subject positions of 'host' and 'guest' are produced and negotiated and shifting spaces of belonging and non-belonging constructed. Bulley develops three central, interrelated arguments that forms his overarching theme. Hospitality is a 'primary way in which "we" practise everyday relations with difference: distinctly spatial, producing particular spaces as 'mine rather than yours' (4). Moreover, they necessarily involve power relations between the fluid and contested subject positions of the aforementioned host and guest. Furthermore, Bulley argues that absolute openness risks destroying the host and the home as such, whereas conditional laws are always available to remove 'themselves

from the domain of hospitality' thereby retaining 'at least the thought of the unconditional' (6) which is the fundamental paradox. As such, hospitality is a 'spatial relational practice', requiring both the existence of boundaries and their crossing, a distinguishing feature from other ethical practices such as donation and aid. This refreshing examination of an array of political practices, performances and discourses through the innovative lens of hospitality and host/guest relations is the strength of the book.

However his philosophical coherence leads to some weaknesses, namely that while organising the examination of problems ranging from colonial rule to migration and terrorism around hospitality and host/guest identities frequently downplays importance of other power structures, such as race, socio-economic inequalities, the international division of labour and geopolitical interests. Nevertheless, **Migration, Ethics and Power** is an important contribution to researchers of migration studies, political geography and global ethics on this underexplored topic.

In **Migration of Rich Immigrants: Gender, Ethnicity and Class (2016)**, edited by **Alex Vailati and Carmen Rial** socio-economic inequalities, international division of labour and geopolitical interests downplayed in the first reviewed book is on display here. Migration of Rich Immigrants is an attempt to shed light on the experiences of rich migrants who have been relegated to the margins of migration research. This edited volume contains nine chapters with a conclusion and is broadly divided into three parts: places, mobilities, and paths.

In the introduction the editors forcefully argue that even though there are examples of rich immigrants throughout history, the social sciences have focused on unprivileged immigrants and this often drives migration related policies. Moreover, conceptualising rich immigrants as 'other migrants' apart from labour migrants, the editors argue that rich immigrants are a fragmented category but have common characteristics. In the book, ethnographic microanalysis is employed to dissect the socio-cultural dimensions of the migration of these other migrants. This book is a refreshing departure from the normal published research since 2015 within academia. The contributions reveal that although economic factors motivate

migration, they are not the only consideration in immigration. Poverty is frequently seen as the cause of migration, yet it is class or socioeconomic backgrounds that also shape not only migration but indeed the transnational exchanges that occur between migrants and their relatives from developing countries. As such, existing migration research and policies of both origin and destination countries which usually focus extensively on so-called economic migrants is a better critique. This book challenges assertions that the relatives of migrants take away migrant resources. Indeed, migrants are able to shape the social fabric of destination countries. This point is important to remember as national narratives within E.U. member countries continue and the E.U. searches for a coherent immigration policy. The only weakness in **Migration of Rich Immigrants** is that while there is variation in geographical representation, the Indian sub-continent and Sub-Saharan Africa examples are missing. Nevertheless, the book draws attention to the diversity and heterogeneity in migration and is necessary contribution to migration studies.



This brochure has been produced under the Jean Monnet Chair grant „Migration: The Challenge of European States” which was awarded to Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, in 2016.

Trnava  
2018

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Corrections: Aaron T. Walter  
Technical specialist: Jakub Bardovič  
Graphic design: Jakub Bardovič  
Cover: source ([www.freepik.com](http://www.freepik.com))  
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in Migration: The Challenge of European States

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Co-funded by the  
Erasmus + Programme  
of the European Union



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