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Revija ***Dve domovini • Two Homelands*** je osrednja slovenska znanstvena revija, namenjena objavi izvirnih znanstvenih in strokovnih člankov, ki obravnavajo različne vidike migracij. Revijo je leta 1990 ustanovil Inštitut za slovensko izseljenstvo Znanstvenoraziskovalnega centra slovenske akademije znanosti in umetnosti in izhaja dvakrat letno v slovenskem in angleškem jeziku. Vsi članki so dvojno anonimno recenzirani.

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MIGRATION AND COVID-19
MIGRACIJE IN COVID-19

THEMATIC SECTION

INTRODUCTION: MIGRANTS AND MIGRATION IN THE ECO-PAN-SYNDemic ERA

Francesco DELLA PUPPA,^I Fabio PEROCCO^{II}

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In 2021, *Dve Domovini / Two Homelands* published a special issue entitled *The Coronavirus Crisis and Migration* (vol. 54), which contained numerous articles on various contexts and specific aspects. Considering the importance of the topic, one year later, *Dve Domovini / Two Homelands* is devoting a new issue to migration in the pandemic era. In the editorial of issue 54, we analyzed the coronavirus crisis's origins, characteristics, and social effects. In this editorial, we present an overview of migratory movements and migration policies and the impact on labor and health for immigrants. The current eco-pan-syndemic¹ has produced new elements compared to the pre-COVID era, at the same time consolidating existing phenomena and highlighting old problems. While it has limited, interrupted, and disrupted migratory movements, at the same time, it has deepened the underlying causes of migration by accentuating the need to emigrate.

OLD AND NEW DIMENSIONS OF MIGRATORY PHENOMENA

In 2020, the pandemic led to a significant transformation of the global system of mobility, which entailed the restriction of international mobility, re-bordering, tightening of controls and monitoring of travelers, and differentiation of the right to international or local movement based on various factors (nationality/citizenship, administrative status, profession) and a dense system of restrictions/exceptions.

Between March 10, 2020, and October 4, 2021, 109,519 travel restrictions (out of which 82,187 conditions for authorized entry and 27,332 entry restrictions) and 998 exceptions came into force (IOM, 2021). Although restrictions on international mobility are a known phenomenon, due to their heterogeneity, ubiquity, and scope, restrictions on border crossings, re-entry of citizens, or departure/transit of foreigners have been a novelty—especially in the “age of migration.” This transformation,

1 We reproduce, supplementing, Powers et al., 2021.

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together with lockdowns, economic crisis, unemployment, trouble in production systems and labor markets, and changes in migration policies, has led to a disruption of global, regional, and local migration systems.

In the second part of 2020, with the partial reopening of several entry points (airports, ports, land borders) and the easing of land mobility restrictions, there was a relative upturn in travel. In 2021, a slow but progressive resumption of migration movements followed along some main migration routes (the US–Mexico border, Central America, Colombia–Panama; the Mediterranean; Balkans/Eastern Europe–Western Europe; the Gulf). However, these movements did not have the same pre-COVID characteristics and size and took place under the various countries' health measures and restrictions. Due to the different pandemic waves (third and fourth waves), the local semi-lockdowns, a difficult recovery of productive activity and employment in some contexts, the state of social and political crisis widespread in different areas of the world, migratory movements have resumed on and off, with changes in the migratory routes, strategies, and pathways—for example, the reshaping of temporary and circular migration,² the posting of workers (in Europe),³ cross-border work (everywhere). Especially in the lockdown phase in 2020, due to the loss of jobs, the worsening of living conditions, and the desire to face the pandemic at home, large mass returns and forced return migrations took place—especially in Central America, the Indian sub-continent, the Gulf, the Balkans, Eastern Europe, the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. Whether voluntary or forced, returns are not a phenomenon that arose with the pandemic, but this time, the modalities, timing, volumes, and causes were unprecedented and peculiar.

In addition to the interruption of remittances, which has worsened the poverty of entire families and countries that live mainly on remittances, these massive returns have “burdened” the countries of origin with an “over-population” to be assisted at a social, economic, and health level. The returns have increased the economic burden on the countries of origin and exacerbated insecurities, accentuating the factors underlying emigration. As genuine “foreigners at home,” returnees have sometimes been accused by politicians and the media of being an inconvenient social burden and of carrying the virus.⁴

Over time, some returnees left to go abroad again, although not only to their previous destination and with the same occupation. Another part remained in their home country because they were unable (due to a lack of documents, permits, and resources to migrate again, lack of job opportunities and contacts abroad) or because they found opportunities there.

Due to restrictions on (internal or international) travel, a lack of economic resources or employment, a lack of documents, permits, health certificates, and the

2 In the Balkans, for example, see Lukic et al., 2021.

3 See Geyer et al., 2020, Stefanova-Behlert & Menghi, 2021, and in this issue Toplak & Lukšič Hacin, 2022; Vah Jevšnik & Milharčič Hladnik, 2022.

4 For Bangladesh, for example, see Parvez, 2021.

closure of humanitarian corridors, in 2020 and partially in 2021, many migrants found themselves stranded, stuck, or confined at the borders of the destination country, in a transit country, or in a place where they had not planned to stay (Sanchez & Achilli, 2020; Ullah et al., 2021). This phenomenon is not new, but with the pandemic, it has taken on a wider dimension in terms of numbers and the contexts involved.

At the same time, many returning migrants were also stranded. The restrictions due to the pandemic caused a temporary halt in returns. Many of those who lost their jobs found it very difficult to return and were stuck during the lockdown. On several routes, Southern Europe–Maghreb, Colombia–Venezuela, on the Indian sub-continent, Singapore, in some Gulf countries, many migrant workers and families found themselves at a dead-end, sometimes confined in dormitories, reception centers, detention centers—despite social distancing measures—as some articles in this issue highlight.

NEW STRATIFICATIONS: DIFFERENTIATED RESTRICTIONS, SELECTIVE PROTECTION, AND REINFORCEMENT OF THE UTILITARIAN CHARACTER OF MIGRATION POLICIES

During 2020–2021, a fully-fledged system of restrictions and exemptions was set up in addition to the existing one (Luconi, 2021; Piccoli, 2021; Triandafyllidou, 2022; Wihtol de Wenden, 2021), which highlighted the new processes and mechanisms of migrant selection in the COVID era.

The new and multiple restrictions (self-isolation, quarantine, screening, and testing, medical certificates, visa, no entry) vary depending on the context and the period, affecting people in a differentiated way according to their nationality, the residence of travelers who legally reside in an affected country, the presence of travelers in an affected country. Various health filters (medical tests, vaccination certificates, the green pass in the EU) have been added to traditional travel documents. Restrictions include numerous exceptions, again depending on the context: nationals, residents, passengers in transit, family members, transport personnel, health care, and humanitarian workers, military, official delegations, individuals with a temporary residence status, and international students (Piccoli et al., 2021).

This system of selective bans, restrictions, and exemptions—based on nationality (sometimes irrespective of the actual residence or origin), residence, area of origin (health risk), legal status, profession, and health status—has affected the population in a differentiated manner. Asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors, “non-essential” workers, and temporary workers,⁵ have suffered the heaviest consequences and, as is often the case, have found themselves in the lowest circle of the variable geometry of citizenship. This new system of restrictions has added the limitation of the

⁵ For Australia, for example, see Ricatti, 2021.

movement of the poor (now also considered “infected”), as well as to the war on migrants and the poor that has been going on for years.

These groups, considered undesirable, are often confined in buffer zones, liminal zones—a sort of “new sacrifice zones”—in very harsh conditions and with high health risks. This has further reinforced the leitmotif, public discourse, and public image of “desirable” versus “undesirable” groups. New and multiple requirements supporting restrictions and exemptions have produced further fragmentation of social figures and stratification of legal-administrative statuses, reconfiguring, and increasing civic stratification. The new admission criteria have redesigned and complicated the internal hierarchy of migrants; migrant workers themselves have been subjected to differentiated measures so that new ones have been added to the old stratifications and differentiations that existed in the world market and the world labor market. These include the figure of “pandemic-era essential workers” employed through priority entries and *ad hoc* measures (special permits, special transport, regulations, etc.) in specific sectors of the various national labor markets (agriculture, care, health services, frontline services). Seasonal agricultural workers (Della Puppa & Sanò, 2021, Kukreja, 2021; Küppers, 2021), food and slaughterhouse workers (e.g., in Germany), and truck drivers have been co-opted into the COVID-era system of foreigner entry preferences, an era in which “passport privilege has been temporarily displaced by a different hierarchy based less on desirability than on immediate necessity” (Macklin, 2022: 24). Referring to the Canadian context—but this can be extended to many other contexts—Macklin observes that now the entry of the migrant worker is to be declined in the categories of legally essential, politically essential, and economically essential, in the sense that, concerning transborder movement, “pandemic restrictions have in turn, generated exceptions organised around a conception of ‘essential’ that was produced, revised, and represented through the interaction of pandemic-driven exigencies and nationally-specific articulations of the legal, political, and economic constraints in play” (Macklin, 2022: 39). Nevertheless, these workers deemed “essential” must still prove themselves disposable and, at some point, are excluded as no longer “essential” (Olayo-Mendez et al., 2021).

Can we, therefore, speak of exceptional migration policies? Policies of a state of exception? We do not believe so: the pandemic has highlighted the selective and utilitarian character of migration policies, which are actual policies to control foreign labor, almost always policies against immigrants. The pandemic did not create hyper-selective and stratifying mechanisms: it has been the direction of public policies and the political use of the pandemic has produced new stratifications that have added to the old ones. In the pandemic era, several governments have opted for even more selective and repressive migration policies; the new stratifications derive from the type of migration policies set up in the COVID-19 era, not from COVID-19 itself, which only highlights the condition of migration in the neoliberal era: casualization and criminalization of migrations.

PANDEMIC DISCRIMINATION: THE BIENNIUM HORRIBILIS OF ASYLUM AND THE STRENGTHENING OF THE REPRESSIVE CHARACTER OF MIGRATION POLICIES

The years 2020–2021 were the *biennium horribilis* of asylum. From Greece to Bangladesh, from South America to the Middle East, the pandemic descended on overcrowded camps and reception centers in terrible conditions, where degrading and inhuman practices were not unusual. Even after the first wave, many countries intensified measures against the arrival of asylum seekers (push-backs, forced returns, confinement), restricted access to asylum, and refugee protection.⁶ Services and programs for migrants and refugees suspended in the first lockdown were not always fully resumed. The pandemic exacerbated the process of asylum restriction that had been ongoing for several years. The EU's own New Pact on Migration and Asylum 2020 partially ends asylum in Europe.

Besides asylum, the pandemic has often been used politically to reinforce punitive migration policies and anti-immigrant discourses, restrict migrants' rights, and build xenophobic political agendas (Adamski, 2020). The media have reinforced negative attitudes toward immigrants and spread fake news more than a few times. In the United States, the US administration's draconian measures on immigration and asylum (Luconi, 2021) have led to discriminatory treatment on entry and stay, exacerbated welfare racism, and resulted in arrests, deportations, and mass deportations of undocumented, temporary workers, asylum seekers, and immobilized not only at the US–Mexico border, but also in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador tens of thousands of people intending to seek asylum in the United States. Stranded at the borders or inside the states, this population has camped out in precarious housing and hygienic conditions. Vilches Hinojosa et al. (2021) point out that the discretionary interpretation and arbitrary application of the order from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (provision of US health law, section 265 of Title 42, which omits reference to immigration to avoid possible discrimination) by the US Department of Homeland Security closed the US–Mexico border and resulted in 204,000 removals in the first six months of 2020. However, mass deportations under the pandemic umbrella continued throughout 2021. Here, as elsewhere, borders and boundaries (but also within states) have been reinforced and given new functions in the name of fighting the virus so that the pandemic again highlights the repressive character of contemporary migration policies.

6 For Canada: Abu Alrob & Shields, 2022; Macklin, 2022; for Norway: Skrobanek & Jobst, 2021; for Italy: Ferrero & Roverso, 2021; Spada, 2021; for South Africa: Moyo et al. 2021.

THE IMPACT ON MIGRANT WORKERS AND FAMILIES: HEALTH, WORK, AND REMITTANCES

In *Dve Domovini / Two Homelands* volume 54, we pointed out that because of their employment, legal, and housing status, immigrants were particularly vulnerable to the pandemic that arrived in 2020. One year on, those trends have been confirmed, as we highlight in this section.

Regarding health, (low-skilled) migrant workers, refugees, and asylum seekers have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic everywhere, regardless of the political system in place.⁷

In addition to the “direct” effects of the contagion and the greater severity of the disease, greater mental distress also affected migrants (Chetia & Baruah, 2021; Semo & Frissa, 2020; MMC, 2020), especially laborers and wage earners. This was due, *inter alia*, to the worsening of already precarious living conditions, the concern for left-behind family members, and isolation, racism, and the stigma of disease-spreaders (Adamski, 2020; ENAR, 2020; Girardelli et al., 2021) in receiving countries and countries of origin for those who returned (Acharya & Patel, 2021; Chetia & Baruah, 2021; Parvez, 2021).

In 2021, there was an intense vaccination campaign around the world. However, it left out several countries in the Global South (especially Africa), and more than a few times, it discriminated against immigrants, especially asylum seekers and refugees. This vaccine inequality highlighted that even forms of pandemic containment treated population groups and countries differentially (Ferraro & Chapman, 2021; WHO, 2021).

As for work, in many contexts, a significant portion of immigrants have experienced worsening working conditions—increased workloads and work rhythms, increased injuries, and decreased wages.⁸ More affected by unemployment than national workers (Bonifazi et al., 2020; Ekanayake & Amirthalingam, 2021; Reddy, 2021), a substantial portion of immigrant workers have been reduced to “work fodder,” despite the risk of contagion in essential sectors such as agriculture (Dal Zotto et al., 2021; Kukreja, 2021; Martin, 2021; Rinaldi, 2021), nursing-health care (Ambrosini, 2020), and manufacturing (Asis, 2021). This occurred especially in the productive sectors characterized by a high level of informality and undeclared work,

7 In North America (the United States: Benfer et al., 2021; Despres, 2021; Gonzalez et al., 2020; Luconi, 2021; Olayo-Méndez et al., 2021; Canada: Tuyisenge & Goldenberg, 2021); in South America (Brazil: Brigido et al., 2022; Parise et al., 2021); in Asia (Hiraiwa, 2021; Reddy, 2021); in Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent (Singapore: Hayward et al., 2021; Hintermeier et al., 2021; the Philippines: Asis, 2021; Ciceri & Prigol, 2021; India: Acharya & Patel, 2021; Saikia, 2021; Bangladesh: Parvez, 2021); in the Middle East (Saudi Arabia: Hayward et al., 2021; Hintermeier et al., 2021); in Europe (Italy: Della Puppa & Sanò, 2021; Quaranta et al., 2021; Sanfelici, 2021; the Netherlands: Coyer et al., 2021; France: Marin & Pelloquin, 2021; Spain: Rinaldi, 2021; Greece: Kukreja, 2021), in Africa (Ferraro & Chapman, 2021); in Australia (Ricatti, 2021).

8 For the Gulf area see Abella & Sasikumar, 2020.

which see a strong presence of immigrants such as domestic work (Rinaldi, 2021). In this sector, although not only in this one, female immigrant workers experienced an increase in harassment (Adamski, 2020; Reddy, 2021).

The worsening of working conditions has worsened the economic and living conditions of immigrant families, with a negative impact on children, for whom the risk of being forced into the labor market has greatly increased (Ferraro & Chapman, 2020; Human Rights Watch, 2020).

As for remittances, 37% of 2019 global remittances (about \$714 billion) were received in the 20 countries with the highest number of COVID-19 cases, and 8 out of these 20 countries (the United States, Saudi Arabia, Germany, the Russian Federation, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, and India) were among those from which the highest amounts of remittances were sent—about 28% of all remittances, accounting for about 46% of remittances received in low- and middle-income countries. In 2020, remittances to sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia from Gulf countries fell by 23% and 22%, respectively (World Bank, 2020), sending tens of millions of people into hunger. For example, the Philippines received USD 35,167 million in 2019, ranking fourth worldwide, with remittances accounting for 8.8% of its GDP in 2020. However, this inflow was projected to decrease by 23–32%, and household spending per capita is projected to decline by 2.2–3.3% within a year because of the pandemic, with more serious effects on women (Murakami et al., 2021).

In the same vein, Ratha et al. (2020) estimated a decline of 20% of remittances to low- and middle-income countries in 2020. However, according to Migration Data Portal (2021), the “latest data show that instead, remittance flows fell by only 1.6 per cent to USD 540 billion.” Remittances, indeed, show a contradictory and not always homogeneous trend in the various areas of the world. According to the World Bank (2020), Italy, for example, recorded an increase of almost 13% in remittances sent in 2020 compared to 2019 (Fondazione Leone Moressa, 2022). This increase is perhaps due to the effect of two elements: restrictions on international mobility, which have caused many immigrants to forgo temporary returns to their country of origin, opting for more frequent and larger remittances to their families; and the decrease in remittances sent through informal channels, also driven by the impossibility of travel. Similarly, according to the State Bank, Pakistan—where remittance inflows accounted for nearly 8% of the GDP in 2019—saw the historically highest monthly remittances in July 2020. Still, according to Migration Data Portal (2022), “in countries such as Mexico and Nepal, monthly remittances in the second, third, and fourth quarters of 2020 increased to amounts higher than the previous year for the same period.”

Finally, we should note that, despite the difficulties produced by the pandemic, new forms of resistance, self-organization, solidarity, and mutualism have developed among migrants and toward migrants: to cope with unemployment (Thieme & Tibet, 2020) and impoverishment (May Black et al., 2020), to facilitate border crossing (Kynsilehto, 2020) and provide assistance along migration routes (Milan, 2020), to

oppose the imprisonment of asylum seekers and refugees in camps and detention centers (Perolini, 2020). They allow a glimpse of a ray of light on an increasingly dark horizon.

This special issue is not exhaustive. Several areas of the world (e.g., North America) and many dimensions of immigrant life remain unexplored. However, we hope it may contribute to the knowledge of this momentous phenomenon.

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SHATTERED DREAMS AND THE RETURN HOME: BANGLADESHI MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COUNTRIES DURING COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

Shattered Dreams and the Return Home: Bangladeshi Migrant Workers in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries During COVID-19

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, many Bangladeshi migrants have returned home, while many others are about to be *repatriated*. Drawing on qualitative research conducted with Bangladeshi migrants who returned from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, this article analyzes the experiences of Bangladeshi laborers overseas during the pandemic to develop a better understanding of why these migrants returned to their home country. The main research questions here are twofold: How did COVID-19 affect the normal socioeconomic lives of Bangladeshi workers in the Gulf Cooperation Council, and to what extent is their return migration related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

KEYWORDS: COVID-19, lockdown, Bangladeshi laborer, Gulf Cooperation Council, return migration

IZVLEČEK

Razblinjene sanje in povratek domov: bangladeški delavci migranti v Svetu za sodelovanje v Zalivu med pandemijo bolezni Covid-19

Odkar se je začela pandemija bolezni Covid-19, se je veliko bangladeških migrantov že vrnilo domov, še mnogim drugim pa grozi repatriacija. Avtorji na podlagi kvalitativne raziskave, opravljene z bangladeškimi migranti, ki so se vrnili iz držav Sveta za sodelovanje v Zalivu, analizirajo izkušnje bangladeških delavcev v tujini med pandemijo, da bi bolje razumeli, zakaj so se ti migranti vrnili v svojo matično državo. Pri tem sta bili njihovi glavni raziskovalni vprašanji, kako je Covid-19 vplival na vsakodnevna življenja bangladeških delavcev v državah Sveta za sodelovanje v Zalivu ter v kolikšni meri je njihovo vračanje domov povezan s pandemijo bolezni Covid-19.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: Covid-19, omejitev gibanja, bangladeški delavci, Svet za sodelovanje v Zalivu, povratne migracije

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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought drastic changes and challenges to human life around the world. Various restrictions like quarantine, lockdown, restricted movement, closed borders, and curfew have been introduced to reduce the spread of the virus, which have created both economic and social disruption for everyone. Migrant workers are among those most threatened by COVID-19 because they are often employed in dirty, dangerous, and demeaning jobs (ILO, 2020b). As a result of the worldwide economic downturn, the COVID-19 pandemic has variously affected migrants. Regardless of their legal status, many migrants lost their jobs in several sectors, such as construction, manufacturing, and the service industries, and were sent back to their home countries (Karim et al., 2020). Many others remain in constant fear of being repatriated for health reasons that have significantly impacted their economic situation and social life. In particular, the position of undocumented migrants has worsened because they have been deprived of basic needs such as housing, food, health care, and social security benefits (Sorkar, 2020). While migrant workers face isolation, job insecurity, and a reduction in their salaries, their dependents in the country of origin may face financial hardship because of the drop in remittances (ILO, 2020b). Moreover, migrant workers who have returned to their country of origin on vacation and have been waiting to fly back to begin working overseas are not allowed to enter destination countries due to imposed shutdowns or travel bans, even if they do get a work visa (RMMRU, 2020).

The outbreak of COVID-19 highlights that migrant workers in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)—Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar—are among those most vulnerable throughout the world (Ranjan & Bisht, 2020). The GCC countries are the primary destination for short-term, unskilled, and semi-skilled migrant workers, particularly those from Asian and African countries. The six GCC states alone account for 10% of global migrants, while Saudi Arabia and UAE, respectively, host the world's third and fifth largest such populations (Karasapan, 2020). The United Nations (2019) estimated that in 2019 about 35 million migrants were living in the GCC. Most of these are low-paid and low-skilled workers living in crowded conditions where maintaining a social distance is very difficult, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the pandemic's beginning, many migrants from the GCC have been forced back to their country of origin, often without even being given their legal wages, compensation, and benefits. For instance, in the case of Saudi Arabia, it was roughly estimated that nearly 1.2 million migrants (or about 20%) were expected to lose their jobs and be repatriated by the end of 2020, while 300,000 migrants have already left the country and over 178,000 have been registered in the *Awdah* initiative that facilitates the return of migrants (Alsahi, 2020; Al-Monitor, 2020).

Bangladesh is one of the main sources of labor for the GCC region, with about 4.2 million migrant workers, making them the second-largest group of migrants

after those from India (Sorkar, 2020). Sorkar has reported that these Bangladeshis come from its most poverty-ridden regions and are unskilled or semi-skilled workers who migrate there with short-term contract visas of three to ten years (Sorkar, 2020). It is important to stress that these migrants are playing a vital role in the economy of Bangladesh by sending approximately USD 15 billion of remittances every year (BMET, 2020). However, in recent months, after the COVID-19 pandemic hit the GCC, many Bangladeshis returned home, while many others are about to face forced repatriation (USAID, 2020). Thus, COVID-19 has brought various socioeconomic crises to Bangladesh, such as joblessness, loss of savings, and a reduction in the flow of remittances (Karim et al., 2020).

Drawing on qualitative research conducted with Bangladeshi migrants who have returned from the GCC countries, this article aims to analyze the experiences of Bangladeshi laborers in Gulf countries during the pandemic to understand better why these migrants returned to their home country. The main research questions here are twofold: How did COVID-19 affect the ordinary socioeconomic lives of Bangladeshi workers in the Gulf Countries? To what extent is their return migration a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

The next two sections discuss Bangladeshi labor migration to the GCC and the study methodology. The following sections present and analyze the empirical data from fieldwork. Finally, we present a concluding remark and reflections on the implications of our research for policymakers.

LABOUR MIGRATION FROM BANGLADESH TO THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COUNTRIES

Bangladesh is one of the major labor-sending countries in the world. While emigration during colonial times was a silent phenomenon and only occurred in a limited number of areas within a specific group of people, it became one of the most common and widespread aspects after independence in 1971 (Mahmood, 1995; Morad et al., 2014). As in other Asian countries, labor migration from Bangladesh developed when the Bangladesh government started to promote international migration as a part of its overall development plan (e.g., Rodriguez, 2010). Bangladesh established a government agency called the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) in 1976 to make use of employment opportunities in the Middle East and the newly industrialized South-East Asian countries (Rahman, 2012). Indeed, from 1976 onwards, the country emerged as a significant source of migrant labor, and the number of emigrants and the countries to which they migrated rose sharply (Morad & Gombač, 2015, 2018). Bangladeshi migrants are working overseas in more than 170 countries across six continents, and the number is, according to a recent estimation, about 13.12 million (BMET, 2020). Of these, 60% moved to the Middle East and

the GCC, 12% to Europe, 11% to the United States, and 11% are working in many countries in the Asian Pacific region (ILO, 2020a).

Concerning the GCC, reports show that between 1976 and 2019, the highest number of Bangladeshi workers migrated with short fixed-term employment contracts to Saudi Arabia (4.01 million), the United Arab Emirates (2.4 million), Oman (1.5 million), Qatar (0.8 million), Kuwait (0.6 million), and Bahrain (0.4 million) (BMET, 2019). These temporary migrant workers have been categorized as professional, skilled, semi-skilled, and less-skilled (ILO, 2014). After the coronavirus outbreak, according to recent estimates, nearly 666,000 Bangladeshi migrant workers were sent back to their own country, while another two million are facing possible deportation (Karim et al., 2020; TBS, 2020). Most of these returnees were sent back from the GCC region. By October 18, 2020, according to the statistics on the number of expatriates produced by the country's welfare ministry, around 209,345 migrants have returned from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Oman since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic (Ahamad, 2020). In addition, over 150,000 aspirant migrant workers, who had recently received work visas for any of the six GCC states, cannot travel there because of flight cancellations and/or job cuts (ILO, 2020a). There is also tremendous pressure on the Bangladesh government from the authorities in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Qatar to repatriate citizens immediately, especially those migrants without documentation being held in deportation camps (ILO, 2020a). Furthermore, the International Labour Organization estimates that the actual number of possible returnees will be between 800,000 and one million, all of whom would need employment, cash incentives, social protection, and health care (ILO, 2020a). As a result, the country's labor migration was in a deep crisis.

METHODS

This article's empirical material comes from 17 in-depth interviews with Bangladeshi migrants who returned home during the COVID-19 pandemic from the GCC countries. Using snowball sampling, we carried out the fieldwork in two phases using two different data collection techniques; five interviews were conducted remotely through mobile phone-based interviews between June and July 2020. Afterward, when the lockdown was lifted, and the COVID-19 infection rate was lower in Bangladesh, we conducted 12 face-to-face in-depth interviews between October and December 2020. These 12 participants were interviewed in a place of their choosing, such as at their home or a tea stall, by visiting where they lived, namely in the Sylhet, Kishoreganj, Narsingdi, and Tangail districts of Bangladesh. Most of our respondents who returned from the Gulf countries, e.g., Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, Bahrain, and Oman, are Muslim, married, and male migrants.

In the countries of destination, these migrants were employed as unskilled and semi-skilled laborers working as manual workers in various sectors such as agricultural, service industries, and construction. They worked as gardeners, cooks, salesclerks, drivers, bricklayers, and hotel and restaurant staff. Regarding their income, Bangladeshis who worked in the agricultural sectors earned EUR 100–200 monthly; hospitality and construction sector workers earned EUR 200–400, and mechanics working in factories received a monthly salary of EUR 500, depending on the tasks and their work experience. Concerning educational qualifications, workers engaged in the agricultural and construction sectors had primary school certificates, while those who worked in hotels and factories had higher secondary school certificates.

To understand the interviewees' lives during the coronavirus outbreak in the GCC, the interviews gathered data on several issues, such as what changes were introduced at their workplaces during the pandemic, how lockdown affected their permanent work, and the chance of finding alternative jobs, how they managed financially when their employment ceased, what kind of discrimination they experienced in getting treatment for COVID-19 and the reason of their return to their home country. In addition to these 17 in-depth interviews, we also had informal conversations with family members and local people while visiting their homes and having a snack at the local tea stalls. These informal social spaces also helped us collect relevant information and cross-check the findings gathered from the interviews. We used fictional names to maintain ethical standards and followed other ethical practices accordingly (Hennink et al., 2011).

In analyzing data, we listened to audio-recorded interviews at least twice, and then the interviews were translated from Bengali to English and transcribed accordingly. Finally, we analyzed the data following the thematic analysis procedure proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006); here, we first identified different themes and categorized them according to the patterns that emerged.

DAILY LIFE OF BANGLADESHI WORKERS IN THE GULF DURING LOCKDOWN

Our findings have shown that Bangladeshi migrant workers faced numerous hardships in the GCC countries during the pandemic. First, the stories of returnees indicated that Bangladeshi laborers experienced unemployment, the loss of jobs, and unpaid wages. These experiences were especially so for migrants employed in hotels, restaurants, food courts, the construction industry, or as hawkers. The self-employed were badly affected as their work and workplaces were shut down due to lockdown. Salam, one of our interviewees, who returned from Saudi Arabia, describes: "No previous information was supplied about that [lockdown]. Everything happened quickly. We did not know that our work was going to be paused for so

long. They [employers] just advised us to stay at home to avoid spreading the virus. So, we remained inside the room [dormitory] and stopped going to work. We were even fined when we went outside for any necessities" (Interview 9, 20. 12. 2020).

The picture painted by Salam is similar to that of other returnees who stress that they were generally laid off from jobs from March 2020, while their employer stopped paying their salary following a policy of "no-work-no-pay." Some of them were not even paid for the final month they worked. Since the lockdown was strictly maintained, migrants had very little scope to go out and find manual work to provide for their daily living expenses because they were forced to remain inside the houses and dormitories and most economic activities were closed. For instance, Md. Kadir, one of the returnees from Oman, explained this situation: "When the lockdown started, everything closed. As our work stopped, the owner stopped paying our salary. They did not even provide our due salary or other savings we had in the company [the workplace]. Our movement was also forbidden so that we had no chance to go out to do other work to earn our daily living" (Interview 8, 6. 11. 2020).

Reflecting Kadir's experience, our analysis reveals a similar picture for most of the migrants who lost their jobs across the GCC countries and were stuck at home because of the pandemic. While these Bangladeshis migrated to find work to support their families back home, instead of sending remittances, many started to survive by borrowing money from other compatriots who had good jobs and had been able to save some money. However, after a few months, the situation grew worse, and they had to rely on food being handed out by local charities and local people. Some migrants began to starve because they did not have enough food for days or even weeks. A returnee from Saudi Arabia, Md. Atiqur, mentioned: "When we had used our savings, we had nothing left. We then took a loan from other Bangladeshis who had a good job. After this, we had to depend on the food assistance provided by *Shekh* [rich Arabian]. Each month, they provided us with one packet of rice, bread, dal (lentils), oil, and some potatoes. With this food package, we barely managed to feed ourselves for a week" (Interview 10, 21. 12. 2020).

As some research highlights (e.g., Morad & Sacchetto, 2020), Bangladeshi workers in Middle Eastern Countries experienced unexpectedly harsh working conditions such as long hours, low wages, and a lack of freedom. But their everyday lives became more insecure when employers continued to withhold their salaries during the pandemic. Rana, one of the returnees from Saudi Arabia, who had waited more than five months for work to resume, confirmed: "During the lockdown, I did not get my salary. But instead of coming back, I waited there for five months. I lived on my savings. Then I took a loan from my friends. Five months later, the company still said, no-work-no-pay" (Interview 11, 22. 12. 2020).

Secondly, as well as economic hardship, migrants felt depressed about the risk of becoming infected and receiving adequate COVID-19 treatment. Our findings indicated that most company workers, mainly construction workers and agricultural laborers, lived in labor camps and dormitories. These labor camps and dormitories

consisted of eight to twelve people in one room, accommodated in bunk beds without proper ventilation and insufficient toilet facilities. As a result, maintaining proper hygiene and social distancing during a pandemic was often hard for them. There was always a risk of coronavirus spreading if fellow workers became infected. In relation to this, Motin and Amin, two Bangladeshis who worked in Bahrain and Qatar, respectively, describe their experiences:

In the dormitory, a room is typically about 20 x 15 feet [about 6.1 x 4.5 meters]. We were 12 people living in this room. We had 6 bunk beds for 12 people. In total, there were 10 rooms, 10 toilets, and 10 bathrooms (Interview 4, 13. 06. 2020).

We were 10 people in one room, and we had bunk beds. That is two people in one bunk, like a two-storied bed. There was one communal kitchen and three toilets for three rooms. We used to wait and queue to use the toilet. We were always afraid of being infected (Interview 12, 27. 12. 2020).

Migrants highlighted their lack of awareness about the procedures for getting treatment if people became infected. They were also afraid of the short-term and long-term consequences they might face if they became infected by the virus. Sohag Mia, a returnee from Bahrain, explained: “The company officials said only to wash hands, wear masks, and not to go outside. They did not provide any other information. We did not know where to go and how to get the treatment. Some of our co-workers were infected and were then taken away by the police. We were scared and had no idea what happened to them” (Interview 7, 22. 10. 2020).

Sohag Mia’s story is not an isolated case, and the narratives of most returnees confirm his experience. In the interviews, they often mentioned that they had been living with anxiety since the onset of the pandemic because they did not receive proper information about the procedures for getting treatment. In particular, they were scared they might not get adequate treatment if they did catch COVID-19. They only saw that once a fellow worker was infected, the police would come and take them away, and no one knew where they had gone.

In general, this section’s findings underlined that the COVID-19 outbreak has adversely affected the economic and mental well-being of low-paid Bangladeshi migrant workers in the GCC countries. They were also more likely to experience inadequate health care and overcrowded living conditions (Karasapan, 2020).

SHATTERED DREAMS AND RETURNING HOME EMPTY-HANDED

Lockdown and restrictions were imposed and continued throughout 2020 in the GCC region. As the findings have shown, most migrants were not ready to leave the host country despite their financial hardships and the adverse effects on their

mental well-being. They waited for five to seven months, hoping that work would resume, but sometimes their employer told them that work would not resume in the near future. When it was no longer possible to afford rent and food, they registered to be repatriated or arranged their own journey home. While many Bangladeshis were dismissed from their jobs, some also went home, having been assured by their employer that they would be taken back when the situation returned to normal (Mahmud & Hasan, 2020). One of the returnees from Saudi Arabia, Shajib Mia, informed us: "I had a valid Akama (visa). My visa was valid till December 2021. Since I had no work there, I thought I would return home. I had no money to buy a ticket, as my salary was stopped and I had used all of my savings. From Bangladesh, my father sent some money, and I took a loan also from my friends to buy a return ticket" (Interview 13, 27. 12. 2020).

As in the case of Shajib Mia in Saudi Arabia, other migrants' narratives also confirm that although they waited for some time, once they were unable to provide for their daily needs, they decided to return to their country of origin even though they had a valid visa and a job contract. In the process of their return migration, most of the returnees had to arrange their travel by taking money from family and relatives in Bangladesh. However, while, in many cases, migrants had to arrange their own journey, there were very few who did receive air tickets from the company to travel home. In this regard, Tapan, who returned from Oman, describes:

As I had no work for a long time, I thought I could not stay here sitting around without a salary. During these months [after lockdown started], I could not send a *poisha* [penny] to my wife and four children though they depend on my earnings. Then, after several months of waiting, I came back to Bangladesh. I asked my company for the salary and other benefits due to me, but my company only arranged a return ticket to send me back (Interview 14, 28. 12. 2020).

While the migrants had to sell their property and borrow money to pay for migration to the Gulf, they went back empty-handed, even though it was clearly stated in their job contact that they should receive any wages and other benefits due after leaving the company. Most of the migrants were neither paid the four to eight months' salary due to them nor received the amount they contributed to the pension scheme.

Furthermore, some migrants who had no documents were forced by the government to a deportation camp where they were held for a few months awaiting expulsion. Later, with the help of IOM and the Bangladesh Embassy, these migrants were sent back to their home countries. In this regard, Motin, one of the returnees from Oman, informed us: "When Covid started, there was a military check. They looked for undocumented workers. One day, I was caught and taken to a camp where nearly a hundred other people from different countries were living. After three months in detention, I was sent back by a special flight with some other Bangladeshis" (Interview 6, 18. 10. 2020).

It is worth noting that during our fieldwork, we also met some migrants who had come to Bangladesh on vacation or short leave before the pandemic started. They were trapped by the lockdown and did not manage to fly back after the holidays were over. One of the Bangladeshi workers, Rafi, who arrived in Bangladesh from Saudi Arabia in February, described his condition: "I came here on my annual vacation. I have a return ticket, but I am unable to go back. I have a valid visa and work permit as well. My company told me, 'you can come when the coronavirus pandemic is over'. Now it is almost 11 months; I do not see any hope now of returning to my workplace in Saudi Arabia" (Interview 17, 30, 12, 2020).

At home, returnees are now facing an uncertain future since their family expenditure relies entirely on their foreign remittances. Rana, a Bangladeshi migrant who arrived from Saudi Arabia, describes his present situation: "I have no savings left. I came back totally empty-handed. Now, I am searching for a job. But due to coronavirus, no job is available here. Many people here are also unemployed. So finding a job is not easy. Even if I want to drive an auto [taxicab], I will not have many passengers since all schools, colleges, and other educational institutions are closed" (Interview 11, 22, 12, 2020).

The above comments by Rana indicate that for returnees managing to find a job to survive in their home country is very difficult since, everywhere, work has yet to resume after the lockdown. In addition, some of the returnees also mentioned that the work experience they gained in the host country was of no use. Alam, who returned from Qatar, highlights the following:

I used to work for a company making gypsum boards. I cannot find any company here that produces gypsum boards. I am now driving a van (rickshaw) here. I bought it by taking a loan from my relatives and friends. With my earnings, I am struggling to provide for five family members. Also, I cannot afford the tuition fees for my children's school (Interview 9, 10, 11, 2020).

As in the case of Alam, the findings have shown that the skills migrants acquired in the GCC are not transferable to their home country. They often failed to find work similar to that they had in the Gulf. However, some have already started doing manual work to earn a living, such as working as a construction worker or a rickshaw puller. Nevertheless, their earnings are not enough to maintain the expenses of their extended families. For instance, Aman, who recently came back to his village home of Tangail from Qatar, said: "I am now working as a plumber's assistant, a job I did not use to do in Qatar. My daily wage is very low to meet the cost of maintaining my family. But still, I have to do this job as I do not have an alternative" (Interview 15, 29, 12, 2020).

Thus, as most of the returnees are the primary earners in their families, these migrants are struggling and have no source of income or savings because they returned home penniless. As a result, they are searching for a job, while many others plan to move abroad once again when the pandemic is over.

CONCLUSION

This article aims to contribute to the literature on migration by highlighting the impact of the recent COVID-19 pandemic on migrant workers, specifically Bangladeshi migrants in the GCC countries. As the COVID-19 pandemic is a recent world crisis, research on this topic is still limited, and researchers in various fields are trying to focus on the issue more seriously.

This research indicates that the COVID-19 outbreak has adversely affected the economic and mental well-being of Bangladeshi low-income migrant workers in the GCC countries. While most GCC countries have strictly maintained lockdown and workplaces have been shut down, and migrant settlements converted into restricted zones, they failed to ensure that basic facilities were provided for the migrants. The employers stopped paying salaries by following a policy of “no-work-no-pay,” and migrants were not entitled to any guaranteed income or unemployment benefits. Migrants had to survive by borrowing money and with the help of the occasional food assistance programs operated by local charities and local people. In addition to these economic hardships, migrants also experienced depression because of the risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 since they lived in overcrowded conditions without proper ventilation or adequate access to water and hygiene products. Therefore, after waiting five to seven months for work to resume, they decided to return home once they could no longer provide for themselves daily, even though they had a valid visa and job contract.

While many migrants had to sell their property or borrow money to pay for their migration, they returned home empty-handed from the GCC. Often these returnees are the only members of their families at work, and their families depend entirely on foreign remittances to meet their living expenses. The returnees’ lives are now very hard because they cannot find suitable means to earn their living in Bangladesh because of the limited local labor market and widespread unemployment and underemployment. It has become very difficult for them to find work in Bangladesh using the skills they acquired in the GCC, which are not transferable to their home country. Moreover, they do not have sufficient savings to invest in any small business. On the other hand, those migrants still in their destination countries face various crises such as the fear of losing their job and being forced to return home, reduced income, and the absence of proper medical care and social security benefits. Many jobless migrants survive by borrowing money or using their emergency savings. Though it is uncertain how long the situation will continue, they still do not want to leave the country and are trying to cope with the situation.

Overall, our research has shown that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on migrant labor is very diverse and complex. It has hampered migrants’ personal lives and adversely affected their economic, psychological, and social well-being.

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POVZETEK

RAZBLINJENE SANJE IN POVRATEK DOMOV: BANGLADEŠKI DELAVCI MIGRANTI V SVETU ZA SODELOVANJE V ZALIVU MED PANDEMIJO BOLEZNI COVID-19

Mohammad MORAD, Al Amin RABBY, Devi SACCHETTO, Nadia HAQUE

Odkar se je začela pandemija bolezni Covid-19 se je veliko bangladeških migrantov že vrnilo domov, še mnogim drugim pa grozi repatriacija iz držav Sveta za sodelovanje v Zalivu (angl. *Gulf Cooperation Council* – GCC). Avtorji na podlagi kvalitativne raziskave, opravljene z bangladeškimi migranti, ki so se vrnili iz držav Sveta za sodelovanje v Zalivu, analizirajo izkušnje bangladeških delavcev v tujini med pandemijo, da bi bolje razumeli, zakaj so se ti migranti vrnili v svojo matično državo. Raziskava je pokazala, da je izbruh Covid-19 negativno vplival na ekonomsko in duševno blaginjo bangladeških delavcev migrantov z nizkimi dohodki v državah GCC. Čeprav so skoraj vse države GCC striktno izvajale omejitev javnega gibanja, zaprle delovna mesta in spremenile naselja migrantov v območja z omejenim gibanjem, niso zagotovile osnovne infrastrukture za delavce migrante. Delodajalci so sledili načelu »brez dela ni plačila« in prenehali izplačevati plače, migranti pa niso bili upravičeni do zajamčenega dohodka ali nadomestila za brezposelnost. Preživljati so se morali z izposojanjem denarja in s pomočjo občasnih programov pomoči v hrani, ki so jih izvajali lokalne dobrodelne organizacije in lokalni prebivalci. Poleg teh ekonomskih stisk so migranti trpeli tudi za depresijo zaradi nevarnosti okužbe s koronavirusom, saj so živeli v prenatrpanih prostorih brez ustreznega prezračevanja ali ustreznega dostopa do vode in sanitarnih sredstev. Zato so se po petih do sedmih mesecih čakanja na nadaljevanje dela, ko jim je zmanjkalo sredstev za preživljanje, odločili, da se vrnejo v svoje domače države, čeprav so imeli veljavne vizume in pogodbe o zaposlitvi.

Čeprav je moralo veliko migrantov prodati svoje imetje ali si izposoditi denar za plačilo odhoda na delo v tujino, so se iz držav GCC vrnili praznih rok. Ti povratniki so edini člani svojih družin, ki opravljajo plačano delo, in njihovi družinski izdatki so v celoti odvisni od njihovih nakazil iz tujine. Zdaj živijo v zelo težkih razmerah, saj v Bangladešu zaradi omejenega lokalnega trga dela ter razširjene brezposelnosti in podzaposlenosti ne morejo priti do zadostnih sredstev za preživljanje. Poleg tega zdaj v svoji domovini zelo težko najdejo nove načine za preživljanje, ki bi ustrezali njihovim znanjem in veščinam, ki so jih pridobili v državah GCC. Prav tako nimajo zadostnih prihrankov za naložbo v malo podjetje. Po drugi strani pa se migranti, ki so ostali v ciljnih državah, soočajo z različnimi krizami, na primer s strahom pred izgubo zaposlitve in prisilno vrnitvijo domov, zmanjšanjem dohodka ter pomanjkanjem ustrezne zdravstvene oskrbe in socialnovarstvenih prejemkov. Na splošno so izsledki raziskave pokazali, da je pandemija bolezni Covid-19 na delo migrantov vplivala na zelo raznolike in kompleksne načine.

MIGRANT WORKERS AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: EVIDENCE FROM SRI LANKANS ABROAD

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ABSTRACT

Migrant Workers and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Evidence from Sri Lankans Abroad

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the unfair and vulnerable situations endured by migrant workers. This article explores the realities of migrant workers stranded overseas during the pandemic. Focusing on evidence from the experiences of Sri Lankan migrants, it aims to create better policies and frameworks to improve their conditions. This study uses qualitative and quantitative data collected from Sri Lankan migrant workers. The analysis of migrants' nuanced experiences overseas during the pandemic, in terms of employment outcomes and social and psychological experiences, shows mixed evidence. While the positive experiences are comforting, the negative experiences give direction for further attention.

KEYWORDS: migration, pandemic, COVID-19, migrant rights

IZVLEČEK

Delavci migranti in pandemija bolezni Covid-19: primer Šrilančanov v tujini

Pandemija bolezni Covid-19 je razkrila nepravilne in ranljive razmere, v katerih živijo delavci migranti. Članek na primeru izkušenj migrantskih delavcev iz Šrilanke proučuje stvarnost delavcev migrantov, ki so med pandemijo ostali ujeti v tujini, za oblikovanje boljših politik in okvirov za izboljšanje njihovega položaja. V študiji so bili uporabljeni tako kvalitativni kot kvantitativni podatki zbrani pri migrantskih delavcih iz Šrilanke. Z analizo mnogovrstnih izkušenj migrantov na delu v tujini med pandemijo koronavirusa so bili v smislu posledic za zaposlitev ter socialnih in psiholoških izkušenj pridobljeni mešani podatki. Na eni strani so bile prisotne pozitivne, na drugi strani pa negativne, ki jim je treba posvetiti dodatno pozornost.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: migracije, pandemija, Covid-19, pravice migrantov

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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has created many far-reaching implications for migrant workers. Their migratory status relative to natives amplified the adverse implications faced. When most economies experienced massive layoffs as part of the economic fallout due to the pandemic, migrant workers were more vulnerable than native workers (Borjas & Cassidy, 2020). Similarly, most migrant workers are employed in occupations less suited for work from home (Borjas & Cassidy, 2020). Likewise, the irregular arrangements endured by many migrant workers translate into poor housing and working conditions with no access to healthcare or social protection and a higher risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19 (FAO, 2020; Sanfelici, 2021; Pandey et al., 2021). At the same time, border closures and travel restrictions prevented many international migrant workers from leaving their countries of destination and returning home (ILO, 2020; Weeraratne, 2020). Some of these stranded migrant workers could maintain their jobs abroad, while others experienced layoffs, wage cuts, or were compelled to take unpaid leave (Içduygu, 2020; Bhagat et al., 2020). Most had to sustain themselves overseas during the pandemic with lower or no income by tapping into their savings if they had any, relying on others, or ending up helpless.

The experiences endured by migrant workers in the countries of destination during the pandemic were neither unheard of nor unexpected. Over time, migrant workers have been discriminated against, marginalized, and made vulnerable, and the pandemic heightened these issues. While there are various efforts, i.e., Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), the outcomes during the pandemic underscore the need for more protection for migrant workers in host countries.

In this context, this article aims to contribute to the small, emerging pool of literature that provides scientific evidence on migrant workers' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Its goal is to shape future interventions to improve the plight of migrant workers overseas. The study uses evidence from the experiences of Sri Lankan migrants abroad during the pandemic, who were at greater vulnerability due to delays in government-facilitated repatriation missions. As such, Sri Lankans abroad were affected by pandemic-induced twin forces: unfavorable employment conditions and the inability to return home. When analyzed using a descriptive approach with qualitative data and an interpretive approach with quantitative data, these twin forces expose various new nuances of labor migration.

BACKGROUND

As identified in the literature, “a critical feature of the COVID-19 pandemic is that it generated simultaneous supply and demand shocks that rapidly increased unemployment levels, health risks, and income losses” across countries (Bossavie et al., 2020). The massive impact of the pandemic on labor markets left asymmetric implications across occupational and population groups, such as migrants (Della Puppa & Perocco, 2021). Bonizzoni and Dotsey (2021) show how the pandemic-induced prolonged suspension of the legal status of migrants negatively affected several aspects of their personal and familial lives, while undocumented immigrants are at greater risk (Kukreja, 2021). Similarly, Sanfelici (2021) elaborates on how immigration policies and neoliberal labor markets caused migrant workers in Italy to struggle during the pandemic. Similarly, emergent literature shows that migrant workers are typically more exposed to the economic and health shocks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic than comparable native workers (Yasenov, 2020).

The current article contributes to the growing pool of literature on the experiences of migrant workers during the pandemic by confirming these various aspects of the implications of the pandemic on migrant workers. The detailed and diverse pandemic-related experiences of migrant workers from relatively understudied migration corridors originating from Sri Lanka (to the Middle East or the Maldives, to name a few) confirm the widespread nature of immigrants’ experiences across regions. This firsthand evidence of the nuances of the employment, social, and psychosocial experiences of migrant workers during the pandemic strengthens the arguments for immediate improvements in their conditions. It provides a strong foundation for the long-term measures that global level frameworks, such as the SDG and GCM, must bring about.

DATA AND METHODS

This depiction of Sri Lankan migrant workers’ experience during the pandemic is based on primary quantitative and qualitative data collected from a sample of returnees and current migrants overseas. For the quantitative survey, a random sample¹ of 143 returnee migrants was interviewed by telephone in April 2021 using a structured questionnaire. The survey sample included 78% males and 22% females, while their ages ranged from 20 to 62 years, with an average age of 38.64 years. The sample consists of returnees from 17 countries. Indicating the relatively higher level of education in this sample, 48% had passed the 12th grade General Certificate in Advanced Level examination or had a university degree. Only 12% of the sample

1 Randomly sampled from the SLBE returnee registry.

had an education lower than passing the 10th grade. In this sample, the average duration of the last migration is 1.64 years.

The qualitative analysis stems from in-depth telephone interviews with 22 returned and current migrant workers in May and November 2020, and April 2021. The migrants interviewed in 2021 were randomly sampled from the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment returnee registry, while those in 2020 were purposively sampled to ensure maximum variation. Hence, this sample included those who migrated for employment through formal and informal channels. The sample also includes those who were undocumented at the time of the pandemic and returned. The skill levels range from low-skilled to high-skilled. The two females and twenty males interviewed in the sample were from eight countries, and the telephone interviews ranged from 31 to 68 minutes in duration.

A descriptive analysis approach is adopted in analyzing the quantitative data, while the qualitative data is analyzed by adopting an interpretive approach. In describing experiences of specific respondents in qualitative data, respondents are identified by the letter R followed by the respondent's number in the qualitative dataset (R1 to R22).

MIGRANT WORKERS' EXPERIENCES

Layoffs and job losses

In the quantitative survey of 143 returnees, 56% indicated that they lost their jobs due to the pandemic. In terms of the timing, in this sample, most layoffs in 2020 took place in March, which accounted for 33% layoffs, while other months accounted for 3–18% of all layoffs. The concentration of a large share of layoffs in March 2020—the early stage of the pandemic—supports the claim that “migrant workers are often first to be laid-off” during a crisis (ILO, 2020: 2). Under normal conditions, the average foreign employment contracts are for 2 years, yet the average duration of the last foreign employment in this sample was 1.64 years. The lower average duration in this sample compared to the average contract period under normal conditions hints at the possibility of a “last-in-first-out” policy in layoffs (Von Below & Thoursie, 2010), in which relatively recent migrants are disproportionately targeted in adverse employment outcomes in destination countries.

The layoffs of these workers took place in various ways. The qualitative data shows that workers in the hospitality sector across countries received different types of advanced notice. For instance, R10, a 51-year-old male migrant worker with 11 years of experience, was formally informed by his employer in Saudi Arabia that his job as a kitchen helper would end once his visa expired in a few months. Similarly, R3, a 36-year-old chef in the Maldives with 11 years of experience, was told by his employer that in the future, there would be no guests patronizing the hotel, and in

such event, no wages would be paid. For R16, a 30-year-old male employed as a chef in the Maldives, the employer continued to pay the basic salary without any service charge. In the case of Saudi Arabia, as per R10, his employer gave employees the option to either terminate employment or obtain a 6-month unpaid leave. For R11, a 27-year-old male hotel supervisor from the Maldives, the layoff was so unexpected and rushed that he did not have any time to even make an appeal to the employer.

Migrant workers in other sectors experienced further diversity. R5, a 25-year-old female apparel factory worker in Jordan, was rendered unemployed when her factory closed down, and the employer attempted to convince employees to transfer to a different factory so that the employer could benefit by transferring these visas. Nevertheless, these workers refused to transfer, and the initial employer later hired them at a per-output rate to stitch masks (JOD 12 per 500 masks). The experiences of R6, a house driver in Saudi Arabia, show that his employer gave him the option to leave the employer or stay back in the household without a job and remuneration until things improved. Conversely, reflecting a very rare case, R8, a 23-year-old factory mechanic in the Maldives, was offered a higher wage by his employer when he voluntarily decided to leave his job due to the spread of the pandemic. Similarly, R15, a 25-year-old robotics engineer from the United Kingdom, was able to negotiate a remote working arrangement before his temporary leave of absence from work to return to Sri Lanka. These findings show the diversity in experiences regarding migrant workers' employment contracts during the pandemic.

Among the 44% in the sample who returned for reasons other than being laid off, the main reasons for return were the end of the employment contract or the expiration of visas. Qualitative data reveals that many migrant workers had problems retaining their jobs due to issues in the timely extension of their passports or visas. For instance, R14, a 36-year-old finance manager with 15 years of experience in Dubai, had to return to Sri Lanka because he could not renew his visa. Another 30-year-old male forklift operator (R12) could not find a new job post layoff due to delays in replacing his lost passport. Similarly, R18, a 51-year-old sales manager in Abu Dhabi, was extremely anxious when his passport renewal was delayed during the pandemic. Without a passport valid for a further six months, he feared his visa would not be renewed in time, making him vulnerable to being prioritized for being laid off. At the same time, the qualitative sample shows that some companies, for example, in Dubai, resorted to laying-off migrant workers without canceling their visas so that such migrant workers could find an alternative job. Similarly, in South Korea, for R2, a 30-year-old fishing sector worker, the employer had extended his visa to ensure he remained legally in Korea until his departure.

Foregone evidence shows that layoffs or job losses during the pandemic ranged from giving prior notice to a sudden termination to leave without wages to voluntary resignations or remote working arrangements. Similarly, difficulties extending visas and passports created an additional dimension to the issues faced by migrant workers to retain or find employment.

Pending wages, terminal benefits, and remittances

As per the International Labour Organizations' (ILO) Termination of Employment Convention (C158), termination of employment contracts or layoffs should ideally involve payment of any pending wages, benefits, and possibly a severance package (ILO, 1982). In this quantitative sample, only 28% of the workers laid off during the pandemic had received severance pay from employers. The average severance pay received was LKR 321,785.90. Some workers also received other benefits from employers, such as paid leave, food, and accommodation. Qualitative evidence shows various reasons for migrant workers not receiving such financial dues and benefits from their employers. For instance, R3 returned to Sri Lanka with the intention of going back to the same employer in the Maldives once the pandemic improved and did not pursue the severance package or wages due, as he planned to obtain the same employment in the future.

Qualitative data further indicated that severance packages and pending wages were offset by employers against migrant workers' return air tickets and/or accommodation provided after the termination of employment (R3, R5). As indicated by survey data, 33% of returnees said their employers had paid for the return travel. This group may include employers with a contractual agreement to pay for these costs and those whose financial obligations were offset against air tickets. In this context, qualitative data raise concerns about the accuracy of dues calculations and offsetting the same by employers. Specifically, due to the stressful mindset of returnees before departing from their destination countries (see discussion under psychosocial aspects), many migrant workers could not pay more attention to the accuracy of these calculations. For instance, R10, the kitchen helper from Saudi Arabia, was only paid half of all his pending wages and benefits due. Still, he was glad to have received at least half, as most companies were closed in Saudi Arabia, and employees were not allowed to meet or discuss with the employer about such payments. R11, a hotel supervisor from the Maldives, indicated that he did not receive the LKR 450,000 due to him, the service letter, or the return air ticket, which was part of the employment contract. Instead, the employer informed R11 that they would provide these once the worker returned to Sri Lanka. Moreover, R19, a banker in Dubai, reflected on how the employer of his highly-skilled friend in Dubai asked his friend to resign and deferred his gratuity payment indefinitely until the company was able to pay. At the same time, some migrants, such as R9, a 49-year-old factory mechanic in Saudi Arabia, received all wages and benefits due before return.

Qualitative data (R20) further reflects how, in general, long-serving high-skilled workers in the Middle East region received large sums of money as severance pay. The literature considers that such one-time terminal benefits may have contributed to propping up remittances to Sri Lanka during 2020 (Weeraratne, 2021). As per quantitative data during the pre-pandemic period, a majority (71%) remitted monthly, while the average pre-pandemic monthly remittances were LKR 98,443.18,

and the most common channel of remittances was Money Transfer Operators, such as Western Union. During the pandemic, as per quantitative data, 75% of respondents had not been able to remit at the same frequency due to loss of employment (48%), wage cuts (39%), and difficulties in remitting money (8%). Similarly, 75% of the sample could not remit the same amount as before because of being laid off or experiencing wage cuts.

Food, accommodation, and other social support

In this quantitative sample, 78% had returned because of the pandemic. The return decision was a personal decision for 73%, and for 19% of the returnees, the employer told them to return. On average, a returnee in this sample spent four months between deciding to return and actually returning.² For most migrant workers, the expenditure in the destination country during this time was unplanned.

During this extended and unprepared period of stay in the destination countries, migrants underwent various experiences in terms of their food and accommodation arrangements. For instance, R1, a 39-year-old female child care worker in Kuwait, was planning before the pandemic to return because her contract was ending. She received accommodation and rations for cooking from her employer until the day of her return. Similarly, R13, a 34-year-old male undocumented migrant in Azerbaijan, received food and accommodation from his informal employer during the pandemic. R5, the female apparel factory worker, and her colleagues in Jordan were allowed to continue to live in the employer-provided accommodation, but their meal arrangements deteriorated during the pandemic. As highlighted, she and her colleagues were served the same meal—dhal curry and rice, for all three meals for several consecutive days.

In the case of hospitality sector workers, they were provided accommodation with varied arrangements for food. R10, the 51-year-old kitchen helper in Saudi Arabia, indicated that the employer cared well for him and other workers, where accommodation included all pre-pandemic facilities such as Wi-Fi, television, and regular meals. On the contrary, the experience of the R3, a 36-year-old chef of a resort in the Maldives, was disturbing. The archipelagic geography in the Maldives isolated this island resort when lockdown measures stopped boats and seaplanes engaging in transportation. With the depletion of food and other stocks, this previously perfect employer changed for the worst in its attempt to sustain a staff of 270. The drastic measures adopted included rationing generators that supplied electricity for only six hours a day in the evenings, shutting down Wi-Fi and A/C, and assigning tasks in exchange for the meals and accommodation provided. These tasks included picking coconuts, fishing in the ocean, helping in the garden, repairs, maintenance, and construction work, which were challenging to the respondent (R3), a trained

2 This delay in return is mainly due to the shortage of repatriation flights.

and qualified chef. Moreover, due to the shortage of ingredients, the respondent and others had to survive mainly on unseasoned boiled fish and rice for all meals on most days during the lockdown period. In contrast, the employer (a hotel) of R16 in the Maldives experienced issues maintaining its staff but did not resort to assigning employees to work in unrelated fields in exchange for the food and accommodation provided. Nevertheless, on most days, staff was served fish and dhal and had to pay for drinking water bottles.

The social experiences of undocumented migrant workers were further nuanced as they faced more challenges during the pandemic due to their undercover existence. Guadagno (2020) notes that lack of awareness of locally recommended prevention measures and overreliance on informal communication were common among illegal migrant workers during the pandemic. Confirming this, R13, a 34-year-old undocumented Sri Lankan migrant worker in Azerbaijan, could not access official pandemic-related preventive information as he did not have a sim/telephone registered in his name. Hence, when social distancing-related time allocations for stepping outdoors were made and communicated to each individual in Azerbaijan, R13 did not have an allocation. Moreover, he did not receive the first message sent by the Sri Lankan Embassy in Iran³ to facilitate his return. Similarly, R12, the 30-year-old forklift operator in Dubai, had entered on a visit visa and lost his passport before the pandemic and then could not pay his fine for overstaying. While he initially did odd jobs ranging from repairing ACs and working in shops to cleaning, it became impossible to find such jobs without a valid passport or visa, leaving him unable to pay for his food and accommodation.

Support from the government in the country of origin

Among the surveyed returnees, 42% had sought support from the Sri Lankan embassies/missions/consulates in their host countries, primarily for their return passage. The qualitative data show mixed evidence about returnees' level of satisfaction. For instance, R7, a 32-year-old male hotel supervisor who returned from Dubai, believed that the consulate staff in Dubai served the stranded Sri Lankan migrant workers to the maximum they could under the circumstances. Similarly, R12, who, as an illegal immigrant in Dubai, was grateful for food and accommodation provided by the consulate until his return. R5, a female apparel factory worker from Jordan, elaborated how the Sri Lankan Embassy in Jordan attempted to protect these workers by requesting employers to pay half of their monthly wages.⁴

Nevertheless, many respondents in the qualitative sample were not satisfied with the protection and services provided by the respective Sri Lankan embassies.

3 Azerbaijan does not have a Sri Lankan embassy and the Sri Lankan Embassy in Iran serves Sri Lankans in Azerbaijan.

4 The employer had refused this request.

For instance, R3, the chef stranded on an island in the Maldives, underscored that the Sri Lankan Embassy did not answer his telephone calls and that he got his family in Sri Lanka to call the Sri Lankan Embassy in the Maldives. At the same time, most returnees had expected that the embassies would coordinate their return sooner. Specifically, returnees from the Maldives (R3, R8, R11, R16) underscored how sad, helpless, and let down they felt when colleagues from India, Nepal, and Bangladesh were repatriated by special ships sent by their respective countries. Similarly, returnees from the Middle East (as highlighted by R10) stressed they had to spend their remaining savings and brave the pandemic to visit the embassy repeatedly in person. In contrast, R5, the female returnee from an apparel factory in Jordan, elaborated that they had to send YouTube videos to authorities and media in Sri Lanka before the embassy arranged their return.

In addition to officials from the country of origin, some migrant workers received help from philanthropists and well-wishers. R19 underscores how an Indian national in Dubai supplied food for stranded Sri Lankans and bought return air tickets for 10 Sri Lankans stranded in Dubai. Similarly, R12, the illegal immigrant forklift operator in Dubai, was helped by an American citizen with his return ticket expenses after the Sri Lankan met the American when the latter was distributing food for stranded Sri Lankans near the Dubai consulate. Moreover, R19 revealed that many Sri Lankans provided washroom facilities in their homes to the fellow Sri Lankan migrant workers camping in a park near the Sri Lankan consulate in Dubai.

Psychological stress and support

Sri Lankan migrant workers endured tremendous psychological stress because of all these socioeconomic experiences overseas during the pandemic. This stress was multifaceted and stemmed from various aspects of the pandemic. One part of the stress was the fear of contracting the virus. By March 2021, 4,431 Sri Lankans abroad had contracted the virus, and 122 had died (Ranasinghe, 2021). At the same time, migrant workers abroad were concerned about the spread of COVID-19 in Sri Lanka. In this context, Sri Lankan migrant workers overseas had to deal with pandemic-related information connected to both the destination country and Sri Lanka and navigate their fears and concerns across an overload of information.

Other fears during the pandemic included not getting treatment if they contracted the virus, not having funds to pay for treatment, and not being able to see their loved ones again. R11, a 27-year-old hotel supervisor from the Maldives, indicated that adjoining his accommodation was accommodation for COVID-19 patients. As such, he was very worried about contracting the virus. His stress level became further elevated as there were shortages of medical and food supplies due to the lockdowns. In this context, he felt like a prisoner with no way out. Similarly, the illegal migrant worker in Azerbaijan noted that when contracted cases were not seeking treatment in hospitals in Azerbaijan, the armed forces stormed such houses

and hospitalized patients by force. This made him very fearful about the possibility of his contracting the virus and the implications for himself and his informal sector employer, who had also given him accommodation. In some cases, migrant workers could not maintain normal communication with their families back home. For instance, R3, the stranded chef in the Maldives, indicated that his stress level would have been lower if he could have seen and talked to his family over the phone as he usually did before the pandemic.

Nevertheless, while stranded overseas, the migrants were fully supported by their families back home. All respondents in the qualitative sample indicated how their family exhibited unwavering support, were eager for their return, helped them keep their spirits and hopes high, and financially supported them during this difficult period. For instance, R9, a 49-year-old male mechanical worker from Saudi Arabia, indicated that his emotional stability improved when his family in Sri Lanka carried out religious activities to bless him. However, the loss of income and related struggles for food and accommodation at the destination, costs of return air and quarantine, and the family at home's struggles due to the loss of regular remittances and or concern for the safe return of the migrant worker, continued to contribute toward migrant workers' psychological distress. In the quantitative sample, 47% self-financed their return air ticket, while for 32%, the employer paid it. For another 10%, the government of Sri Lanka paid for the return, while for 4%, the host government paid it. For most repatriation flights, the return air costs were much higher than under normal circumstances. Additionally, for many, there were the costs of quarantine. R10, a returnee from Saudi Arabia, had to suddenly find LKR 300,000 to secure a spot on a repatriation flight. To help him, his family borrowed this amount from an informal money lender at an interest rate of LKR 3,000 per day. Similarly, R11, the 27-year-old hotel supervisor from the Maldives, had his cousin in Dubai wire transfer funds. In terms of quarantine costs, 48% paid on their own, 35% used free quarantine facilities, while for nearly 8%, their employer paid these costs. The paid quarantine started from LKR 7,500 per day on a twin-sharing basis running to a minimum of LKR 105,000 for 14 days per person. Compared to the average pre-pandemic wage of LKR 145,861 in this sample, the quarantine costs were unaffordable for many.

Returning with unfulfilled migration plans and empty-handed created an added dimension of stress for migrant workers. For instance, R6, the 51-year-old house driver from Kuwait, emphasized that he usually brought many gifts for his wife and children. However, this time, he was neither able to shop before his return nor did his repatriation flight allow more than one piece of luggage. Similarly, R3, the 36-year-old chef, returned from the Maldives during the pandemic with only USD 21 in hand. Therefore, many migrants had several concerns weighing down their spirits during their return.

The emotional cost of the pandemic also affected migrants' relationships. The female apparel sector worker (R5) from Jordan highlighted how inmates in her

dormitory got into arguments due to their restless nature. Similarly, R11, a hospitality sector returnee from the Maldives, ended his relationship with his fiancée, a fellow Sri Lankan employed in the same sector in the Maldives, due to disagreements and arguments triggered during the stressful period of being stranded overseas. As discussed above, Sri Lankan migrant workers endured an unimagined level of emotional hardship and pressure during the pandemic, with nearly no psychological support provided except by their respective households.

CORE FINDINGS AND THE WAY FORWARD

The above highlights the mixed evidence of the experiences of migrant workers' employment outcomes and social and psychological experiences overseas during the pandemic. While the positive experiences are comforting, the negative experiences give direction for further attention. Some findings that need further attention are as follows.

The findings highlight the importance of comprehensive support mechanisms to protect migrant workers overseas until their return if the employer refuses food and accommodation, especially for those in isolated locations or those undocumented. Similarly, it is crucial to facilitate migrant workers to maintain a valid visa after layoff to support legal pathways for re-employment overseas and timely renewals of employment visas and passports, with support structures and capacity in diplomatic missions improved. Bi-lateral agreements should introduce an automatic concessionary extension of visas during times of crisis.

Moreover, better protective clauses about prior notice and continued protection and accommodation till departure from the country of destination or change of employment are needed for employer-provided accommodation. Such clauses would ensure that vulnerable migrant workers are not disproportionately affected by external shocks and other unforeseen issues. A special focus on extra protective measures is needed for migrant workers during the first two years of employment, as newly-arrived migrants are vulnerable to exploitation and other difficulties. To aid this process, migrants should also be educated on building and maintaining networks in their host country. This would also help them gain and share information, network, create a means of social support, and be re-employed.

Introducing an international mechanism to support migrant workers who are currently abroad or returned in quantifying and verifying the calculations of the pending wages and terminal benefits and ensuring their receipt would help. Additionally, introducing international laws and regulations, i.e., tied to ILO conventions, to streamline setting off the above payments and prevent employers from committing wage theft is important.

To minimize the negative repercussions of unchecked stress, destination countries should take on a greater role in providing psychological support to migrant

workers in their countries, especially during crises. Such stresses and problems could also be minimized if the employer and the host country's government collectively ensured access to communication facilities.

Factoring in the above recommendations into the indicators of the SDGs and the objectives of the GCM can contribute to improving the outcomes for migrant workers during future crises, promote greater protection, and ensure that migrant workers are not disproportionately vulnerable to exploitation and injustice. With such, destination countries would benefit by becoming more attractive to migrant workers. In addition, countries of origin would benefit from a fairer sharing of responsibility for the well-being of migrant workers overseas.

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POVZETEK

DELAVCI MIGRANTI IN PANDEMIJA BOLEZNI COVID-19: PRIMER ŠRILANČANOV V TUJINI Bilesha WEERARATNE

Pandemija bolezni Covid-19 je močno negativno vplivala na življenja številnih delavcev, zlasti mednarodnih delavcev migrantov. Prehodna narava delavcev migrantov v državah gostiteljicah ter nenadne gospodarske posledice pandemije so njihove socialne in psihosocialne težave še povečale. Članek preučuje dejanske razmere delavcev migrantov, ki so ob začetku pandemije bolezni Covid-19 obtičali v tujini, ter na tej podlagi predlaga oblikovanje politik in okvirov za izboljšanje njihovega položaja.

Avtorica se s pomočjo kvalitativnih in kvantitativnih podatkov osredotoča na položaj šrilanških migrantov in pride do mešanih ugotovitev. Odpuščanje delavcev migrantov med pandemijo je obsegalo vse od predhodnih obvestil o prenehanju delovnega razmerja do nenadnih odpovedi zaposlitve, odpuščanj kot prvih odzivov na pandemijo ter politik »zadnji pride, prvi gre«. Zaradi pandemije in obdobja zaprtja javnega življenja je prišlo do zamud pri obnavljanju njihovega migrantskega statusa. Nekateri delodajalci so se izogibali plačevanju tekočih plač delavcem migrantom oziroma odpravnin in jih nadomeščali s storitvami ali infrastrukturo, ki so jo zagotavljali, pri čemer njihovi izračuni niso bili jasni.

Avtorica med drugim priporoča vzpostavitev celovitega podpornega mehanizma za zaščito delavcev migrantov v tujini, dokler se ne vrnejo domov, če jim njihovi delodajalci ne zagotavljajo hrane in namestitve; namenjanje posebne pozornosti dodatnim zaščitnim ukrepom za delavce migrante v prvih dveh letih njihove zaposlitve; pravočasno podaljševanje delovnih vizumov in potnih listov v državah izvora in v ciljnih državah; vzpostavitev mednarodnih mehanizmov za pomoč delavcem migrantom pri pridobivanju ustreznih potrdil, določanje višine in preverjanje izračunov neizplačanih plač in odpravnin, poenostavitev obračunavanja zgoraj navedenih vrst izplačil in preprečevanje kraje plač; ter zagotavljanje dostopa do komunikacije s strani delodajalca in vlade države gostiteljice.

Vključitev zgoraj navedenih priporočil v cilje in kazalnike ciljev trajnostnega razvoja ter v cilje globalnega dogovora o migracijah bi pripomogla k izboljšanju položaja delavcev migrantov med prihodnjimi krizami obenem pa bi spodbudila večjo zaščito in zagotovila, da delavci migranti ne bodo nesorazmerno podvrženi izkoriščanju in krivicam.

INSTITUTIONAL DISCRIMINATION AND THE POLITICIZATION OF MIGRATION: THE CASE OF THE COLOMBIA–VENEZUELA BORDER

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ABSTRACT

Institutional Discrimination and the Politicization of Migration: The Case of the Colombia–Venezuela Border

In this article, the author presents the migratory phenomenon at the Colombia–Venezuela border in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The article is based on many sources, including presidential addresses, statements, decrees, and press releases. The author argues how humanitarian assistance has been based on political maneuvering by the governments of Colombia and Venezuela, which constitutes discriminatory practices against Venezuelan migrants. The paper finally points out how this situation has aggravated the migration crisis, characterized by serious violations of fundamental human rights of the Venezuelan migrant population.

KEYWORDS: Venezuelan migration, Colombia, Venezuela, migration policies, COVID-19

IZVLEČEK

Institucionalna diskriminacija in politizacija migracij: primer kolumbijsko-venezuelske meje

Avtor v prispevku predstavlja pojav migracij na kolumbijsko-venezuelski meji v kontekstu pandemije Covid-19. Članek temelji na številnih virih, med katerimi so predsedniški nagovori, izjave, odloki in sporočila za javnost. Avtor trdi, da je humanitarna pomoč temeljila na kriterijih političnega manevra, ki je predstavljal diskriminatorno prakso do venezuelskih migrantov s strani vlad Kolumbije in Venezuele. Članek na koncu izpostavlja, da se je zaradi takih razmer zaostрила migracijska kriza, za katero so značilne hude kršitve temeljnih socialnih pravic venezuelskega migrantskega prebivalstva.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: migracije v Venezueli, Kolumbija, Venezuela, migracijska politika, Covid-19

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INTRODUCTION

The Venezuelan migration crisis may be considered one of the world's largest migration crises. According to the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V), "The exodus of Venezuelan nationals is already the largest in the modern history of Latin America and the Caribbean and involves both refugees and migrants from Venezuela" (R4V, 2018). This migratory phenomenon is complex and specific. On the one hand, are the migrants who remained in Colombia under deteriorating social conditions. On the other hand, are those migrants who want to return to their country from or through Colombia. For Venezuelan migrants returning to their country from Ecuador, Peru, and Chile, passing through Colombia is an obligatory step on their journey.

The COVID-19 pandemic has aggravated the situation of Venezuelan migrants; both the Colombian and Venezuelan governments have used the pandemic for political maneuvering. In the case of Colombia, the country that hosts the largest number of Venezuelan migrants, we have found some particularities. The quarantine was ordered on March 22, 2020; Colombian president Iván Duque Márquez announced the news via his own television program, broadcast daily on all Colombian television channels. The opposition political parties requested the suspension of the television program; social protests in Colombia and the resulting police brutality against the protesters led to its suspension in May 2020.

As per government policies, the television program was characterized by the strong presence of the business sector and its appeals to Colombian nationalist sentiment. In contrast, there has been a lack of participation in the public discourse of the most vulnerable populations, such as the homeless, the indigenous, Internally Displaced People (IDPs), and Venezuelan migrants. In this respect, we monitored the daily presidential discourse and statements. We must consider the social and political agenda and the daily political responses in this context. Pajnik states that "only by placing the power and politicality of migration at the center of the analysis are we able to see the true nature of bordering" (Pajnik, 2019: 128).

COVID-19 has exposed the reality of social conditions in several regions, where social problems remain unresolved by governments and the international community. Della Puppa & Perocco (2021: 8) argued, "If the novel coronavirus is a symptom of the current state of the environment and a sign of the progressive disease affecting the biosphere, the coronavirus crisis is a litmus test and a mirror exposing the structural problems of contemporary societies, highlighting the major crisis of our times".

The dramatic social conditions represent a real social challenge for the governments and institutions of these two countries. However, there is a lack of political will to resolve serious socioeconomic problems: "Both in its role as a litmus test and social accelerator, the coronavirus crisis has converged and entangled pre-existing social contradictions, exacerbating social hardships and inequalities, increasing social risks" (Della Puppa & Perocco, 2021: 9).

The borderland between Colombia and Venezuela is considered one of the world's most dangerous borders. Since 1830, these two neighboring countries have shared one of the most dynamic borders in South America; running for 2219 km, it is a zone of deep politicization and government propaganda. The media focuses on the diplomatic and commercial crises around the borderlands to make them visible to the public (Jiménez Aguilar, 2008). Despite this complex and dramatic situation, the two governments have not responded to resolve this situation and attend to the migrant population. We conclude how, paradoxically, the two most antagonistic governments in the region share the same exclusionary policy, aggravating the marginal social conditions of migrants that existed before the coronavirus pandemic.

COLOMBIA, A SETTING OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Colombia is a country characterized by profound exclusion and marginalization of large parts of its population. It is a structural phenomenon embodied by government corruption and a deeply entrenched political elite. As we identified in the presidential television program, many populations were not considered, particularly those most in need of protection. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) report entitled "Social Panorama of Latin America 2019" showed that Colombia is one of the countries with the most inequality in the world. This report indicated several aspects that help us understand the social situation, including income inequality measured by the Gini index. "However, these averages mask very uneven patterns from one country to another, in relation both to inequality and to the intensity and direction of the changes in these different periods. Argentina, El Salvador and Uruguay recorded the lowest levels, below 0.400, while Brazil and Colombia recorded levels higher than 0.520" (ECLAC, 2019: 21).

According to the Colombian National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), in 2019, the percentage of the Colombian population classified as living in extreme poverty was 9.6%, and the percentage classified as poor was 35.7% (DANE, 2020). The previous indicators are made based on some imprecise criteria. For instance, the DANE report indicates that if a household is composed of four people, it will be classified as poor if its total income is below COP 1,310,696 (equivalent to EUR 340) (DANE, 2020). The logic of this measurement demonstrates an incorrect approach toward the phenomenon of poverty by Colombian institutions. The pandemic crisis has worsened the social outlook; the DANE institution reported a monetary poverty rate of 42.5% in 2020 (DANE, 2021).

Among the many examples of institutionalized discrimination, we can refer to homelessness at the height of the pandemic. Here, we see the relationship between exclusion and COVID-19. The press release shown in Figure 1 makes this apparent. This online press release narrates the actions that accompany a video presentation. The video begins with a police officer knocking on the lid of the sewer. This action



Figure 1: Source: Pulzo, 2020 (April 3).

gives the impression that the officer is absolutely sure that he will find someone in there. In response to the knock, the hand of a homeless person appears, who proceeds to tell the officer that he is in quarantine. The man, visibly shaken by the police visitor, is eating butter with his hands and appears in a deplorable state. The scene seems quite funny to the police officer, who laughs and says, “Stay home”, and, amid a national health crisis, seems to mock the situation. The police officer says to the man, “Well, well. Comply with the quarantine,” and, using his feet, puts the wooden door back on to cover the sewer. He also adds, “Close the door there; don’t go out” (own translation of the press release; Pulzo, 2020). This vignette illustrates a concrete example of an exclusive state’s high degree of marginalization.

In Colombia’s political, legal, and economic context, the level of vulnerability is higher for Venezuelan migrants. Most of them operate in the informal economy, one of the sectors most impacted by the pandemic through deteriorating economic conditions. This situation illustrates the substantial nexus between COVID-19 and the marginalized and impoverished Venezuelan migrants in Colombia. According to a recent Refugees International and Center for Global Development report, “the economic situation is especially challenging in areas along the border, where there are high concentrations of Venezuelans. Before the pandemic, many already experienced high rates of unemployment and informality, reaching up to 15 and 71 percent, respectively” (Graham et al., 2020). In an interview, Jozef Merkkx, representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Colombia, stated that 60% of Venezuelan migrants do not have an income (Sánchez, 2020). Only 29,095 Venezuelans have a work contract and are registered on the platform of the Single Registry of Foreign Workers in Colombia, set up by the Ministry of Labor

of Colombia; only 85,797 Venezuelans are registered in the social security contributions system (UNHCR, 2021).

According to a Venezuela Migration Project Observatory report, 51.7% of the Venezuelan migrants surveyed are in a situation of multidimensional poverty, which contrasts with 17.6% of Colombians; 48.8% of Venezuelan migrants face critical overcrowding in their homes (Palomares, 2021). We have witnessed Venezuelan migrants begging for food and shouting practically every day. It is important to highlight how the local population reacts to this situation. On one occasion, a person yelled, “Let us sleep.” On another occasion, even when a man was accompanied by his son, another person yelled, “If there are children, don’t, shameless.”

The Interagency Group on Mixed Migration Flows (GIFMM) report conducted in Colombia in June 2020 revealed: “[...] 74% of those surveyed stated that they had missed at least one meal a day out of the three required, which is associated with the difficult income situation of the households, and affects their ability to comply with the preventative isolation measures” (GIFMM Colombia, 2020: 28).

There is a broad assumption in the Latin American region that Colombia is a democracy that respects human rights, and Venezuela is a narco-dictatorship with gross and systematic violations of human rights. This political reasoning is present in most mass media. However, it contrasts with the social reality on the ground reported by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which shows how most Venezuelan migrants live in conditions of extreme poverty and marginalization in the Colombian territory.

SOCIAL REALITIES AT THE INTERNATIONAL BORDER

The relationship between both countries has been very complex. Historically, there was a state called “la Gran Colombia” (Greater Colombia), which included modern-day Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Panama; this state dissolved in 1831. The border problems began immediately after the disintegration of Greater Colombia. Between 1833 and 1941, the presidents of the newly-formed states signed treaties of friendship, commercial alliances, limitations, and navigation (Cadena Montenegro, 2007). The region has experienced moments of tension, as Pastrana Buelvas stated: “The military acquisitions have experienced a particularly remarkable increase in Latin America in the last decade, inevitably bringing along rumors concerning ‘arms races’ that evoke old borderline disputes, old remnants inherited from the Cold War’s [...]” (Pastrana Buelvas, 2010: 57). Today, the Colombia–Venezuela border is one of the most complex regions in Latin America because of violence and narcotraffic, featuring severe human rights violations. Perocco highlights the worsening conditions of migrants arising from the impact of the pandemic in some geographical areas:

[...] The reports and documentation regarding migration in different parts of the world—for example, the Colombian–Venezuelan area, Central America, the Mexico–US border, India, the Balkan route, the sub-Saharan route, the Mediterranean route—have painted a gloomy picture; a large part of the migrations have slipped into a foggy limbo, passing even more into the hands of traffickers and criminal organizations that have often operated undisturbed (Perocco, 2021: 24).

The border of North Santander (Colombia) and Táchira State (Venezuela) is one of the most complex zones for both countries. The Simón Bolívar International Bridge is the most iconic place along the border and the main gateway between Colombia and Venezuela. We find several key features in this border area: first, the politicization of two governments; second, the Colombian armed conflict (one of the regions in Colombia most affected by this conflict is the border department of North Santander); third, the existence of enormous criminal activity; fourth, several cases of corruption.

THE POLITICIZATION OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE: THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN BOTH GOVERNMENTS IN THE BORDER AREA

During the COVID-19 pandemic, both governments committed to criticizing one other, with allegations made from both sides. The historical problems, the institutional vacuum, and the global pandemic make this delimited region a complex social phenomenon. Instead of being a space for cooperation between both countries, the border area is a site of tension with constant political confrontation and the aggravation of human rights violations.

In the context of Caracas–Bogotá confrontations, both governments have used the current pandemic as a pretext to intensify political propaganda via serious allegations. For instance, a press release of the Ministry of People’s Power for Foreign Affairs of Venezuela denounced the Venezuelan government to the United Nations (UN) and Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) for “the inaction of Colombian migration authorities on the border with Venezuela in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, a situation that promotes Venezuelans’ entry through informal border crossing points” (Torres, 2020). The same press release also indicated: “The inaction of the Colombian authorities hampers the epidemiological efforts made by the Bolivarian Government to receive those Venezuelans that are returning home as they flee from the xenophobia and social havoc resulting from the late measures taken by Colombia due to Covid-19” (Torres, 2020).

Subsequently, Iván Duque Márquez alerted the UN and International Organization for Migration (IOM) to pay attention to the new income restrictions imposed by the Venezuelan government on Venezuelans who want to return, indicating: “That

will be an issue that the IOM and the UNHCR must observe because we are facilitating that humanitarian process" (own translation; Agencia EFE, 2020). In an interview with *Reuters*, the Colombian president indicated: "In the case of Venezuela the information is non-existent [...] There's not good hospital capacity or good epidemiological capacity, for a long time they haven't had serious vaccination programs. I think Venezuela is a time bomb from the public health point of view" (Symmes Cobb & Acosta, 2020).

In this political framework, not only were the politicians denounced but also their migrant populations. The Venezuelan government blamed returning Venezuelan migrants for spreading COVID-19. A publication of the Human Rights Watch indicated:

On July 8, Maduro said people crossing through illegal passageways were "contaminating their communities" and "killing their families." Previously, he said the returnees were "irresponsible" and that their families and neighbors should report them. Other authorities have called returnees "fascists," "camouflaged coup-plotters," and "biological weapons" sent to Venezuela (Taraciuk Broner & Page, 2020).

Based on presidential statements and other official information, we can identify the strong presence of nationalist discourse in both countries. One government (Venezuela) offers COVID-19 testing apparatus, and the other (Colombia) rejects it; both are looking for political advantages. One government (Venezuela) urges working together to gain recognition of its president, and the other (Colombia) rejects this proposal to maintain the perception that the Venezuelan leader Maduro is a narco-dictator. One government (Colombia) accuses the other of human rights violations against their people, and the other (Venezuela) asserts that Venezuela is the only country in the world receiving reverse migration. At the same time, all through this confrontation, the population trapped in the borderland continues to be unable to leave Colombia and unable to return to Venezuela. This population includes those who used to live in Colombia and the migrants returning from other countries who need to walk through the Colombia–Venezuela borderland.

DETERIORATING PROTECTION FOR VENEZUELAN MIGRANTS

As a logical consequence of the primacy of seeking political gain over social welfare, human development has been seriously affected, and the human rights situation has continued to deteriorate. Although the situation has worsened for millions of people in both countries, Venezuelan migrants have been most affected. Many refer to their desperate intention to return to their country despite obstacles indicating the absence of governmental cooperation as a "true odyssey." Following the March 14, 2020, border closure, as of November 16, 2020, 119,885 Venezuelans have returned to their home country from or through Colombia (UNHCR, 2020).

The absence of judicial protection assumes an approach of political exclusion by the host country. Jorge Castañeda highlighted that the former Colombian president's focus on the politics of open borders has continued with the current president. His focus is perhaps surprising given that he is "a right-of-center technocrat, who, at first glance, would not be an obvious candidate for expressing such solidarity with poor Venezuelans—especially since many of his compatriots are less sympathetic to their plight" (Castañeda, 2020).

The coronavirus crisis has increased the stigmatization of migrants by some local governments and populations. We find one example in the municipality of Pamplona in North Santander, whose mayor expressed: "I understand what a refugee is, but at this moment, the health and life of the citizens of Pamplona prevail" (own translation; Abramovits, 2020). This statement echoed the earlier assertion of the former mayor of Pamplona: "The city is permeated by irregular migrants whom we are going to make available to Migración Colombia" (Abramovits, 2020). This viewpoint has come to dominate the political agenda toward immigrant populations, particularly in small towns.

Another negative social consequence of governmental stigmatization and politicization during the pandemic has been the closed border policy of Colombia–Venezuela. The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) argued, "Although many Colombians support the border closure, noting other countries have done the same, [...]" (Chavés, 2020); this response has had serious consequences. According to the independent information provider ACAPS:

The Covid-19 crisis has resulted in the closure of the Colombian border since March 2020, which has led to the appearance of new irregular crossings, making migration control difficult and increasing protection risks for *caminantes*. The risks include forced labour and sexual exploitation, forced recruitment, theft, extortion, and human trafficking and smuggling (ACAPS, 2021).

The Colombian institutional discourse has focused on the COVID-19 vaccines for some time. In an interview with BLU Radio, President Duque announced that Venezuelans without formal migratory status would not get access to vaccines. "The priority will always be Colombian citizens" and "those who do not have Colombian nationality and whose migration situation has not been regularized, they will not be vaccinated" (own translations; Redacción Blu Radio, 2020). We must note how the same Venezuelan opposition remained silent about this decision and encouraged the Colombian president. Subsequently, President Maduro indicated that the vaccines would be distributed in Venezuela free of charge to the entire population living in the country, "be they Colombians, Portuguese, Italians, Venezuelans" (own translation; Venezolana de Televisión, 2020). This last situation is an example of the high level of politicization and discrimination. In the case of the Colombian state, the populist declaration excluding COVID-19 vaccines is to the detriment of the human rights of Venezuelan migrants.

CONCLUSION

Venezuelan migrants represent one of the groups most affected by the coronavirus crisis. The majority endure human rights violations that continue to have a deleterious effect on their existing precarious conditions. Over recent decades, the Colombia–Venezuela borderland has seen episodes of political tension. During the COVID-19 pandemic, both Colombian and Venezuelan governments have focused their attention on this area as part of their binational relationship. In this paper, we have stressed the absence of a human rights approach, showing that political interests predominate over mutual solidarity. The two governments could not reach a minimum agreement to reduce hunger. We note how in the issued decrees and presidential statements, there has been a lack of any social assistance for migrants; and that this crisis has been exploited for political gain. The needs of Venezuelan migrants are usually not considered by either the host country or the country of origin. This institutional discrimination has further aggravated the suffering of migrants.

The COVID-19 pandemic has meant that Venezuelan migrant patterns have changed significantly since living conditions have worsened. Thousands of migrants have been forced to return to their country of origin in a migratory journey characterized by extreme difficulties. We can observe that both in the wider society and in government policies in Colombia, the pandemic has laid bare the institutional discrimination against the migrant population. The absence of cooperation between both governments confirms our assertion of institutional exclusion and discriminatory practices in social care for Venezuelan migrants.

In Colombia, the coronavirus crisis has seriously affected all aspects of society, particularly the status of war and peace. In the case of the armed conflict and worsening social conditions for the population, “Illegal armed groups and criminal organizations have continued to take advantage of the pandemic to strengthen their social and territorial control” (UN Security Council, 2020). The Colombia–Venezuela border is one of the most badly affected regions, where the violence continues to leave death and displacement. The peace agenda has been seriously affected, with significant delays in implementing the Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace. The assassination of social leaders has dramatically increased; in 2019, there were 132 assassinations, rising to 182 in 2020 (Ombudsman’s Office of Colombia, 2021).

The current pandemic interconnects with the dynamics of conflict. Criminality and insecurity are rife in the Colombia–Venezuela borderlands, making this particular mass migration flow a structural phenomenon and one of the most complex situations in the world. Some political parties and armed actors are taking advantage of the current pandemic to maintain criminal activities. To use an old proverb, they are “fishing in troubled waters.”

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POVZETEK

INSTITUCIONALNA DISKRIMINACIJA IN POLITIZACIJA MIGRACIJ: PRIMER KOLUMBIJSKO-VENEZUELSKE MEJE

Juan Pablo SERRANO FRATTALI

Avtor v članku opisuje pojav migracij na kolumbijsko-venezuelski meji v kontekstu pandemije Covid-19. Na eni strani so migranti, ki so ostali v Kolumbiji v vse slabših socialnih razmerah, na drugi strani pa tisti migranti, ki se želijo iz Kolumbije oziroma skozi to državo vrniti v svoje domače države. Avtor preučuje, kako je pandemija bolezni Covid-19 poslabšala položaj venezuelskih migrantov, saj sta tako kolumbijska kot venezuelska vlada pandemijo izkoristili za politične manevre.

Avtor ugotavlja, da so venezuelski migranti ena izmed skupin, ki jih je kriza s koronavirusom najbolj prizadela. Večina so kršene človekove pravice, zaradi česar se njihov že tako negotov položaj še dodatno poslabšuje. Avtor izpostavlja odsotnost pristopa, ki bi temeljil na človekovih pravicah, in pokaže, da politični interesi prevladujejo nad vzajemno solidarnostjo. Državi nista uspeli doseči niti minimalnega dogovora o zmanjšanju lakote. Kot ugotavlja, izdani odloki in izjave predsednikov ne vključujejo nikakršne socialne pomoči za migrante, kriza pa je bila zlorabljena v politične namene. Za potrebe venezuelskih migrantov običajno ni mar niti državi gostiteljici niti njihovi državi izvora, zaradi takšne institucionalne diskriminacije pa se trpljenje migrantov zgolj še povečuje.

IMMIGRANTS AND THE PANDEMIC IN A LEADING REGION OF NORTHERN ITALY: A QUESTION OF POSITIONING

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ABSTRACT

Immigrants and the Pandemic in a Leading Region of Northern Italy: A Question of Positioning

This paper examines the impact of the pandemic on immigrants in one of the most economically developed areas in Northern Italy. Using a qualitative approach, the author highlights the effects on the traditional dimensions of inclusion (work and housing) and the perspectives of the younger generations (education and transition to adulthood). The results indicate how the weak social positioning of immigrants strongly and selectively conditioned their response to the pandemic. The study also revealed the intense erosion of immigrants' social capital and the need for strategies to strengthen it.

KEYWORDS: pandemic, Italy, immigrants, social capital, inequalities

IZVLEČEK

Priseljenci in pandemija v vodilni regiji severne Italije: vprašanje položaja

Članek obravnava vpliv pandemije na priseljence na enem izmed gospodarsko najrazvitejših območij v severni Italiji. S kvalitativnim pristopom avtor je izpostavil tako učinke na tradicionalne dimenzije vključenosti, kot sta delo in stanovanje, kot tudi perspektive mlajših generacij, kot sta izobraževanje in prehod v odraslost. Rezultati so pokazali, da je slab socialni položaj priseljencev močno in selektivno vplival na njihov odziv na pandemijo. Študija je pokazala tudi na močno erozijo socialnega kapitala priseljencev ter na potrebo po strategijah za njegovo krepitev.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: pandemija, Italija, priseljenci, socialni kapital, neenakosti

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INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of 2020, Italy was among the countries that suffered the most substantial impact of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic (World Health Organization, 2021), becoming an advanced front in the response capacities of European societies to an environmental challenge unprecedented in “magnitude” but certainly not unpredictable (GPMB, 2019). As illustrated by international documents, the pandemic has affected immigrants in European countries from a health and, more broadly, social point of view (OECD, 2020; Donà, 2021). For them, too, it was a “pan-syndemic” (Della Puppa & Perocco, 2021; Perocco, 2021). From the outset, the Italian regions most affected were those in the north, where most of the total population and most immigrants (and their children) reside.

This article draws from a qualitative investigation carried out in a central socio-economic area of Northern Italy: the Veneto region. Investigating the consequences of the pandemic among immigrants, the research started from the hypothesis that even in this relatively more developed economic area compared to the rest of the country, their deeper social exclusion (in comparison with the wider population) hindered them. The second hypothesis is that the responses to the difficulties triggered by the pandemic still passed through informal mechanisms and civil society actors (according to a model defined as “implicit” in the literature). Therefore, the analysis will reveal the most critical dimensions among those acquired through the study.

In the first part of the contribution, we will briefly reconstruct the features of the territory involved in the research. Then we will explain the methods used. Afterward, we will illustrate the most relevant results according to this scheme: firstly, we will analyze the consequences of the pandemic, paying attention to the historical issues that have emerged since the first migrations to Northern Italy (above all, work and housing); secondly, we will consider the consequences of the pandemic (especially among young children of immigrants) in perspective.

THE INVESTIGATION TERRITORY

The Veneto region is one of Italy’s economically leading regions. It is now one of the regions with the highest percentage of residents with non-Italian citizenship out of the total resident population. The increase in immigrants occurred mainly between the late twentieth and the early twenty-first century. In those years, Veneto became the leading region of a wider area defined as the “North East” (Marini, 2012). At that time, the media would often refer to it as the “locomotive of Italy.” This development stems from several factors, but among the most important was the presence of small (often craft) firms that had taken on a configuration known as the “district” (Becattini, 2000). The district shares a common production specialization and is based on the

presence of the skills needed to guarantee that specialization: examples of districts have been (and still are today) footwear, tanning, or mechanics. Economic aspects, as well as similar cultural traits and strong territorial roots, characterize the districts. In the 1990s, the districts were characterized by extensive workforce use, which guaranteed almost total employment. From a cultural point of view, the Veneto of those years still presented culturally homogeneous traits, derived from a local history strongly permeated by Catholicism but already widely challenged by the processes of individualization of belief (Berger, 2014) and by a cultural landscape much more diversified than in the past (also through migrations). In political terms, however, the Veneto region became in those years the area of significant structuring of the autonomist movement called "Lega Nord" (Northern League, which later became Lega). The affirmation of the Lega in Veneto followed the crisis of the so-called "First Republic" in Italy and, in particular, of its most prominent party. In Veneto, too, indeed, the Democrazia Cristiana (Christian Democrats) had been the reference party for the Catholic roots mentioned above. The strong opposition to the central state and hostility toward internal and international immigration shaped the success of the Lega Nord in those years. However, in that phase of development, the presence of immigrants proved to be fundamental because they guaranteed a young workforce willing to be employed in jobs and, above all, under conditions that the local population mainly rejected. They also responded to an incipient birth rate crisis, which would explode in the following years. In those years, the social *status* of immigrants was confined to that of a "necessary workforce." At the same time, they became the object of stigmatization as "invaders." There were no strategic policies, and migration issues were dealt with from a bottom-up approach and entrusted mainly to "solidarity institutions."

Since the early 2000s, the development trajectories of the Veneto have changed dramatically. The model of "widespread enterprise" has been challenged by growing international competition. Companies were progressively divided between the innovative ones (in terms of investments, management, and orientation toward international markets) and those that continued to focus on labor intensity and the domestic market (Marini, 2005). The former performed much better than the latter, which often disappeared, with consequences also regarding employment. The two-year period 2008–2009, which led several companies to a crisis and expelled many workers, significantly reinforced this process. This effect created a less dynamic labor market (Anastasia & Oliva, 2015) and less room for immigrants in manufacturing. The service sector, in particular, advanced services for businesses, grew. Still, this growth also concerned care services: in this area, immigrant family assistants have been crucial in responding to much smaller families (due to the birth rate crisis) and unmet care needs. Also, from this point of view, the model of immigrant participation in the labor market continued to be instrumental. However, the migration scenario has changed mainly due to the substantial increase in the number of children of immigration. The "second generations" required a great effort from the educational

institutions, which acted first and often in the absence of political strategies. The development of migration in Veneto has ultimately changed the territory's overall cultural landscape. Nevertheless, this has not led to more mature social representations of immigrants; they are still considerably linked to the idea of the immigrant as a "worker" or "guest" and still frequently seen as a danger or threat. These representations often extend to young children of immigrants born in Italy. Their transition to adulthood remains one of the main challenges for this part of the population: with a labor market that is still dual (segmented between "Italians" and "foreigners"), with weaker employment dynamics, and with the consequences of the recent pandemic.

METHODS

We identified the field of investigation in the broader context of the Veneto region as follows: we divided the provinces of Veneto with the highest number of "foreign" residents (according to the definition provided by the National Institute of Statistics) between those that were more "metropolitan" and those with a more widespread settlement pattern. After choosing the province with the highest number of foreign residents among the two groups, we divided the municipalities into three groups: large, medium, and small municipalities. Finally, we chose the municipality with the largest number of "foreign" residents for each group.

In this field of investigation, we chose a qualitative approach to analyze the complexity of the phenomena of interest. For each territory identified according to the previous criteria, relevant actors with different profiles were involved: among them, cultural mediators, public administrators, experts on migration issues, social cooperation actors, social service operators, and association representatives. We conducted a total of 24 in-depth interviews, which, due to the limited mobility caused by the pandemic, were conducted *online*, recorded, and subjected to content analysis.

THE WEAKENING OF THE "PILLARS"

The analysis of the main results shows that the pandemic has vigorously shaken the "pillars" that have historically guided the processes of participation of the immigrant population in Veneto since the early years, especially work and housing. Moreover, in the first months of 2020, there was a problem with communication and understanding experienced by immigrants with fewer language skills. The sharp generational divide between parents (less linguistically competent) and children (more competent by virtue of their school attendance) affected access to information. Immigrants with a poorer linguistic background tried to remedy this situation through television (and online) channels from their country of origin, "mediators" such as fellow

nationals or Italian acquaintances they had met during their experience in Italy, and through their children, if any.

We worked a lot with the mediators to make them understand what was going on, the importance of respecting the rules, why it was necessary to have social distancing, why it was necessary to be careful even with the people you were living with. Some of the things that were going on outside—for example, the so-called “conspiracy theories”—were also present among the population of foreign origin (AE1; in charge of the immigration desk).

The first thing we had to face was fear. Fear for one’s health, fear for their job, fear for loved ones living abroad. Being immigrants—I speak for the Albanians, but also for the other immigrants I always see when we have meetings—I saw this fear in everyone’s eyes. We felt alone in some cases. [...] Italians have family members who can help them in case of need, while those who are alone ask themselves: “Oh God, who will help me?” (OO1; cultural mediator).

For many of our parents, the difficulty was mainly understanding what was going on. [...] In the end, they relied more on the news that arrived directly in their own language or on the news in the Ghanaian news bulletins. I used to tell them: “You have to understand the Italian situation; if Italy is in a lockdown, it’s not like Ghana is too” (but it was difficult to let them understand) (AR2; association representative).

In this situation, clear concerns for employment developed immediately. Indeed, in 2020, Italy witnessed a marked economic and employment slowdown (ISTAT, 2021). Before the pandemic, the labor market had already changed significantly compared to the early 2000s, with more mobility and an increasing presence of less protected work and work “on the margins” (Barbieri & Scherer, 2005; Barbieri et al., 2018).

The interviews above all highlighted the personal and family implications of the employment dynamics involving immigrants during the pandemic. Two aspects emerged above all: the fear of losing one’s job and becoming infected in the workplace; the fear of no longer being able to guarantee remittances to the countries of origin.

Regarding the first aspect, the fear of losing their jobs mainly concerned immigrants employed in the catering, tourism, and seasonal work sectors as they were strongly affected by the national and international mobility freeze.

However, this reduction in the demand for labor did not give rise to any apparent compensatory or transitional phenomena in the employment basins that rocketed during the pandemic period, especially in the movement of goods linked to the gig economy.

One holding factor is the fact that immigrants constitute an important employment pool in sectors considered essential. Those who work in the countryside well or badly (make it) (RA3; Caritas representative).

In Verona, two important sectors have been affected by the so-called disappearance of foreign workers. The first is the seasonal sector. Everything (the pandemic) started in February, and March is the month traditionally dedicated to the recruitment of labor in agriculture. [...] Another sector that was canceled is tourism. [...] No longer having cleaning staff, kitchen staff, housekeeping staff in the hotels—mainly foreign staff—[...] has had a huge impact. [...] Italians are not fungible compared to foreigners because the contractual conditions are not advantageous (IC3; representative of employment centers).

Among migrants who worked in the so-called “essential” sectors (agri-food chain, some segments of manufacturing, personal services in facilities for the elderly, logistics, food delivery), there were fewer problems with the loss of employment. However, these were often working poor jobs.

The research thus confirms a highly diversified Italian labor market, with more “protected” (in terms of actual working conditions) and less “protected” work (Barbieri et al., 2018).

Compared to the fear of contagion, the difficult housing conditions and employers’ variable attention to strictly following the required measures, especially in the case of working poor jobs, proved to be the highest risks of exposure.

Another issue is that before becoming patients, these people [immigrants, Ed.] live in very confined spaces with other people. So their homes are overcrowded and, therefore, the possibility of contagion increases (A12; medical service representative for immigrants without residence permits).

Suddenly, there was an outbreak where I worked, and this was a concern not only for the company but for all of us because going to work—since we do grocery and chicken butchery—almost meant going out looking for trouble. All this meant that you left home, but you weren’t sure if you would come back healthy (AD3; cultural mediator).

Respondents also recalled a second major fear related to labor difficulties: the interruption of the flow of remittances to foreign countries, which is only guaranteed when you can count on a continuous income.

While in the first phase [the lockdown phase, Ed.], there was a surge in food, in the summer months, there was an incubation, and from September onwards, a tail-off—which we are still experiencing now—in which the problem is no longer food, but the

reduction of income that makes it no longer possible to fulfill certain commitments such as utilities, rent, the possibility of having to face an extraordinary expense (AC2; Caritas representative).

Another issue was that of remittances. Workers who were used to sending remittances to their countries of origin—people from Senegal, Ghana, and Nigeria who have children studying in their countries of origin—(had a hard time). I have a friend who used to work in a hotel in the center of Verona; this hotel has closed. He has a son studying in New York, and he sends remittances from here to that son. He can't anymore, and now he is in difficulty (E112; cultural mediator).

The other major mainstay of participation affected by the pandemic is housing, which became fundamental during the first Italian lockdown in March–April 2020. Unfortunately, housing once again proved to be a marker of inequality for the area's immigrants (except for those who have been involved locally for a long time and therefore have more robust trust networks). Although the issue of housing for immigrants in Italy seems to have been partially overcome in the last decade, it has exploded again in recent times.

Another major issue (exacerbated by the pandemic) is the reopening of the housing question a few years ago. It took us fifteen years to get out of it, and now it's back. The issue is becoming an emergency again for families. [...] Access to rent has become difficult for the whole foreign population. [...] from a bureaucratic point of view, legislation protects tenants more than owners, and from a cultural point of view, there is a perception that foreigners are less reliable in terms of payments and housing tenure (RA6; Caritas representative).

The other big problem arising—which also affects Italians, but predominantly immigrants—is that due to rent issues, many have lost their homes. But above all, no one can get one anymore. You can't rent a house anymore (BA5; head of an immigration desk).

We have had people with an open-ended contract who, when it was time to sign the contract, were denied it just for having a foreign surname. And we have experience with both Italian and foreign families, and you get the Italian family that takes care of your flat as badly as the foreign one. These are really boorish stereotypes (AA5; head of a social cooperative).

AN INTERRUPTED FUTURE?

The pandemic has not only weakened the foundations of immigrants' socioeconomic capital. It has also affected the educational paths of immigrant children and their transition to adulthood.

The impact of school closures has entailed difficulties for both students and their families. The impossibility of going to school has created three types of issues: those due to the digital divide, related problems of school dropouts, and the compression of social opportunities for the younger generations of foreign origin.

As for the digital divide, a first-level digital divide (devices actually available) and a second-level digital divide (competence in the use of the tools) emerged (Kenner & Lange, 2019).

Especially in the first phase of the pandemic, distance learning for immigrant parents was like Kilimanjaro, the Everest (i.e., unsurmountable) (E1; cultural mediator).

The closure of schools has increased the unpaid workload for immigrant women, as for all women. However, in the case of foreign women, there is a further critical element linked to socialization. Even fewer opportunities and possibilities to go out of the house, therefore even more confinement and an increase of the pressure of this negative factor (RA5; head of social cooperative).

The "confinement" during the lockdown had a significant impact on immigrant families. The higher number of family members in immigrant families meant that fewer devices were available for everyone and decision-making processes were more complicated than in Italian families. Family members with a more limited cultural capital also found it difficult to help their children with distance learning (second-level digital divide). The children often ensured communication with the school because they were linguistically more capable.

The closure of primary and secondary schools has created a regression in children, not only in education but also in terms of relationships. Of course, the family environment—in which the heads of the family were often away from home [for a long time]—also created a certain form of violence against children. I don't feel like giving you this as a "certain" fact, but ... [this form of violence] was maybe also linked to a form of difficulty of the family heads, who no longer felt like the breadwinners (AC3; head of social cooperative).

The side of minors and young people at home has become an important element [during the pandemic], leading to reports of youth depression and psychological support. Another important aspect related to minors is that in all municipalities, gangs, small gangs [formed], which, as they do not have hours at school, the same

access to sports or other side activities, which were harshly limited, have a large presence of foreigners (IU7; municipal councilor).

[...] You have to think that we are brought up in a context where you keep your origins, so going to school allows you to cultivate contact with the area in which you live. The closure was hard because it was difficult to live your own culture exclusively. Between me and my brother—who is younger—you can see that it is easier for me to live by the rules of our culture than it is for him (AR14; association representative).

This situation has contributed to a greater dropout risk (Vergolini & Vlach, 2020), especially for the younger generations with an immigrant background. With the schools closed, an occasion for sociability has disappeared (Besozzi et al., 2009), which, in the last fifteen years, had facilitated for the children of immigrants the development of a common generational horizon with their Italian peers and substantial participation paths still denied on the formal level (among these, the lack of citizenship reform). With the schools closed, the youngest found themselves much more often in contact with their parents and much less with their peers. This situation had two fundamental implications. The first took the form of taking refuge in the virtual world, with massive use of mobile phones and a loss of relational competence with their peers. The second saw the possible involvement of young people of foreign origin in more or less improvised “street organizations.” These places have represented a sort of re-appropriation of the social dimension, but with consequences in terms of sanctions and reinforcing the stigma against the “foreigner.”

Speaking of young people, the months of the pandemic also closed the access to spaces for those making the transition to the labor market. These were children of immigrants finishing secondary school and (to a lesser extent) university as well as young people concluding their humanitarian protection process who were included in apprenticeships useful for the conversion of their residence permit and, therefore, for the consolidation of their life path.

With the first phase of the pandemic, we noticed a forced halt of internships or integration in certain contexts, such as tourism or catering, in all the projects for the social and work insertion of people. There was an immediate stop there. We had activated a whole series of apprenticeships in the metalworking or welding sectors, and we suffered a sudden stop. All the pathways of inclusion of people suffered a fracture between before and after (AC4; head of social cooperative).

The closure of these spaces was disruptive because it called into question the future of the people involved.

OVERALL CONSIDERATIONS

To conclude this work, we will underline the main aspects that emerged and provide an overall analysis of them.

One crucial aspect is information-communication, going beyond the “logic of documents translated into all languages” (words of one interviewee). Even when immigrants had a more solid cultural capital, communication with public offices was not always smooth. From this point of view, it is necessary to strengthen the resources of linguistic-cultural mediation and train operators to work with the complex demands such as those of a population of foreign origin. The powerful push toward digitalization observed in the pandemic months also requires overcoming the digital divide that still affects many immigrants.

The pandemic months have also highlighted three fundamental pillars on which to work in the coming years. The first is employment, by ensuring improved working conditions in which most immigrants still find themselves are improved. These jobs are often poorly protected and risky in a market that remains dual and where immigrants are in the weakest positions. This pillar will be even more critical for the children of immigrants, who have higher expectations than their parents. Then there is the issue of housing, which also predates the pandemic but has further exploded in recent months: mediation mechanisms left to the market alone have led to the exclusion of many immigrants from the housing market, weakening their social participation. Public intervention seems necessary to allocate Italy’s large unused real estate assets. Without it, the situation will hardly be solved. Another critical aspect sharply emerged during the pandemic months: immigrant children’s “difficult” school attendance. Even before the pandemic, they were among those who dropped out of school the most. The pandemic year has left many behind, and it will not be easy to make up for it. The answer cannot be left to individual families because schools are a fundamental public asset for the area’s future. It is so in terms of skills training and from a socio-relational point of view. The latter is a particularly valuable asset for those minors of foreign origin who, in recent years, have often “felt at home” through school.

The study highlights the “consumption of the social capital” caused by the pandemic among immigrants. The effects were, above all, a “matter of positioning”: the social condition in which immigrants found themselves strongly conditioned their ability to react.

It also confirms the hypothesis that, often, informal responses originated out of voluntary and collaborative processes developed at the local level. This dynamic, too, resulted in the “use of social capital.”

To reproduce and enhance the social capital consumed, it is now necessary to invest in “the fundamentals” (such as information, schooling, and housing) that make it possible to move from the logic of the emergency to that of the project. Such an investment will allow a large part of the population (such as those of foreign origin)

to feel at home and avoid processes of precariousness that can easily translate into dynamics of social invisibility. Long-term strategies are the only ones capable of reinforcing the banks so that the river does not overflow in times of flood.

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The study was conducted on behalf of the Veneto Regional Immigration Observatory from January to May 2021. The main results are contained in the article “I risvolti della pandemia tra la popolazione di origine straniera” (Girardi, 2021). This essay develops some of the results of the final research report. The considerations contained in this work must be attributed to the author and not to the commissioning body of the study.

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POVZETEK

PRISELJENCI IN PANDEMIJA V VODILNI REGIJI SEVERNE ITALIJE: VPRAŠANJE POLOŽAJA

Davide GIRARDI

Pandemija v severnoitalijanskih deželah je močno vplivala na priseljensko prebivalstvo. Čeprav gre za gospodarsko najrazvitejše regije v državi, je bila tam strukturna šibkost, ki je prizadela priseljence, v dvoletnem obdobju pandemije še hujša. V študiji je bil uporabljen kvalitativni pristop in je bila izvedena v Benečiji, eni izmed najrazvitejših regij v severni Italiji. Študija je pokazala, da je pandemija močno vplivala tako na zgodovinske dimenzije vključenosti priseljencev, kot je delo, kot tudi na dimenzije, ki so povezane zlasti s prihodnostjo novih generacij, kot je npr. šolanje. V obdobju pandemije so se pojavljale težave pri zagotavljanju informacij o tem, kaj se dogaja, prihajalo je do izločanja najšibkejših akterjev na trgu dela, poslabšale pa so se tudi delovne razmere, predvsem v smislu zaščite pred nevarnostjo okužbe. Poleg tega je s pandemijo postal še bolj pereč dolgoletni stanovanjski problem. Pandemija je tudi poglobila neenake pogoje otrok priseljencev, zlasti med zaprtjem šol in učenjem na daljavo. Zaradi manj dinamičnega in bolj zaprtega trga dela se je za generacije mladostnikov tujega porekla poslabšal prehod v odraslost. Težave, s katerimi so se soočali priseljenci, so večinoma reševali s pristopom od spodaj navzgor, kar kaže na tradicionalno pomanjkanje strategije v italijanskem odzivu na migracije. Zaključimo lahko torej, da je bil obseg težav, s katerimi so se priseljenci spopadali med pandemijo, odvisen predvsem od socialnega kapitala, ki so ga imeli. Mnogi med njimi so zaradi prekarne narave svojega položaja izgubili svoj socialni kapital. Potrebno je opredeliti nove strategije za okrepitev tega socialnega kapitala. Treba bo izboljšati kakovost informacij in tako poskrbeti, da bodo imeli priseljenci na voljo boljše življenjske in delovne pogoje. Nenazadnje pa bi morali imeti tudi otroci več možnosti za učinkovito šolanje, da kasneje ne bodo živeli v enakih pogojih kot njihovi starši. Samo tako bo lahko prispevek priseljencev v celoti prepoznan.

THE PANDEMIC IN THE TRENTO ASYLUM RECEPTION SYSTEM: SUBJECTIVITIES LOST WITHIN THE “HEALTH OF THE FACILITY”

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ABSTRACT

The Pandemic in the Trentino Asylum Reception System: Subjectivities Lost Within the “Health of the Facility”

This contribution results from research conducted during the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic. It explores how the restrictions imposed for safety reasons impacted the everyday routines of a group of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection hosted in the asylum reception system in the city of Trento, Italy. Drawing on the interviews, the authors enlighten how the “health of the facility” sometimes came at the expense of the health of the individual, reducing their sociability outside the reception facilities and, therefore, their opportunities to develop their paths toward independence.

KEYWORDS: asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection, COVID-19 pandemic, reception system, independence, “health of the facility”

IZVLEČEK

Pandemija v sistemu za sprejem azilantov v Trentu. Subjektivnosti, izgubljene v »zdravju ustanove«

Prispevek je nastal na podlagi raziskave, opravljene v prvih mesecih epidemije bolezni Covid-19 v njem avtorice raziskujejo, kako so omejitve, sprejete iz varnostnih razlogov, vplivale na vsakodnevno življenje skupine prosilcev za azil in upravičencev do zaščite, ki bivajo v azilnem sprejemnem sistemu v italijanskem mestu Trento. S pomočjo intervjujev razkrivajo, kako se je »zdravje ustanove« včasih vzdrževalo na račun zdravja posameznikov – z omejevanjem njihovih socialnih stikov izven sprejemnih prostorov, s tem pa tudi njihovih možnosti za to, da bi se podali na pot samostojnosti.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: prosilci za azil in upravičenci do zaščite, pandemija bolezni Covid-19, sprejemni sistem, neodvisnost, »zdravje ustanove«

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INTRODUCTION

As the pandemic spread, governments called on their populations to stay home. In the first weeks of the pandemic, the outside turned into a place of contagion and insecurity, while the inside—the home—began to be seen as a place of health and safety. While we know that this assumption does not correspond to everyone's experience, the majority of the population—or at least the population reflected in the dominant narrative—undeniably did its best to make it happen. However, what about those who could not have a home of their own? What happens when the inside is a place governed by strict rules that might make it difficult for people hosted in reception facilities to feel at home or safe? Would those people fit in the dominant narrative? Or rather, would they tell a different story? With these questions in mind, we decided—as social workers, activists, and researchers¹—to listen to the voices of a group of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection who were living in reception facilities during the first phase of the pandemic. While different sectors of the population share collective and institutionalized living conditions, we decided to focus on their experiences because of their marginalized position in society. Indeed, a global emergency can exacerbate and accelerate situations that were already critical (Della Puppa & Perocco, 2021; Bozorgmehr et al., 2020; Cassidy, 2020; Mukumbang et al., 2020; Pastore, 2021; Sanò & Firouzi Tabar, 2021), such as that of the asylum reception system. Inside it, the pandemic has been treated as an emergency within an emergency, leading to the wider precarization of all actors involved (Pitzalis, 2020), also enacted through the reduction of supplied services and activities within and outside the facilities, which undermined the paths toward independence of the persons living in the system.

In this scenario, we examined the living conditions, everyday routines, and concerns of a group of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection who found themselves living during the first lockdown in Trento's various reception facilities. After a brief presentation of the research context and participants, the article discusses how, from the interviewees' perspective, the safety and health needs of the facility came at the expense of those of the individual. Secondly, the paper describes how, while restricted, asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection faced relational, social, and economic losses which challenged their already difficult paths within the wider local society, incurring a further precarization of their everyday lives.

1 Our thanks go to Sara Ballardini for her contribution in the interviews.

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND PARTICIPANTS

The research was conducted in the city of Trento, the capital city of the homonymous autonomous province in the northeast of Italy. Although, due to the special legal status of the province, the local asylum reception system intertwines national, provincial, and municipal competences, it reflects the discretion and fragmentation typical of the entire national system (Marchetti, 2014; Colloca, 2017) as well as its inner ambivalence between assistance and control (Szczepanikova, 2013; Avallone, 2018; Acocella & Turchi, 2020). Also, because of these features, the working and housing trajectories of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection, both inside and outside the reception, are marked by a series of obstacles, discriminations, and challenges (Dines & Rigo, 2016; D'Agostino, 2017; Pasqualetto & Perocco, 2020). The recent reforms have worsened this scenario. In particular, the cuts in services of Decree 113/2018 (Della Puppa et al., 2020; Firouzi Tabar, 2020; Filippi & Giliberti, 2021) had significant consequences on the paths toward independence (Boccagni et al., 2020), our interviewees included. Furthermore, these cuts have resulted in a growing relevance of the system of shelters for homeless people managed by the Municipality of Trento (Storato et al., 2021). These shelters, along with a network of informal reception facilities, have become a *de facto* part of the asylum reception system making crystal clear the marginalization of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection in the city. Within this context and without any claim to provide a quantitatively representative analysis—which, however, is still scarce (Perocco, 2021; AA.VV., 2020) and probably hard to gain also at the national level (Pastore, 2021)—our investigation collected narratives which allowed us to partially grasp the experiences of those living within an asylum reception facility during the pandemic.

We interviewed sixteen asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection—fifteen men and one woman—aged 25–35 who spent the lockdown in different collective facilities. Starting from the contacts that each of us as researchers, former social workers, and activists had within the reception system, we used a snowball sampling to collect voices from the different facilities that shape the Trentino asylum reception system. Half of the interviewees were living in the formal asylum reception system: seven in facilities that host more than fifty people and one in a small reception facility. Regarding the other half, five of the interviewees were hosted by the network of the informal reception facilities, one in a shelter for homeless people and one in a collective facility for medical rehabilitation. Eleven interviewees were from West Africa, one from North Africa, three from the Middle East, and one from Asia. The time the interviewees had spent in the city of Trento before the pandemic varied from a few months (only one) to more than a year. The interviews were carried out between May and June 2020 in online or face-to-face modes, in accordance with the anti-COVID measures. Italian was the language of most of the interviews, except for three conducted with the support of cultural mediators and one using English as

a vehicular language. The authors have thus translated the non-English interviews presented herein into English. All the names of the participants reported in the text are fictitious.

EXPERIENCES OF “COLLECTIVE ISOLATION”: RULES, PITFALLS, AND REACTIONS TO FEEL SAFE

The global COVID-19 pandemic has been addressed through social distancing, assuming that people live in single-family dwellings in which they can isolate themselves to protect (from) the broader social community (Cassidy, 2020). Asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection experienced the oxymoron of a “collective isolation” where the concern for their own health is overridden by the one for—what we called—the “health of the facility,” guaranteed through a reorganization of its spaces and times (Marabello, 2020). This new concern addressed asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection who lived in the facility as a whole but not necessarily as individuals. Exploring the difficulties faced by interviewees in their attempt to self-isolate in a facility, we shed light on the tensions between the health needs of the individuals and those of the facility.

Living in a reception facility implied different and additional rules than those in force for the rest of the population (Filippi & Giliberti, 2021). The majority of interviewees justified this difference on the grounds that not following the rules could cause damage to all the inhabitants of the facility: “What made me worried is that in a big facility if a person [...] does not respect rules, it will hit everyone, not only this person” (Hassan).

While these rules were unknown outside the facility, these have been explained to us by interviewees. Ali told us that those living in a facility with a canteen service could not go to the supermarket. In contrast, where no canteen service was in place, they were allowed to go to supermarkets under specific rules. Mohammed reported: “They said we can go out only twice a week to go shopping.” Along the same line, Usman told us that “to go to the tobacco shop you have 15 minutes and to go to the supermarket you have 30 minutes. [...] Every week you can go out only once. If you’re late, you’re not allowed to go the following week. And they check your receipt on arrival.” Aziz also expresses the difficulty for him and his family in complying with the rules: “Especially at the beginning, we were obliged to go only to the supermarkets close to our reception center, we could not go to the low-cost ones [because too distant]. We had to write down the street of the supermarket, so we were obliged to go only to the nearby ones. This limitation was an economic problem for us. After some time, we were authorized to go to other supermarkets.”

Interviewees attached a great value to accessing reliable information, which enabled them to understand how to protect themselves and others. Given the specificity of the rules applied in the facility, the interviewees revealed that entrusted

figures—such as social workers—were considered the main source of information along with online news, which was not limited to the Italian ones but also included the news in their mother tongue or vehicular languages. How these rules were communicated represents the first element of friction between the individual and the facility. From the interviews, it emerged that there was not a uniform procedure to communicate rules and behavioral guidelines within the facilities during the pandemic. For instance, in one of the collective facilities, interviewees reported that regular meetings were organized and that information and rules were communicated, paying attention to the mother tongue of those present. In contrast, in another one, posters were the main tool. They were hung in the common spaces so that everybody could read them. As mentioned, none of the interviewees questioned the necessity of the rules. However, the majority pointed out that while responding to the collective need for clarity, how the rules were communicated did not meet the individuals' needs for understanding. This is especially evident with respect to the use of posters. As Abdou said, "All the information was in Italian, which was a bit difficult for me. And they were basically only written on paper, and you cannot ask questions to a paper." The few informative sessions posed a similar issue. Conducted either in Italian or English, the sessions excluded those who poorly mastered those vehicular languages.

Moreover, social workers had little role in conveying the information, whether written or oral. According to interviewees, social workers tended to merely repeat what was written on the posters without adding information or explanation even when it was needed. Samba said: "I am quite sure that they [social workers] do not explain to other people more than what they explain to me ... so I wonder how they managed to explain things to those that cannot understand the posters...I have never seen any social worker talking to them." Interviews revealed that sometimes even social workers had problems understanding the rules. As Zakaria reported, "He said, 'Sorry, I didn't even know it myself, they [the authorities] didn't explain these things very well.'" The lack of clarity concerning rules combined with absolute clarity concerning the interdependence between the health of the individual and that of the facility generated anxiety and distrust. Mohammed told us: "They put hand-sanitizing gel [...], some people use it, others not. In the dining room, I can see people who respect the rules and others who do not." The same feelings are traceable in the words of Leila, who had in mind the health not only of herself but also of her children: "The very fact that to get in and out of the facility we had to sign using the same pen...I didn't trust it. I thought, who touched the pen? Who touched the paper? [...] I always tried to wash my hands, especially the children. Since we live in a facility where there are people from all over the world—Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, and Africa—there are differences. So, I didn't trust them." While, to some extent, individuals tried to adopt a personal strategy to feel safer—Sidibe increased his own levels of protection, "I always wear a mask, also in my house. It is better." There have been cases where the very way in which the facility was organized clearly runs counter

to the health needs of the individuals hosted there. This is the case for Abdou and his mates, who were moved from a shelter for the homeless to an isolated place to perform quarantine. Once there, they discovered that the facility did not have adequate space to guarantee the physical distance. “There were nine people, six were positive, and there was a bathroom and only one door. You cannot quarantine in this way,” About said.

Another example of how the collective dimension can absorb the individual dimension is the access to welfare measures introduced to provide economic support for families, workers, and businesses affected by the emergency (Sanfelici, 2020). Although the measures target the entire population, the interviewed asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection reported that they could not access the measures because they were living in a facility and thus already had access to services—such as shelter and cooked meals—provided by the asylum reception system. Sajad told us: “I requested the food bonus, but I received an email from my social worker [...] who told me ‘I am sorry, but your request had a negative reply because [...] there [in the facility] you eat lunch and dinner, and you pay nothing.’ But life is not only eating.” This example shows how asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection were considered only in terms of their immediate needs and could not ask for more, thus blurring, once again, the lines between the individuals and the facility. Although the interviews show the anxiety, mistrust, and discouragement for the unequal treatments, our research has not identified cases where these resulted in collective claims. As well described by the words of Sidibe, the implementation of the “collective isolation” led to a loss of social interactions within the facility, so that each person had to deal with his or her own worries alone: “In the canteen, we are divided, and everyone eats at a table by himself [...] It’s not good to eat alone. The mind gets fixed, and this doesn’t help. I have many thoughts about the future. We don’t know when the virus will end, it seems to be under control, and we hope, inshallah, that it will end soon.” The lack of collective claims should be further investigated also in light of the awareness—reported by interviewees—that staying in a collective facility exposed them to a greater risk of contagion than the rest of the population.

PATHS TOWARD INDEPENDENCE STUCK IN A STRICTER “UNCHOSEN SOCIABILITY”

The pandemic has significantly impacted the social relations and routines of individuals’ everyday lives. Prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19, interviewees used to go out of the facility to pursue their daily interests—to go to work, attend courses, and meet friends and fellows. Besides being necessary to reach economic and personal independence, these activities were another way to find greater wellbeing in actions and places other than the facility.

In the path of the asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection toward independence, finding a job is an essential step. Therefore, it should be no surprise that most interviewees expressed serious concerns about how the pandemic would affect their capability to find a job and, therefore, to emancipate themselves from the asylum reception system. Most of the interviewees in March 2020 were looking for a job, but the pandemic deleted the possibility of visiting places, agencies, and persons who could help find one. As Bakary told us, the few interviews already settled have been canceled: "I had an appointment for a job interview on Thursday, but they closed everything that Thursday." Likewise, interviewees reported that most of the contracts had been interrupted or not renewed due to the pandemic, confirming the greater exposure of the migrant population to job loss (Perocco, 2021; Precipe, 2021; Quaranta et al., 2021). Zakaria told us: "Before the quarantine, I worked as a cultural mediator [...] with the quarantine. I worked 3 hours in two months." Along the same lines, Hussain shared with us his frustration: "All the things are closed, I send emails, but no one answers. They are still afraid of the virus, and the job is stuck." Among interviewees, frustration over job loss worsened because a job, however precarious—or however "little" as the interviewees labeled it—represented a legitimate reason for exiting the facility during the pandemic.

Among the interviewees were some students who faced difficulties due to the lack of adequate space and the constant presence of people. As reported by Lamin: "I study in the facility where I live. The facility's common areas are full of people, so I cannot study. I try to study in my room, but it's not so easy." Besides the shortage of physical spaces for studying, interviewees were confronted by the necessity to learn—in a short time—how to use the new online platforms for distance learning. In trying to cope with this new way of learning, interviewees also dealt with the absence of a stable internet connection and all the limitations of a lesson delivered remotely. As underlined by the words of Usman, somehow, the very motivation of interviewees to study was severely impaired by this new way of learning: "For me, it would be too difficult to have online lessons. I have a tablet, but there is no PC. I would like to study only if my teacher is close to me. In that way, it is better."

The loss of a job, even if precarious, and the impossibility to attend courses and Italian schools also meant the loss of the possibility of exiting the facility freely. The interviewees found themselves always more absorbed in the facility due to their reduced contact with the outside. Samba, who saliently expressed the relevance of the outside activities, told us: "Before, I knew what to do to help me live and not die inside here."

Moreover, they also lost access to external activities and goods—above all food—alternative to those provided by the asylum reception system. Interviewees perceived this alternative as essential for not becoming completely absorbed by the facility: "What I missed most is being able to do those things that are not really... regular" (Samba). The impossibility of having alternative meals rather than the ones offered by the canteen was identified by interviewees as one of the main negative

elements because, as Samba said: "Food [...] is an important thing, people always fight about it, because it is something that nourishes your body, no? And then you remember who you are [...] we have a weekly menu, so I see it, I decide the days when I eat [there] and the days when I don't, and then I go out and go to my friends for meals." Along the same line, Sidibe told us: "I don't know who is cooking. The food comes from outside. The food is not good, but you know the situation of the coronavirus, we have to adapt. To be honest, it's a very difficult situation."

The impossibility to exit the facility had a further consequence that, in the absence of family ties, interviewees attached a great value to the meetings with their fellows. However, those meetings were no longer possible due to the restrictions. Interviewees consider "being in presence" and the action of "meeting" as fundamental elements of their relations. These were built and maintained by sharing common habits and common places. Indeed, most of the interviewees were not used to planning meetings or having the telephone numbers of their fellows, as confirmed by Mohammed: "I have a lot of fellows that I meet around, but I don't call them on the phone. Usually, I go around to see them, but [during the lockdown] I was very lonely because I couldn't see anyone." Suddenly these moments of exchange faded with the lockdown. Practical impediments (such as the shortage of internet data) and the lack of interest in these online activities limited the use of technological tools and virtual meetings, which poorly replaced the action of "meeting." As Hassan told us, "We didn't have the internet, so we were very bored. And you know that if you are very bored, you can become depressed. I couldn't contact my friends [...] the Wi-Fi was too weak."

As the bond with the "unchosen sociability" of the facility became stricter, the paths toward independence of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection became more precarious due to the loss of those outside elements—above all social relations and job search—which motivated and sustained them. In the eyes of interviewees, they mainly see the lockdown as an impediment that delays their emancipation from the facility. The anxieties generated by this delay seeped out of Sajad's words: "I had the feeling that time was very long during these months. It is very difficult to stay three months in a room, like a prison. From the bed to the bathroom, from the bed to the canteen. There were no other activities." These anxieties were even louder in the voice of Leila, who told us, "I often question myself, and I am angry, why this coronavirus has arrived while I am in this facility." Indeed, the pandemic and the measures undertaken to counteract it led to a further precarization of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection, increasing their uncertainties and anxieties about the future.

CONCLUSIONS

The article discusses how the outbreak of COVID-19 impacted the everyday routines and paths toward independence of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection living in the asylum reception system of Trento. Interviewees experienced the oxymoron of a “collective isolation,” where the individual’s health necessarily passed through the health of the facility. In consideration of this link, new rules and behaviors were established inside the collective space of the facility. Nevertheless, our research reveals that these new rules were far from clear and understandable to those for whom they were intended. This lack of clarity, combined with the awareness that staying in a collective facility exposed them more to the virus, generated anxiety and distrust among interviewees. Moreover, the interviewees reported how the “health of the facility” sometimes came at the expense of the health of the individuals. On the one hand, the interviewees’ right to move was restricted due to concerns for the facility’s safety. On the other, their right to access the welfare measures as individuals was denied due to their imposed belonging to the asylum reception system.

In the interviewees’ eyes, the measures imposed to contain the pandemic further challenged their already precarious and marginalized social position. The lockdown not only forced interviewees into a stricter “unchosen sociability” but also impoverished their social relations, drained by the lack of the action of “meeting.” Most of the interviewees interrupted their educational paths and were unable to find a job that would allow them to sustain their paths toward independence and emancipate themselves from the centrifugal and homologating force of the facility.

COVID-19 apparently reinforced the critical features of the asylum reception system: emergency, control, and temporariness. The measures to counter the pandemic were oriented more to control and prohibit than to empower and guarantee. This approach fueled the definitive temporariness (Rahola, 2003) of the living conditions of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection, who found their paths toward independence delayed by the pandemic. (Un)surprisingly, besides the individual attempts to avoid being completely absorbed by the facility, the impact of the pandemic on the asylum reception system did not seem to open to forms of collective claims.

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POVZETEK

PANDEMIJA V SISTEMU ZA SPREJEM AZILANTOV V TRENTU. SUBJEKTIVNOSTI, IZGUBLJENE V »ZDRAVJU USTANOVE«

Noemi FILOSI, Chiara IORIATTI, Elisa PINI, Irene SERANGELI, Giulia STORATO

V prvih mesecih pandemije bolezni Covid-19 so se avtorice prispevka kot socialne delavke, aktivistke in raziskovalke odločile raziskati, kako so omejitve, uvedene iz varnostnih razlogov, vplivale na vsakodnevna življenja in prizadevanja za samostojnost skupine prosilcev za azil in upravičencev do zaščite v različnih sprejemnih centrih v italijanskem mestu Trento. Članek temelji na vrsti intervjujev, ki so jih avtorice leta 2020 opravile s petnajstimi moškimi in eno žensko iz afriških in azijskih držav, starimi med 25 in 35 let, ki so med prvo fazo pandemije bivali v centrih za sprejem azilantov v Trentu. Z raziskavo so med drugim ugotovile, da so intervjuvanci doživljali protislovno »kolektivno izolacijo«, v kateri je bilo zdrave posameznikov neizogibno pogojeno z zdravjem ustanove. Glede na to povezavo so bila v kolektivnem prostoru sprejemnih centrov vzpostavljena nova pravila in vedenja. Kljub temu pa njihova raziskava razkriva, da tistim, ki so jim bila nova pravila namenjena, ta še zdaleč niso bila jasna in razumljiva. Ta negotovost, skupaj z zavedanjem, da so z bivanjem v skupinskih prostorih bolj izpostavljeni virusu, je med intervjuvanci vzbujala tesnobo in nezaupanje, a kljub ti niso izražali skupinskih zahtev. Poleg tega se je po besedah intervjuvancev »zdravje ustanove« ohranjalo na račun zdravja posameznikov, hkrati pa so potrebe sprejemnih ustanov prevladale nad potrebami posameznikov. Intervjuvanci dejansko niso mogli zaprositi za posebno socialno pomoč, saj so že bili deležni storitev sprejemnega sistema (npr. kuhanih obrokov). V primerjavi z zunanjim svetom so bili intervjuvanci prisiljeni upoštevati strožje omejitve svobode gibanja, ali pa so se zaradi teh omejitev znašli v položaju »neželenih socialnih stikov«, s čimer so izgubili možnost aktivnega »srečevanja«, ki ga vidijo kot temeljni sestavni del odnosov s svojimi tovariši izven sprejemnih prostorov. Kot je povedala večina intervjuvancev, so morali prekiniti izobraževalne in zaposlitvene procese, ki so jim bili v pomoč pri osamosvajanju od centrifugalnih in homologacijskih silnic sprejemnih prostorov. V tem smislu se zdi, da so se s pandemijo koronavirusa še okrepile bistvene značilnosti sistema za sprejem azilantov, zaradi česar so slednji, skupaj z upravičenci do zaščite, postali še bolj ranljivi, njihova že tako negotova pot proti samostojnosti pa se je še upočasnila.

REPATRIATION OF SLOVENIAN NATIONALS DURING MOBILITY LOCKDOWNS DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

Repatriation of Slovenian Nationals During Mobility Lockdowns Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Repatriation due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic was the most extensive assisted return in Slovenia's history. The article explores governmental responsiveness to the struggles and social risks experienced by Slovenian nationals stranded abroad during the global outbreak of COVID-19 from February to April 2020. It builds on a review of EU and national-level reports, a qualitative analysis of media sources, and expert interviews. The article highlights the lack of detailed systemic guidelines on transnational social protection in crisis situations and argues that the success in the repatriation of Slovenian nationals can be primarily attributed to the ad hoc measures set in place by highly motivated and inventive consular staff.

KEYWORDS: COVID-19 pandemic, mobility lockdown, repatriation, consular service, Slovenia

IZVLEČEK

Repatriacija slovenskih državljanov v obdobju omejevanja mobilnosti zaradi pandemije bolezni Covid-19

Repatriacija zaradi izbruha pandemije Covid-19 je bila najobsežnejša pomoč pri vračanju v zgodovini Slovenije. Članek raziskuje odzivnost vlade na negotovosti in socialna tveganja, s katerimi so se soočali državljani, ki so med izbruhom pandemije Covid-19 obtičali v tujini. Temelji na pregledu poročil na ravni EU in nacionalni ravni, na kvalitativni analizi medijskih virov ter na intervjujih s strokovnjaki. Avtorici izpostavljata pomanjkanje podrobnih sistemskih smernic o transnacionalni socialni zaščiti v kriznih razmerah in trdita, da lahko uspeh pri repatriaciji slovenskih državljanov v veliki meri pripišemo *ad hoc* ukrepom, ki jih je izvedlo visoko motivirano in iznajdljivo konzularno osebje.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: pandemija Covid-19, omejitev mobilnosti, repatriacija, konzularna pomoč, Slovenija

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INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 was a landmark for human mobility, dramatically reducing cross-border movements of all kinds (Benton et al., 2021). The COVID-19 outbreak prompted a complex worldwide reshaping and redefining of the meaning of mobility and immobility. Immobility became an obligation, while mobilities became either glorified or, in most cases, denounced (Ma, 2020). For instance, mobilities of healthcare workers, first responders, and workers in critical infrastructure were met with gratitude, while most of the other population was expected to remain immobile. Lockdowns defined immobilities as moral and legitimate (Ma, 2020, Novotný, 2021) and mobilities as irresponsible, immoral, and unlawful. In other words, societies shifted from hyper mobilities to forced immobility. There was, however, space for a particular type of mobility—return mobility (Grabowska & Czeranowska, 2021). The closure of borders and the introduction of travel restrictions following the pandemic declaration were accompanied by the emergency repatriations of citizens on short-term travels, students, and mobile workers stranded abroad. Governments activated their consular services and organized charter flights to bring home their citizens from various parts of the world. Outside the government repatriation schemes, large numbers of citizens residing abroad temporarily or permanently also returned home to be with their families during the times of the unprecedented uncertainties spreading throughout the globe.

However, many return mobilities were involuntary because they occurred due to the loss of income caused by the lockdowns and subsequent workplace closures (Acharya & Patel, 2021) that forced workers to return to their countries of origin.¹ Moreover, not all return mobility was facilitated and welcome. In some cases, the returnees who wished to return to their countries of origin or even countries of citizenship were refused entry due to the fears that they carried the virus (Šter, 2021). Some states also introduced unreasonable measures concerning the return of cross-border commuters, who feared not being able to return to their workplace in case they returned home and vice versa (Novotný, 2021).²

The pandemic has constituted a demanding challenge for policymakers worldwide and questioned states' preparedness for crisis management (Konstantinidou &

1 Upon return, many of those returnees were faced with social stigma, discrimination, and harassment (Parvez, 2021). This was also the case with the first Slovenian repatriates returning home from a cruise in Japan, who received hostile treatment from their neighbors (Šter, 2021).

2 One of the most restrictive EU countries in this respect was the Czech Republic, which introduced a strict policy regarding cross-border commuting between the Czech–German border in April 2020. The commuters were allowed to work in Germany, but they had to stay abroad for at least three weeks at a time and then stay in quarantine for two weeks upon their return. They were allowed to return earlier, but in that case, would lose their cross-border commuter status. They had to decide between returning home to take care of their children and the elderly, or staying in Germany to keep their jobs. The choice was most dramatic for single parents (Novotný, 2021).

Vintila, 2020). The most pressing issues raised immediately after the global outbreak in late February 2020 were migration and mobility management, reshaped border management, and the ability to activate the repatriation schemes. Many states had closed their borders to non-citizens and non-residents to stop the spread of the virus but became active in facilitating the return of their stranded citizens (İçduygu, 2020). The initial challenges surrounding repatriation were organizational and logistical, i.e., establishing transnational cooperation, providing consular assistance, and organizing repatriation flights (Prpic, 2020). The entire process of repatriation was a complex endeavor due to frequently changing travel restrictions, limited options of transportation, limited consular coverage, and burdensome bureaucratic procedures, to name a few. It prompted close transnational cooperation that often resulted in successful joint efforts. However, it has also revealed significant gaps in the national, EU, and global commitment to respond to social risks and provide transnational social protection³ to travelers and diaspora members in times of crisis. By mid-July 2020, the pandemic had left millions of people stranded without access to consular assistance, the means to ensure they did not slip into irregular status, or sufficient resources to meet basic needs (Benton et al., 2021).

In Slovenia, the COVID-19-related repatriation was by far the most extensive assisted return in the country's history. The article explores governmental responsiveness to the struggles and social risks experienced by citizens and residents situated outside Slovenia during the global outbreak of COVID-19 and subsequent mobility lockdowns occurring from late February to April 2020.⁴ In particular, it documents and evaluates government initiatives and efforts to ensure the repatriation of individuals stranded abroad. It builds on a review of the publicly released official EU- and national-level reports on the repatriation of citizens and residents, an extensive qualitative analysis of Slovenian media sources⁵ addressing the repatriation in the specified period, and three expert interviews conducted with the senior representatives of two governmental services, the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government Office for Slovenians Abroad (Valentinčič, 2021a), and a representative of the Counselling Office for Workers, a non-governmental organization providing counseling to migrant and mobile workers (Lukič, 2021).

The article first addresses the emergence of mobility lockdowns put in place at the outbreak of the pandemic. It then outlines the role and preparedness of consular policies in emergencies, emphasizing the EU and Slovenian repatriation efforts and strategies. In particular, it presents and evaluates the establishment and activities

3 In the context of this article, transnational social protection refers to emigrants' entitlements to sending countries' social protection policies (Lafleur & Vintila, 2020).

4 This period overlaps with the beginning and end of the mobilization of the Consular Crisis Cell to deal with emergency repatriations due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

5 Forty-six articles from several mainstream newspapers and media platforms were used in the analysis: *MMC RTV Slovenija (rtvslo.si)*, *24.ur*, *Dnevnik*, *Delo*, *Siol*, *Svet24*, *Žurnal24* and *Večer*.

of the Consular Crisis Cell. Finally, it evaluates the explored policy measures and groups them into three categories: active intervention, information provision, and additional support. The article concludes with a call for the development of new avenues of research that will grasp the evolving dynamics of (return) migration and mobility in pandemic situations.

MOBILITY LOCKDOWNS IN THE INITIAL PHASE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) outlined three phases of cross-border mobility in 2020: mobility lockdowns (January to May), phased reopening (June to September), and mixed responses to new outbreaks and virus mutations (October to December) (Benton et al., 2021). The first phase started already two months before the declaration of the pandemic by the World Health Organisation on March 11, 2020. In late January, the neighboring countries with China, where the novel coronavirus was reported to have erupted, were the first to begin closing their borders. By late February, several countries began restricting the entry of travelers from the countries most affected by the virus, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, and the Republic of Korea. By the time of the declaration of the pandemic, countries around the globe completely closed most points of entry, arrivals (and in some cases departures) were restricted, and flights were grounded. Even in the border-free Schengen area of the European Union, the makeshift borders were re-introduced practically overnight, with limited planning and coordination. Governments and authorities in subnational regions issued or extended 43,300 travel measures; every country, territory, and area worldwide was subject to at least 70 travel bans. The number of passengers on international flights in April and May was down by 92 percent compared to the same months in the previous year (Benton et al., 2021: 1).

In the European Union, the governments of the Member States supported the proposal of the European Commission to reinforce the external borders by applying a coordinated temporary restriction of non-essential travel to the EU for 30 days, starting on March 17, 2020.⁶ Member States also adopted various measures that impacted citizens' right to move freely across the EU. These measures included entry restrictions or other specific requirements, such as quarantining, applicable to cross-border travelers, including those traveling for work reasons (European Commission, 2021). By March 26, fourteen Schengen countries⁷ had notified the

6 Guidance on the implementation of the temporary restriction on non-essential travel to the EU, on the facilitation of transit arrangements for the repatriation of EU citizens, and on the effects on visa policy (2020/C 102 I/02).

7 Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Spain, Lithuania, Hungary, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Finland, Switzerland, and Norway.

European Commission of the reintroduction of border controls due to the threats related to the spread of COVID-19; seven other countries⁸ had introduced restrictions on the movement of persons that affect internal borders, such as temporary bans on non-essential travel (Prpic, 2020).

Slovenia introduced the first intra-EU travel restrictions on its western border with Italy on March 11. Entry from Italy was allowed only under specific conditions at six border crossings. This restriction immediately created chaos in international freight transport, causing congestion from Fernetiči to Padova (Šter, 2021). Slovenian rail service was discontinued on March 16, and passenger air traffic was suspended on March 17 (Ministry of Infrastructure, 2021). On March 18, Slovenia closed twenty-seven border crossings with Croatia and an additional two at the border with Italy. On March 24, entry conditions on the border with Austria were introduced, and the border could be crossed only at thirteen checkpoints. These decisions created numerous problems for thousands of cross-border commuters (Toplak & Lukšič Hacin, 2022), who struggled to adapt to the ad hoc measures that greatly restricted their daily mobility, significantly increased their commute time, and strongly affected their work-life balance. The problem was exacerbated further by the fact that the governments tended to act in a protectionist and uncoordinated manner (Novotný, 2021). In Slovenia's border regions, commuters and companies turned to different organizations and institutions for support and advocacy.⁹

Some countries introduced entry bans without the possibility of quarantine, even for their own citizens. In March, several Serbian citizens became stranded in Slovenia without the possibility to enter their country, which had closed its border on March 20 (Zupanič, 2020). The Slovenian Consular Department pleaded with the Serbian embassy to allow these Serbian citizens' entry, especially those returning through Slovenia from work posts in the other EU Member States and did not have accommodation in Slovenia. Many of them were workers posted by Slovenian employers to provide services abroad (Šter, 2021, Lukić, 2021). On March 23, around 60 Serbian citizens waited outside the Serbian Embassy in Ljubljana, some of them for the third day in a row, without food or accommodation. They received some assistance from the Red Cross (Zupanič, 2020) and the Serbian Orthodox Church (Šter, 2021) in the form of hot tea, food packages, and accommodation. Another 100 Serbian nationals were reportedly waiting to receive permission to leave Slovenia and enter Serbia at two border crossings with Croatia (Zupanič, 2020). Altogether, the number of Serbian citizens stranded in Slovenia was around 350. On March 25, the Slovenian Consular Department managed to facilitate their return to Serbia,

8 France, Italy, Latvia, Malta, the Netherlands, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

9 On the northern Slovenian border, commuters mainly sought support from the Trade Union of Migrant Workers (Toplak & Lukšič Hacin, 2022). Later on in the pandemic, the employers on the western and eastern borders also turned to the Government Office for Slovenians Abroad. The minister negotiated, for example, free COVID-19 testing for cross-border commuters at the border checkpoints with Italy (Valentinčič, 2021a, see also Majovski, 2021).

which had agreed to allow entry under the condition that they undergo a mandatory 28-day self-quarantine (STA).

All these travel-related measures and border closures have had far-reaching impacts on migration and mobility within the EU. The most affected persons were travelers stranded abroad awaiting repatriation, migrant and mobile workers getting locked out of destination countries where they might have performed seasonal or temporary work (Benton et al., 2021), workers posted to provide services in other EU Members States (especially third-country nationals), and cross-border commuters whose income relies on the ability to cross borders daily (Toplak & Lukšič Hacin, 2022; Novotný, 2021).¹⁰ The travel bans also heavily affected individuals permanently living abroad who wished to return to their families in their countries of origin or were facing a particularly vulnerable situation in their host countries (Konstantinidou & Vintila, 2020).

CONSULAR POLICIES AND EMERGENCY REPATRIATIONS: A TIMELINE FOR SLOVENIA

Consular policies in emergency situations

Crisis management is an essential part of consular assistance in emergencies. If there is a need to help citizens, the states can, within the framework of international law, perform all activities that prevent the worsening or improve the situation of their citizens abroad (Udovič, 2020). Often, as Udovič notes, the open political questions and disputes only marginally influence consular assistance in times of an emergency, meaning that the high politics do not tend to hinder consular cooperation (often understood as low politics) between states. However, as Šter (2021) notes, in crises, many states also tend to deploy a policy of us-first, them-later. In these situations, the official channels of communication and cooperation become less effective, and personal networks and acquaintances become essential.

Consular engagement generally differs across countries, but the services are broadly similar and limited to strengthening commercial, economic, cultural, and scientific relations between home and host countries; issuing passports and travel documents; serving as a notary and civil registry; and assisting detained nationals abroad. Article 5 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, adopted in 1963 and entered into force in 1967, defines these functions (Aceves, 1998). In the European Union, the key directive that addresses the consular protection of the EU citizens is the Directive (EU) 2015/637 on the coordination and cooperation measures to facilitate consular protection for unrepresented citizens of the Union in third countries

¹⁰ Other persons heavily affected by the travel bans were displaced people facing difficulty in fleeing conflict zones across borders, and asylum seekers struggling to access the procedures to apply for international protection (Benton et al., 2021).

(hereafter the Directive).¹¹ The Directive's aim is to lay down the cooperation and coordination measures necessary to facilitate further consular protection for unrepresented citizens of the European Union. Article 9 of the Directive defines the areas of assistance typical for consular activities, i.e., assistance in case of death, serious illness or accident, arrest or detention, assistance to victims of crime, and the relief and repatriation in case of an emergency. Article 13 of the Directive further elaborates on the role of the consulates in crises. Evacuation and repatriation, in particular, are mentioned in Paragraph 2, which states that the Member States shall inform each other of available evacuation capacities in a timely manner. This provision indicates a duty to take coordinated action if the repatriation of EU citizens is necessary (Udovič, 2020). The Directive also stipulates that the cost of repatriation incurred during an emergency is not borne by the country that carries out the repatriation of another Member State's citizen but by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Member State of which the unrepresented citizen is a national. States then may, in accordance with their national legislation, require citizens to reimburse the incurred costs.

The Slovenian Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs conducts its tasks as stated in the Consular Assistance Act. In emergencies related to outbreaks of disease, the National Plan on Protection and Relief in the Event of an Epidemic or Pandemic of an Infectious Disease among Humans also defines their role (Government of the Republic of Slovenia, 2020).¹² The Plan outlines the basic procedures to be activated in the case of an epidemic or a pandemic, such as establishing contacts with foreign governments, international organizations, embassies, and consulates and offering assistance to Slovenian citizens located in foreign countries. The Plan also presents the legal basis for establishing a Consular Crisis Cell (Slov. *Konzularna krizna celica*), which provides information to citizens stranded abroad and responds to repatriation requests.

11 Directive (EU) 2015/637, adopted on April 20, 2015. The Directive builds on the point (c) of Article 20(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union – TFEU) and Article 23 of the TFEU, which state that the Member States should provide consular protection to unrepresented citizens under the same conditions as their own nationals. This Directive does not affect the Member States' competence to determine the scope of the protection to be provided to their own nationals.

12 Other relevant documents include the Plan on the Crisis Management of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Action Plan on the Activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs During Natural and Other Disasters.

REPATRIATION STRATEGIES

To facilitate the repatriation of their citizens, the Member States adopted different measures in line with their capacities. In addition, they were able to activate the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.¹³ In the first month of the pandemic, 15 countries requested the help of the Mechanism, and as a result, 4,382 EU citizens were repatriated with evacuation flights by the end of March. The number of Slovenians repatriated on these flights was 19 (Prpic, 2020). The priority, however, was to bring EU citizens back on commercial flights. According to the official estimates, 250,000 were returned in March with no need to activate additional EU resources (Prpic, 2020). Throughout the entire year, the EU and the Member States brought home over 600,000 people. The EU's Civil Protection Mechanism facilitated and co-financed 408 repatriation flights to bring home more than 100,300, including 90,000 stranded EU citizens (European Commission, 2021). Apart from the Mechanism, the EU has been involved in consular protection through the work of the European External Action Service (the European Union's diplomatic service), EU delegations, and cooperation between the EU Member States' embassies and consulates in third countries (Prpic, 2020).¹⁴

However, as Šter (2021) notes, the role and coordination at the EU level could be improved. Often, individual states mobilized their good connections with the third countries, while those Member States with fewer networks and connections were left behind. In his expert opinion, the EU could have played a more assertive coordinating role in this respect. In addition, although the support and solidarity between the Member States in terms of providing consular assistance and sharing repatriation flights departing from the third countries were notable, there was little or no assistance with travel arrangements within the EU. In other words, when the EU citizens from different Member States were repatriated from a third country to a location in the EU, their home states were expected to arrange further transport to bring them back home. In some cases, repatriation was allowed only by air. This task proved to be particularly daunting for Slovenia, which did not own any aircraft at the time of the outbreak. Therefore, the Slovenian Consular Department's action relied on the inventiveness and resourcefulness of the staff based in the consular headquarters in Ljubljana.

13 The Mechanism aims to strengthen cooperation between the EU Member States and six Participating States on civil protection to improve prevention, preparedness, and response to disasters. When an emergency overwhelms the response capabilities of a single country, it can request assistance through the Mechanism. The Mechanism was established in 2001.

14 According to the Article 20(2) c and 23 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU and Article 46 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, and according to the 2015 Directive on consular protection for unrepresented European citizens living or travelling outside the EU, EU citizens have the right to consular protection from another EU Member State in a third country, under the same conditions as its own nationals, if their country is unrepresented (Prpic, 2020).

The establishment and activities of the Consular Crisis Cell

To cope with the unprecedented demand for assistance, the Slovenian Consular Department operating within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs activated a Consular Crisis Cell (CCC) on February 14. The primary role of the CCC was to set up a call service for Slovenian nationals stranded abroad, organize repatriation flights and other transportation options to ensure their safe return to Slovenia, and establish cooperation with Slovenian and other consulates and embassies abroad (Konzularna krizna celica MZZ). The Crisis Management Plan of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had foreseen its activation. However, the scope of the crisis created an unprecedented demand for consular assistance, and the subsequent organizational challenges exceeded the provisions put in place in the existing documents.

The staff at the Consular Department was required to adopt ad hoc measures and creative solutions to provide consular service to thousands of Slovenians in need of their assistance. The initial challenges concerning the functioning of the Consular Crisis Cell involved basic human resource management, including the questions of how to recruit competent staff to work long hours, how to provide financial compensation for their overtime, and how and where to find suitable space for them to carry out their activities as well as how to find additional computers, organize warm meals,¹⁵ and provide beverages (Šter, 2021). The head of the consular department, Andrej Šter, negotiated to turn a conference room at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs into a hub where a total of thirty people would work in shifts of ten to answer telephone calls, reply to e-mails, post information on social media, and provide any advice relating to repatriation. They answered several hundred questions per day (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021). The hub was a lively place where highly motivated enthusiasts with different experiences and skills gathered and established inspiring intergenerational cooperation (Šter, 2021).

The initial event that prompted its establishment was the repatriation of six Slovenian nationals stranded on the cruise ship *Diamond Princess* in Jokahoma, Japan (Ministry of Defense, 2020a), which turned out to be an unprecedented challenge. The first two nationals were to return to the EU on an Italian airplane that was set to make a pit stop in Germany. Slovenia was required to pick up the recruited nationals at the airport and transport them to Slovenia via a direct flight. However, the only aircraft owned by Slovenia had been undergoing repairs in Switzerland. The Slovenian army could pick up the two nationals with the army helicopter, but this was not an option since they would need to land twice before reaching Germany. The CCC reached out to the private aircraft providers in Slovenia, all of whom refused to cooperate, and so did at least 60 foreign providers to whom Slovenia reached out. Eventually, a Serbian provider was outsourced (Šter, 2021). Šter noted that Slovenia's

15 The cost of the meals was initially shared between the employees because the expenditure was not accounted for in the consulate's budget. Later, the head of the consulate made arrangements to receive lunch from the nearby military barracks.

capacities for evacuating its citizens were non-existent. Therefore, cooperation with other countries depended greatly on personal connections and acquaintances, making experienced diplomats and consulate workers indispensable.

By the end of March, over 360 Slovenian nationals and more than 300 foreign nationals had been evacuated by air. With the assistance of the CCC, between 800–1000 nationals returned to Slovenia independently. Around 120 nationals were repatriated by bus (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020). Slovenian foreign minister Anže Logar particularly praised the cooperation with the neighboring countries (Croatia, Austria, and Hungary) and Spain, the UK, France, Russia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020). Slovenian nationals were repatriated from several EU and third countries, including Japan, Russia, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, Morocco, the United States, and the Canary Islands (U.Z. / STA / D.L., 2020). Repatriations took place between the second half of February and April 6, when the Slovenian government decided to abruptly suspend assisted repatriation. The decision was sudden and unexpected, also for the consulate staff, since the need for repatriation persevered and more Slovenians remained stranded abroad (Šter, 2021). The reason for this decision has not been made public. However, at the end of March, the Slovenian foreign minister had alluded that Slovenian nationals abroad were already urged on March 6 to return to the country and that Slovenia would no longer organize additional return flights for Slovenians who refused to board the ones initially available (SDS, 2020).

The CCC remained operational for another twenty days until April 26 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021). The overall cost of repatriations was around 350,000 EUR, but the government decided not to claim the expenses from the repatriates. Instead, a fund for voluntary contributions was created, and repatriates (and others) could contribute an amount they considered suitable. By mid-May, the collected amount was already 750,000 EUR (STA, 2020).¹⁶ The generous contributions reflected the gratitude of Slovenian nationals for the efforts made by the CCC.

After April 26, the tasks conducted by the CCC did not cease but were transformed to meet the new demand for information after the initial mobility lockdowns. The focus was no longer on the emergency repatriation from the third countries but rather on everyday border-regime-related problems experienced by international students, labor migrants, and cross-border commuters.¹⁷

16 The funds will most likely be spent on the purchase of new medical equipment for Slovenian hospitals (Šter, 2021).

17 There were cases when Slovenians abroad contacted the Consulate or the Office for Slovenians Abroad with a request for repatriation due to the loss of employment because of the pandemic. In April and May 2020, two charter flights were organized for Slovenian workers who had lost their jobs in the United Kingdom and requested assistance in returning to Slovenia (Valentinčič, 2021b).

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION OF POLICY MEASURES

The measures initiated by the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can be grouped into three categories: active intervention, information provision, and additional support.¹⁸

Active intervention refers to the repatriation efforts involving communication with different ministerial actors, relevant national and international organizations, governments, consulates, and embassies, and organizing repatriation flights and other travel options to bring home nationals stranded abroad. According to the report published by the Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief¹⁹ on the activities of protection and assistance during COVID-19 (2020), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs carried out assisted return for around 800 Slovenian citizens and provided assistance in the return of around 1,500 Slovenian citizens who individually returned to the country. The report states that the ministry organized 24 journeys by aircraft and bus (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021). Much of this successful action resulted from the head of the Consular Department's ad hoc setup and organization of the Consular Crisis Cell (CCC). Without a detailed plan of action, he used his and his colleagues' extensive experience to set up the CCC. Likewise, they used their personal networks to connect with colleagues and former colleagues who could provide seats for Slovenian nationals on repatriation flights.²⁰ In its evaluation report, the Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief acknowledged that consulates in the most endangered parts of the world were understaffed. In addition, there was a shortage of public employees who would be willing and appropriately trained to depart to the crisis areas. They also noted that candidates to work in the Consular Crisis Cell should be identified and trained to perform basic consular tasks. Selected employees should also undergo capacity-building training and be involved in the activities of the Slovenian diplomatic and consular networks or the European External Action Service (Ministry of Defense, 2020b). However, according to Šter (2021), the status quo persists, and, during the next emergency, the CCC will have to rebuild itself from scratch.

The second category, information provision, refers to the assistance provided by the CCC to residents abroad and their families in the form of information sharing via telephone, e-mail, websites, and social media. The employees also provided support to consular posts, embassies, and the media (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021). The review of published information by different media sources shows that the media

18 Similar categories have been identified in other countries as well. See, for example, Konstantinidou & Vintila, 2021.

19 The Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief is part of the Ministry of Defense.

20 The head of the Consular Department, Andrej Šter, was awarded by the president of the Republic of Slovenia with the Order of Merit for his assistance to Slovenians abroad during the COVID-19 pandemic (STA, 2020).

was well informed on the activities concerning repatriation. All repatriation flights were well documented in daily newspapers and their online platforms. Information about mobility restrictions affecting the return of migrant and posted workers could be obtained from the websites of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Slovenian embassies, Slovenian Police, trade unions—especially the Trade Union of Migrant Workers, and social media posts shared by users (Toplak & Lukšič Hacin, 2022). The workers stranded abroad could also seek assistance from a non-governmental organization, the Counselling Office for Workers, which had provided information, among others, to third-country nationals posted from Slovenia to the EU Member States. In most cases, these were workers from the Western Balkans who needed information about mobility restrictions in several countries: their current country of work (EU Member State), employment (Slovenia), and origin (Lukić, 2021).

The assistance was also provided to foreign citizens with or without residency in Slovenia. Such was the case, for example, of Serbian workers stranded in Slovenia due to the entry ban put out by Serbia, as discussed earlier. The consulate also offered transport to foreign nationals in solidary and quid-pro-quo actions that strengthened bilateral relations (Udovič, 2020). However, the role of the EU in this respect has been evaluated as unambitious. According to Šter, the EU missed its chance to become a more important player in global consular relations. He noted that “he saw no EU flag carrier” and that there were only national means of transportation available to the EU citizens (Udovič, 2020). The consulate’s efforts to assist in other matters, such as mitigating social vulnerabilities, were noted. The highly publicized case in question was the consulate’s role in arranging the arrival of a mother from Bosnia and Herzegovina whose son had lost his wife in Slovenia and was in desperate need of a caregiver (Šter, 2021). Such actions, however, were dependent on the goodwill of the consulate staff since no detailed systemic guidelines on transnational social protection in crises were in place.

Finally, it should be noted that while the pandemic triggered emergency evacuations and repatriations of Slovenians stranded abroad, the ongoing repatriation of Venezuelans of Slovenian origin from Venezuela due to the economic hardship and political unrest came to an abrupt stop (Valentinčič, 2021a). The government’s decision to repatriate from Venezuela prior to the declaration of the pandemic led to an unprecedented political and organizational undertaking coordinated by the Government Office for Slovenians Abroad. It resulted in the arrival of the first group of Venezuelans in Slovenia in January 2020. However, the ongoing action was suspended a couple of months later due to the novel coronavirus outbreak and subsequent border restrictions. Until the beginning of the pandemic, 23 Venezuelans of Slovenian origin and their family members were repatriated, but 15 were left

behind as repatriation was deferred due to the suspension of general and commercial flights in Venezuela (Valentinčič, 2021a).²¹

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The sudden and unprecedented need for swift state intervention triggered different institutional responses across the world. National policymakers adopted varying emergency measures to assist their citizens stranded abroad and diaspora members in need of assistance (Konstantinidou & Vintila, 2021). The ability to respond was largely dependent on the existing transport (especially aviation) infrastructure, civil protection capacities and capabilities, and international consular relations and networks. Slovenia was among the highly disadvantaged states because it did not own any aircraft. Therefore, the repatriation depended on the ability to outsource the flights and the flight crew at a moment's notice. Since there were no detailed plans in place on how to carry out the repatriation of such massive scope and duration, the capacities of the consulate headquarters in terms of the number and capabilities of the staff were initially insufficient. However, the improvisation and inventiveness of the consulate staff, who were able to provide ad hoc solutions during the global-scale emergency, enabled the return of hundreds of nationals and non-nationals. The response from the public regarding the repatriation activities was overwhelmingly positive (Metina lista, 2020; Lamovšek, 2020). It seems, however, that internal policy evaluation did not result in any further activities in terms of developing a detailed plan of action for similar future emergencies. Since the success of any large-scale emergency repatriations is dependent on robust and detailed planning, the lack of interest and motivation to build on the lessons learned during the pandemic is disappointing and signifies a failure to address the issue at the normative level.

The role of consulates and sending states' policies in assisting emigrants to deal with risks abroad have, in general, not received significant scholarly attention (Lafleur & Vintila, 2020; Vah Jevšnik & Cukut Krilić, 2020). However, the body of literature will undoubtedly continue to grow given the transnational turn in migration studies, the increasingly emerging diaspora engagement policies by which the sending states' governments seek to engage with nationals and their descendants abroad (Lafleur & Vintila, 2020; Vah Jevšnik & Cukut Krilić, 2020), and in light of the pandemic that has raised numerous issues relating to the engagement with the diaspora in times of need. Further research is also needed about return migration in the context of pandemics. Return migration has primarily been analyzed in the context of macro-structural changes, such as an economic recession. However, it is questionable if the

21 Repatriation from Venezuela is not subject to the Consular Protection Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 30/18) but the Act Regulating Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians Abroad (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 43/06, 76/10 and 206/21).

pandemic can be conceptualized as a similar kind of crisis as an economic downturn (Grabowska & Czeranowska, 2021). At least two differentiating factors can be identified: the pace of the changes involved and the inevitability of mobility restrictions enforced by governments to hinder the spread of the disease (Grabowska & Czeranowska, 2021). In this respect, new avenues of research will need to emerge to grasp the evolving dynamics of migration and mobility in pandemic situations.

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POVZETEK

REPATRIACIJA SLOVENSКИH DRŽAVLJANOV V OBDOBJU OMEJEVANJA MOBILNOSTI ZARADI PANDEMIJE BOLEZNI COVID-19 Moja VAH JEVŠNIK, Mirjam MILHARČIČ HLADNIK

Članek raziskuje odzivnost vlade na negotovosti in socialna tveganja, s katerimi so se soočali državljani, ki so med izbruhom pandemije Covid-19 obtičali v tujini zaradi zapor mej in omejevanja mobilnosti. Temelji na pregledu poročil na ravni EU in nacionalni ravni, na kvalitativni analizi medijskih virov ter na intervjujih s tremi strokovnjaki: vodjo konzularne službe, predstavnikom nevladne organizacije za pomoč delavcem migrantom ter predstavnikom Urada za Slovence v zamejstvu in po svetu. Članek obravnava obdobje med februarjem in aprilom 2020, s čimer sovpada z obdobjem razglasitve epidemije in delovanja konzularne krizne celice na Ministrstvu za zunanje zadeve. Avtorici izpostavljata pomanjkanje podrobnih sistemskih smernic o transnacionalni socialni zaščiti v kriznih razmerah in trdita, da lahko uspeh pri repatriaciji slovenskih državljanov v veliki meri pripišemo predvsem *ad hoc* ukrepom, ki jih je izvedlo visoko motivirano in iznajdljivo konzularno osebje. Podrobneje so opisani postopki vzpostavitve konzularne krizne celice, ki je delovala z namenom nudenja informacij in pomoči Slovincem in drugim državljanom v tujini ter njihovim svojcem v Sloveniji. Analizirani so številni izzivi, s katerimi se je soočalo konzularno osebje ob odsotnosti jasnih in podrobnih smernic delovanja, ter načini urejanja vračanja – tudi s pomočjo osebnih poznanstev in omreženosti konzularnega osebja. Članek ugotavlja, da so bile aktivnosti konzularnega osebja v Sloveniji s strani ljudi ocenjene zelo dobro, vendar pa na normativni ravni ni bila pripravljena poglobljena analiza, ki bi služila kot osnova za pripravo podrobnega načrta za delovanje v primeru novih kompleksnih globalnih kriz.

INTERNATIONAL MOBILE WORKERS CAUGHT BETWEEN RESTRICTIVE MEASURES AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: THE CASE OF SLOVENIA

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ABSTRACT

International Mobile Workers Caught Between Restrictive Measures and Freedom of Movement During the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Case of Slovenia

The COVID-19 pandemic and the government measures to curb it in the past two years have had a significant impact on the mobility of workers within the EU. In this article, we analyze the measures adopted by the Slovenian government and the governments of some neighboring countries in the first half of 2020 and examine how these have affected international mobile workers. We identified the economic and social risks to which workers have been exposed following their return to Slovenia or while working in neighboring countries. Such risks were largely due to inconsistently adopted measures on an international level and the adoption of measures at short notice.

KEYWORDS: COVID-19 pandemic, labor mobility, international mobile workers, cross-border workers, Slovenia

IZVLEČEK

Mednarodni mobilni delavci med omejevalnimi ukrepi in svobodo gibanja v času pandemije bolezni Covid-19: primer Slovenije

Pandemija bolezni Covid-19 in vladni ukrepi za njeno zaježitev so v zadnjih dveh letih močno zaznamovali mobilnost delavcev v EU. Avtorici v članku analizirata ukrepe, ki so jih v prvi polovici leta 2020 sprejele slovenska in vlade nekaterih sosednjih držav in so neposredno vplivali na mednarodne mobilne delavce. Identificirali sta ekonomska in socialna tveganja, ki so jim bili delavci izpostavljeni po vrnitvi v Slovenijo ali med delom v sosednjih državah in so bila v veliki meri posledica neusklajenosti ukrepov na mednarodni ravni ter sprejemanja ukrepov v kratkem časovnem obdobju.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: pandemija Covid-19, delovna mobilnost, mednarodni mobilni delavci, čezmejni delavci, Slovenija

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INTRODUCTION

International mobile workers in the European Union face various obstacles to mobility due to social, political, economic, or cultural constraints (Cresswell, 2006; Blitz, 2014; Salazar, 2017). In the last two years, the health constraints related to the SARS-CoV-19, or COVID-19, coronavirus disease outbreak have been added to the list. The COVID-19 pandemic is not only a health, political, and socioeconomic crisis but also a mobility crisis (IOM, 2020).

In early March 2020, many countries around the world, including Slovenia, took previously unthinkable measures to curb the spread of COVID-19. Some measures restricted movement and thus drastically impacted people's lives (Meier et al., 2020: 1436; Heller, 2021), especially those economically dependent on mobility. The pandemic and the measures taken to prevent its spread physically and, above all, symbolically restricted one of the fundamental freedoms of EU citizens—the right to free movement.

As soon as the pandemic was declared, international mobile workers, such as posted, cross-border, seasonal, and other mobile workers (Rasnača, 2020), found themselves restricted by the measures of the countries in which they were located and were forced to decide whether they would stay or return home. However, as most countries closed their borders, returning home was not always possible. With most of the European economy shutting down, posted workers suddenly found themselves without work. They later encountered increasingly significant obstacles preventing them from crossing borders on the way to carrying out services in the other EU Member States. In border areas, the movement restrictions made the transnational daily life of inhabitants more difficult or even impossible (Opilowska, 2021), as so-called cross-border activities related to areas such as work, education, creativity, leisure, and social contacts were restricted or even abolished for an extended time. Cross-border workers and their families faced economic, social, and health risks. They had to rely on the countries where they worked, which was not always without administrative obstacles. Mobile workers who lost their work due to restrictive health measures abroad and those who worked in the so-called critical infrastructure (healthcare, transport, food production, sales) found themselves in a challenging situation and often without sufficient social and healthcare protection (Rasnača, 2020; Fasani & Mazza, 2020a).

In this article, we present the results of a study on the impact of government strategies, measures, and policies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on mobility. Specifically, we analyze the effects of measures on the international mobility of workers (posted workers, cross-border workers, and other mobile workers) who are Slovenian residents.

METHODOLOGY, RESEARCH APPROACHES

Consideration of various aspects of international labor mobility in the form of seasonal, cross-border (daily, weekly), or posted work in the COVID-19 period has stimulated discussion in various academic fields about the increased vulnerability of international mobile workers and migrants and the potential consequences of COVID-19 for them (Fasani and Mazza, 2020a; Geyer et al., 2020; Karaleka, 2021; Perocco, 2021). It triggered probes about the meaning and existence of borders, especially their renewed establishment or re-bordering within the EU (Heller, 2021; Medeiros et al., 2020; Novotný, 2021; Opiłowska, 2021).

We carried out the research into the impact of measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on international mobile workers with the aim of identifying the measures and strategies adopted in Slovenia (and neighboring countries) in the first “wave” of the pandemic (March 12–May 31, 2020). We wanted to find out which measures aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19 affected international mobile workers most negatively and how they impacted their life and work.

In this article, we have focused on the measures that restrict mobility (e.g., closing borders, limiting free movement to the municipality of permanent residence, health checks at the border) and the society lockdowns. We have also identified the risks workers face when they return from abroad or engage in cross-border activity. In the first phase of the epidemic, we reviewed the restrictive measures adopted in the same period by the governments of neighboring countries, particularly Austria and Italy.¹ We have mainly used the official publications of decrees from the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia and information on other countries’ decrees posted on the Slovenian government website (gov.si). We have also conducted special analyses of media coverage in all major Slovenian printed and online media, information on the Slovenian Union of Migrant Workers (SDMS) website, and comments by workers on Facebook. To verify the impact and consequences of measures in practice, we conducted semi-structured interviews with posted and cross-border workers (fourteen interviews with cross-border workers and their family members and two interviews with posted workers in total) who work in Austria, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, and elsewhere. All are inhabitants of Slovenia.² The interviewees described the everyday life of cross-border or poster workers and their itineraries. They spoke about changes due to the epidemic that they noticed on the way to work, in the workplace, and at home. They described how they perceived the measures that affected them and defined the sources of information they found helpful in connection with the epidemic and their mobility. The interviews have been rendered anonymous,

1 Most daily cross-border and posted workers living in Slovenia cross the borders between Slovenia and Austria or Italy (SDMS Union, 2020; De Wispelaere et al., 2021), so we decided to focus on them, and not so much on the less widespread movement of labor between Slovenia and Hungary or Croatia.

2 Interviews were conducted in Slovenian language and translated into English.

so we only use an abbreviation of the name of each interviewee. In order to acquire a broader perspective of what is going on, we carried out further discussions with representatives of trade unions who assisted workers (four interviews) and with a EURES network advisor at the Employment Service of Slovenia (ZRSZ).

THE BACKGROUND OF THE PHENOMENON

International labor mobility is the consequence of economic, legal, and social restrictions, which force individuals to leave their home countries for employment and affect their choice of future work and destination (Bastos et al., 2021: 157). Thus, in addition to opportunities, mobility can be full of uncertainties, and the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions have only added new challenges to the existing obstacles (see Fasani and Mazza, 2020a; Rasnača, 2020).

The pandemic has explicitly highlighted the differences and inequalities in the (im)mobility, citizenship, vocational, social, and health status among people. Heller claims that the pandemic has set up a so-called “sanitary apartheid” (Heller, 2021: 120), which is an expansion of Balibar’s concept of global apartheid based on citizenship, race, and social class (Balibar, 2004). Although Heller applied the concept to the EU’s external borders and in relation to citizens of third countries, we find that “sanitary differentiation” was also established on the internal borders between the EU Member States by only allowing entry to citizens/inhabitants with permanent or temporary residence in the same Member State, foreign workers employed in critical infrastructure, and those who could prove they were not sick (Klatt, 2020; Novotný, 2021). The threat considered to be posed by refugees, migrants, or terrorists as “others” prior to the epidemic has with the pandemic and the restrictive measures aimed at stopping the spread of COVID-19 increasingly included inhabitants of neighboring countries as the allegedly sick and non-citizens (Opilowska, 2021). An example of this is the international “isolation” of Italy, which in the spring of 2020 was one of the countries most affected by COVID-19. Similar distinctions were made on the Czech–German, Polish–German, and Czech–Polish borders during the same period and later (Opilowska, 2021; Böhm, 2021; Novotný, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic not only highlighted the differences at borders but also showed that the working conditions of posted, cross-border, and other mobile workers, who are citizens of EU Member States, in many cases deteriorated.³ Although, according to EU legislation, workers from one Member State who work in another Member State have the same labor rights as domestic workers (European Union, 2020), this does not always apply in practice. Studies show (Fasani & Mazza, 2020a, 2020b; Rasnača, 2020; Perocco, 2021) that mobile and migrant workers, even if they

3 According to Eurostat, in 2019, there were 1.5 million cross-border workers (Fries-Tersch et al., 2021) and 1.9 million posted workers (De Wispelaere et al., 2021) in the EU.

are citizens of an EU Member State, usually carry out lower-paid work which does not correspond to their level of education or qualifications. They are also exposed to economic and social vulnerability due to the short-term nature and limited duration of their work contracts; they may be paid less than local workers and are likely to have to accept informal agreements about working conditions. In a crisis, foreign workers are the first to lose their employment.

In 2020, a unique paradox arose when, in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the EU Member States restricted freedom of movement and established checkpoints at their borders. At the same time, they declared mobile workers who regularly travel within the EU (and also enter and leave from third countries) to be “key workers” (Fasani & Mazza, 2020a). Foreign workers in the so-called critical infrastructures—activities that served the population uninterrupted during the pandemic (workers in road transport, health care, seasonal workers in agriculture and the food industry, and others)—were indispensable yet restricted in their mobility while enjoying the least economic and social protection. Moreover, they were also the most vulnerable in terms of health (Rasnača, 2020).

Soon after the COVID-19 pandemic was declared, the scope of global mobility was limited. The pandemic also affected the dynamics and forms of mobility, which became more localized, regional, and shorter in duration (IOM, 2020). Some key changes in the scope and characteristics of mobility also occurred in Slovenia. According to the statistics of the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia (ZZZS; internal report, in the authors’ archives), the number of posted workers from Slovenia decreased: in the second and fourth quarters of 2020, the drop was 8% and 16%, respectively, in comparison with the previous quarter. A comparison of the number of Slovenian citizens employed in Austria between April 2019 and April 2020 showed that this fell by 6.8% (this includes cross-border mobile workers with residence in Slovenia and Slovenian nationals with residence in Austria; unpublished statistics from the AMS—the Austrian Public Employment Service, in the authors’ archives). We may assume that these shifts were decisively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulted from restrictions determined by government measures in Slovenia and in the countries of employment or posting in the first half of 2020.

THE COVID-19 EPIDEMIC IN LEGISLATION: NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND THEIR AIM

Slovenia was one of 12 EU Member States that introduced restrictions on cross-border movement as one of the national strategies to stop the spread of COVID-19 when the epidemic began. In the other Member States, restrictions on movement were either regional or completely non-existent (Alemanno, 2020: 311), which means that the EU did not adopt a unified strategy in this domain. Moreover, the European Commission adopted “only guidelines” for administering borders in the time of the

COVID-19 pandemic, in which it determined important characteristics of temporary border control, including internal borders. We would like to draw attention to Section 21, which requires compliance with the Directive on the Free Movement of Persons and also requires that EU Member States make no distinction between their own citizens and other EU citizens and may not, under any circumstances, refuse entry to EU citizens or citizens of third countries who are present in the territory of the EU. At the same time, the guidelines require the use of appropriate protective measures, such as self-isolation or quarantine, but only if the measures apply to both citizens and non-citizens. The guidelines under Section 23 also require that the Member States allow frontier workers to cross the border (European Commission 2020a: 4–5).

European legal expert Alberto Alemanno claims that the EU Member States have treated the pandemic as “an essentially national matter”, adopting different, uncoordinated, and sometimes competing national responses (Alemanno, 2020: 307). Some documents from the European Commission, the European Parliament, or its individual members also indicate the uncoordinated, nationally motivated, and discriminatory actions of EU Member States to stop the spread of COVID-19. They point to a discriminatory relationship by the EU Member States toward mobile workers, the inadmissible obstruction of the free flow of workers, and the increased vulnerability and precarious situation of cross-border, posted, and seasonal workers (European Commission, 2020b; European Parliament, 2020a; European Parliament, 2020b).

The uncoordinated national response of Slovenia and its neighboring countries was reflected primarily in the restrictions of freedom of movement and the closure of parts of the economy and society. The Slovenian government adopted the measures rapidly, with a brief prior announcement and decrees for which it did not require a majority in the Slovenian National Assembly. In the first month of the epidemic alone, the Slovenian government adopted six decrees forbidding movement or determining conditions for crossing borders and movement within the country. These changed many times in the following two months. Such measures affected international mobile workers who are residents of Slovenia in a specific way. Let us look at some examples of these measures.

The first measure to restrict movement was adopted before the epidemic was declared in Slovenia (March 12, 2020). Due to the rapid spread of the illness in Italy, the *Decree determining the conditions of entry into Slovenia from Italy to prevent the spread of infectious disease* was adopted on March 11, 2020. With the decree, the government introduced six (later only four) checkpoints on roads connecting Slovenia with Italy (UL 18/2020). By March 18, the decree had changed already two times. The government set up sanitary checkpoints for foreign non-residents. It determined a few exceptions for which restrictions did not apply, including Slovenian nationals, foreign nationals with permanent or temporary residence in Slovenia, and freight transport destined for Slovenia. All transit traffic was stopped, and foreign nationals had to prove they were healthy (a negative COVID-19 test and body temperature of less than 37.5° C). As a result, a large number of passengers and trucks gathered on

Slovenian territory near the border with Italy, stranded due to the above decree (A. V., STA, 2020).

On March 16, 2020, the *Decree on the temporary prohibition and restriction of public passenger transport in Slovenia* entered into force, which also included international connections (UL 24/2020), while on March 17, 2020, the government *Decree prohibiting air transport in Slovenia* came into force (UL 26/2020). The government extended the prohibition of air transport on several occasions until June 12, 2020 (UL 66/2020). The prohibition of public transport and flights in Slovenia and elsewhere in the world meant that many people were stranded abroad (see more on this in Vah Jevšnik & Milharčič Hladnik, 2022, in this issue of the journal), and even more of them could not go to work. The following measures to be adopted introduced restrictions for crossing the borders with Croatia (adopted on March 17) and Austria (March 24). In both cases, the governmental decrees set strict conditions for border crossings and established a limited number of checkpoints. Both neighboring countries independently enacted measures to control border crossings into Slovenia on March 18, 2020.

On April 11, 2020, the Slovenian government adopted a joint order (extended many more times, slightly different each time), which determined the border regime on all of Slovenia's borders (UL 50/2020), checkpoints and their opening hours, and also exceptions for which people could, under stringent conditions, cross the border and be exempt from quarantine. These exceptions included daily cross-border workers but not posted workers. At first, the weekly cross-border workers were not amongst the exceptions, apart from those working in Austria. Under pressure from the public, especially the SDMS, the government issued a decree (almost a month later) on May 7, 2020 (UL 64/2020), that confirmed weekly cross-border workers in other countries were also an exception and could cross the border with Slovenia.

On March 30, 2020, the restriction of freedom of movement between Slovenian municipalities was introduced. Among the few exceptions allowed to cross the municipal borders were international mobile workers and residents who needed to cross these borders for professional reasons. This movement was possible if they could prove that travel between municipalities was essential. If they could not prove this, they faced a fine of between EUR 400 and 4,000 under the Contagious Diseases Act. Similar restrictive measures were applied during the second wave of the epidemic (from October 2020 to June 2021), which shows how long the measures to restrict movement lasted.

As part of the overall effort to curb the spread of COVID-19, many countries uncoordinatedly shut down part of their economies. Italy did so on March 9, Slovenia on March 12, and Austria on March 16, 2020. Governments also issued a series of regulations mandating the use of protective equipment and safety distance between people. A negative COVID-19 test result became a condition for crossing the border, which countries adopted again at different dates and with many national administrative peculiarities.

THE COVID-19 EPIDEMIC IN PRACTICE: RESTRICTIONS ON MOVEMENT, MEASURES TO PREVENT INFECTION AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

The measures that the Slovenian government and the governments of neighboring countries began adopting in an uncoordinated fashion in March 2020, i.e., closing the borders, introducing strict control over the population's movements, canceling public transport, enforcing specific health measures on individuals, etc., provoked predominantly negative reactions such as anger, frustration, and often distress amongst international mobile workers.

Restrictions of movement

Numerous cross-border workers and their families in Slovenia became afraid that the governments of neighboring countries would close the border completely, even for daily cross-border workers. As we showed in the previous chapter, Slovenia and its neighboring countries have not completely closed their national borders. However, a limited number of border crossings, checkpoints, and rare exceptions regarding who was allowed to cross the border meant unimaginable changes for the population. The controls related to the health crisis represented an unprecedented and very large obstacle for people for whom crossing the border is vital.

For one thing, crossing the border took longer because, in addition to the controls intended for refugees or migrants, they began introducing temperature measurements at borders. As it was no longer allowed to take passengers, more cars were on the roads. This is how things were, and everything was stricter. I think they also closed some [smaller] border crossings. [...] Those who are not used to using these [larger] international crossings have had great difficulty getting to their workplace (Interview with cross-border worker M.).

With the proclamation of the epidemic and the restriction of movement, the states also paralyzed part of the economy for several weeks. Posted workers, in particular, had to return to their home countries. When companies resumed operations and construction sites reopened, posted workers faced a new problem at the border, as posted worker G. told us. Unlike cross-border workers, posted workers were not among the exceptions defined in decrees and always had to prove their reasons for crossing the border or were quarantined right at the border. This happened twice to our interviewee. Such workers were subjected to frequent testing for crossing the border,⁴ and if they did not fulfill the necessary conditions were threatened

4 Austria decided on March 20, 2020, that entry into the country would be possible only upon submission of a negative COVID-19 test, which could not be older than four days. Exceptions

with quarantine. Workers had to pay for their own PCR and RAT tests for prolonged periods, and some posted workers have not been reimbursed for these expenses (Interview with posted worker G.). Frequent testing was time-consuming, and confirmations in a foreign language were not issued at all testing sites, and a possible quarantine decision could also mean termination of the employment contract. Additional safety measures for preventing the spread of COVID-19, such as masks, disinfectants, physical distancing, separate accommodation and transport to work, along with testing, were fully implemented in the Austrian construction sector, for example, and also accepted by workers (Geyer et al., 2020), which was confirmed by some of our interviewees. Elsewhere, in production and work with customers, such measures hindered work. Precarious working conditions and a lack of safety measures for cross-border, posted, and seasonal workers were also present in other sectors during the epidemic, such as the meat processing industry and health care (European Parliament, 2020a). One interviewee, employed by a large manufacturing company in Austria, told us that throughout the first wave of the epidemic, he worked with local workers who had not been tested and were also undisciplined in their use of safety equipment. As a result, he felt he was at greater risk (Interview with cross-border worker M.). Our interviewees highlighted another feature of cross-border work: fewer international mobile workers could work from home because they are predominantly employed in sectors that do not enable this: construction, manufacturing, and the so-called critical infrastructure.

Cross-border workers who regularly drove to work in neighboring Austria and Italy experienced the greatest difficulties due to the closure of smaller border crossings which meant they had to drive up to twice as far to work. Waiting at checkpoints for documents to be checked and the restricted opening hours of some major border crossings, with queues at border crossings that were open throughout, further increased the time spent commuting to work. Our interviewees criticized decision-makers for not understanding the importance of open borders for mobile workers: "What bothers me most in Slovenia is that they closed down border crossings. That was wrong. They should not have done this. I think that the people in Ljubljana who make these decisions have no idea what is happening at the country's periphery. This is wrong" (Interview with cross-border worker M.). As a result, workers were late for work, the workday lengthened, and so did their absence from home. Their travel costs increased significantly. According to one of the respondents, employers were "mostly understanding as long as they did not come to work late." However, fearing the spread of infection among employees, some Austrian employers prohibited their employees from traveling to work together, which meant additional costs for commuters and even more cars on the road and at border

were Austrian citizens or people with permanent or temporary residence, transit passengers, commuters, and other passengers on urgent trips (gov.si).

crossings. All respondents whose travel costs had increased significantly expressed concern about how these expenses would be accounted for when calculating income tax for 2020.

Economic and social consequences

Even without COVID-19 restrictions, the provision of services with posted workers is highly dependent on fluctuations in business and economic conditions. When much of the economic activity in EU countries came to a halt, it naturally had a negative impact. Many posted workers who worked in the other EU Member States via Slovenian companies had to return to Slovenia. Businesses and construction sites were closed, and the interruption of work lasted for several weeks, such as in Austria (Geyer et al., 2020). Of the workers posted from Slovenia to the other EU Member States in 2020, almost six out of ten were third-country nationals. They worked for Slovenian employers and had at least temporary residence in Slovenia (Vah Jevšnik et al., 2022). Some of them were in a particularly difficult situation. They had to return to Slovenia during the period of extraordinary circumstances and partial economic shutdown of Europe, where they were unemployed and without any means of support. One of these posted workers was Stojan Mirič, a Serbian citizen who had to return to Slovenia after a construction site in Ingolstadt, Germany, was closed. He had a permanent residence in Slovenia but no means of subsistence (S.R./J.P./STA, 2020). So, he decided to return to Serbia, but in the meantime, Serbia had closed its borders even to its own citizens. Thus, a large group of Serbian citizens returning from various European countries remained stranded in Slovenia. The workers' families were waiting for them at home, but when they returned to Serbia, they usually had to spend 14 to 28 days in quarantine (S.R./J.P./STA, 2020). According to a representative of the Counselling Office for Workers, an NGO located in Ljubljana, many employers gave leave to posted workers, i.e., sent them "home" to Serbia, BiH, and elsewhere. In Slovenia, some posted workers also faced the fact that the employer did not pay contributions for them or excluded them from the social security system from April 2020. Some of them sought help from trade unions, while many returned to their home country.

According to representatives of the Slovenian Union of Migrant Workers (SDMS), many Slovenian cross-border workers lost their jobs because economic activity in neighboring countries was partially halted at the beginning of the epidemic.⁵ In Austria, for which we managed to obtain (unpublished) AMS statistics, 1,726 Slovenian nationals lost their jobs at the beginning of the pandemic (based on a

5 Indeed, in 2020, Austria recorded its lowest employment level since 1952 (Geyer et al., 2020), and the crisis hit foreigners the hardest. Employment of foreigners fell by 10.5%, while it fell by 3.4% for the native population. Employment of cross-border workers fell by 14.9%, and there were 46.1% fewer posting notifications (ZKO3) for posted workers in Austria (for more details, see Geyer et al., 2020).

comparison of the state in April 2019 and 2020). However, according to a EURES advisor, about 10% of Slovenian nationals employed in Austria lost their jobs in the first phase of the epidemic (Interview with the EURES advisor), which corresponds to about 2,360 workers (unpublished AMS statistics, in the authors' archive). In addition, the number of people laid off due to informal forms of employment and contract work was undoubtedly even higher and differed depending on the form of employment. Tourism, accommodation and food services, wholesale and retail trade, personal services, and other non-critical activities lost significantly more employees than other activities (Interview with the EURES advisor). There would likely have been many more job losses if the Austrian government had not adopted several packages of measures to support the economy. At the same time, it urged employers not to lay off workers and instead to resort to short-time work and subsidies (SDMS Union, 2020). During this period, the SDMS constantly warned its members not to sign amicable termination agreements with Austrian employers because they would not be entitled to benefits in the event of unemployment in Slovenia (SDMS Union, 2020). According to the EURES Adviser, most of the dismissed Slovenian workers found new employment relatively quickly in Austria, thanks to the flexibility of the labor market and the revival of the closed part of the economy. Because of the flexibility of the labor market and the tougher work environment, and more stressful conditions compared to Slovenia, most of our interviewees expressed fears about job security. They were especially afraid at the beginning of the epidemic when it was still unclear how governments would deal with the population movement and the economy's stagnation and how employers would react.

International mobile workers, especially those not employed in Slovenia, were not eligible for many of the measures taken in Slovenia to mitigate the effects of the pandemic. If they lost their jobs, they could only register with the employment service in Slovenia, from which they received lower cash benefits than the contributions they paid in the countries where they worked.⁶ If cross-border workers agreed to terminate their employment contract by mutual consent or if they had worked abroad for less than nine months, they were not entitled to benefits in Slovenia. The dismissed workers faced an additional economic threat from the procedure for collecting insufficient income tax payments by the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, which had already been collecting payments due for many years. Some workers were temporarily in a very difficult position (Interview with cross-border worker M.). The amount of childcare compensation received by workers during the lockdown varied widely in duration and scope, resulting in unequal treatment of cross-border workers compared to other workers employed in Slovenia. Non-formal and undeclared work in neighboring countries, which, according to many of our interviewees, is common among Slovenians, became utterly impossible

6 On the initiative of the SDMS, the Slovenian government solved this long-term problem in March 2021 and increased the amount for the three and six months of benefit receipt from EUR 892.50 to EUR 1,785.00 (UL 54/2021).

due to the strict border controls. Thus, workers who wanted to enter Austria had to present confirmation from their employer, the so-called certificate for commuters (*Bescheinigung für Berufspendler*), or a valid employment contract, for a job in the critical infrastructure (SDMS Union, 2020).

THE RELIABILITY OF INFORMATION AND ITS CHANNELS

The international mobile workers we spoke with mostly kept abreast of policies and changes in both countries—the country where they worked and their country of residence. They found information in the media, on the official websites of the Slovenian and Austrian/Italian governments, on the websites of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and embassies, then on the website of the Slovenian police, or directly from the officials at the border. Another reliable source of information was the SDMS website, which included links to important official websites. Many workers relied on the information they received from their employers or on informal channels the workers established among themselves. Less reliable but still frequently used sources of information were social networks.

Despite various official sources of information about valid measures, workers said they found it challenging to keep abreast of changes in policies and admitted to being very confused by the amount of information to which they were exposed. They had to keep abreast of the situation in two or more countries and compare them.

“There was no closing of municipalities in Switzerland as there was here. In Switzerland you could go anywhere you pleased, all the time, you could leave the country, come back ... If you went out, you knew that you would have to quarantine for 10 days, this was all clear, you didn’t have the options we had here. And curfews, we never had this in Switzerland” (Interview with seasonal worker M.).

“This was a permanent subject of conversation at the time, keeping up on all the measures and comparing ours and theirs. We eventually realized that our measures in Slovenia came one week after theirs. And I still think that our government simply copies their measures so they can say that they only did the same as in Austria. That’s how I feel it is” (Interview with cross-border worker M.).

Mobile workers found the measures adopted by the Slovenian government vague in time and content, changing too quickly, some adopted in a very short time or not realistic, such as the working hours at border crossings, which did not take into account the working hours of companies (Interview with the SDMS Union representative), or the frequency of tests for workers returning to Slovenia, this measure becoming valid while they were still working abroad (Interview with cross-border worker S.). Workers were often confused in the flood of news about changes in current regulations and different measures on both sides of the border. According to respondents, the biggest problem was the lack of reliable information about border crossings. Since the beginning of March 2020, the media reported

that the borders with neighboring countries might be closed, so these workers were concerned about how they would go to work. Some of them were even willing to move to the other country temporarily. One of them was nurse B., employed in a nursing home in Austria. She traveled to work with a suitcase during the first two weeks of the epidemic, always prepared to stay in Austria if needed.

On the other hand, international mobile workers perceived the measures taken by the Austrian, Swiss, or German governments as clear in content and timing. New measures were decided and announced some time in advance so that they could prepare for them. Nevertheless, there were many measures, and respondents found it difficult to keep track and identify which of them applied to them. The posts and comments on the Facebook page of the *Connecting migrant workers and supporters group* also reflected this state of affairs. In the group, members often asked whether a particular border crossing was open, whether a decided measure also applied to them, or what they should do if they were unable or unwilling to comply with a measure.

CONCLUSION

The pandemic COVID-19 caused a unique paradox in terms of mobility. On the one hand, the global community sought to solve the problems posed by the virus, which, in the words of Étienne Balibar, overcame all national and social barriers (2020), while at the same time, each country took its own measures to restrict the freedom of movement, excluding “the others” and including “us” in order to stop the spread of the pandemic. In the same month that marked the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Schengen Agreement, many EU Member States closed the internal borders of the Schengen area to stop the spread of the virus—a measure that proved ineffective, however, judging by the increasing number of infections and sick people in the weeks that followed. We cannot deny the role of mobility in the spread of the epidemic because the virus does not travel by itself. However, the restriction of freedom of movement is a late and, above all, nationalistic reaction, which in this case, triggered new forms of control (Heller, 2021).

The pandemic has highlighted the enormous differences in the vulnerability of our societies and groups of individuals during the health and economic crises that have hit the EU, including Slovenia (IOM, 2020). As our study has shown, the health crisis immediately put many administrative obstacles in the way of Slovenian residents working in other EU member states, which also created certain risks in economic, social, and health terms. International mobile workers, who were often already in precarious situations before the pandemic, became even more vulnerable and at-risk due to movement restrictions and other measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. They were exposed to risks such as layoffs, increased costs associated with commuting, infections due to the lack of or inconsistent application

of protective measures, poor security measures, unequal treatment, and most of their jobs could not be performed from home, meaning that they were constantly exposed to sources of infection and restrictions when crossing state borders (see Rasnača, 2020). The study's main finding is that the measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, which were not internationally coordinated during the period in question and changed very quickly, were restrictive and even harmful to the mobile population. The measures to limit the spread of COVID-19 created new inequalities and disparities and contributed to a deterioration in mobile workers' economic and social status.

Finally, we would like to quote Étienne Balibar again. In an interview, he said that an important aspect of democracy is the awareness that no strategy of collective protection—closing borders, quarantining, or pursuing risky contacts—is without danger. "The way in which a society sees itself 'at war,' even against a virus, is a matter of democracy" (Balibar, 2020).

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POVZETEK

MEDNARODNI MOBILNI DELAVCI MED OMEJEVALNIMI UKREPI IN SVOBODO GIBANJA V ČASU PANDEMIJE BOLEZNI COVID-19: PRIMER SLOVENIJE

Kristina TOPLAK, Marina LUKŠIČ HACIN

Avtorici v članku predstavita rezultate raziskave o vplivih ukrepov za preprečevanje širjenja bolezni Covid-19 na mednarodne mobilne delavce, ki je potekala v letih 2020 in 2021. Njen namen je bil identificirati ukrepe in strategije, ki so bili v Sloveniji sprejeti spomladi 2020 in so vplivali na omenjeno ciljno skupino. Avtorici sta preučili, kateri ukrepi za zajezitev širjenja Covid-19 so najbolj prizadeli mednarodne mobilne delavce in kako so vplivali na njihovo življenje in delo. Zanimali so ju predvsem izkušnje, percepcije in odzivi napotenih, čezmejnih in drugih mednarodnih mobilnih delavcev.

V članku se avtorici osredotočata predvsem na ukrepe omejevanja mobilnosti in zapiranja družbe (npr. zapiranje meje, omejevanje gibanja prebivalstva na občino stalnega prebivališča, preverjanje zdravstvenega stanja na meji) in tudi nekatere ukrepe blaženja posledic epidemije, zato sta pregledali glavne vladne dokumente, ki so določali pogoje za prebivalstvo. Na podlagi opravljenih polstrukturiranih intervjujev s posameznimi delavci in njihovimi družinskimi člani ter pogovorov s sodelavci sindikatov, ki so delavcem nudili informacije in pomoč, sta lahko identificirali tveganja, ki so jim bili izpostavljeni delavci po povratku iz tujine ali med opravljanjem čezmejnega dela in so bila posledica omejevanja mobilnosti zaradi epidemije (izguba službe, začasna prekinitev dela, zdravstvena tveganja ipd.).

Raziskava je pokazala, da je zdravstvena kriza delovno mobilnim prebivalcem Slovenije postavila na pot veliko administrativnih ovir, ki so predstavljale določeno tveganje v ekonomskem in socialnem smislu. Glavna ugotovitev raziskave je, da so bili ukrepi za preprečevanje širjenja bolezni Covid-19, ki so bili v obravnavanem obdobju mednarodno neusklajeni in so se zelo hitro spreminjali, za mobilno prebivalstvo omejujoči in celo škodljivi. Povečali so neenakosti na področjih mobilnosti, državljanstva in poklicnega ali socialnega statusa ter poslabšali ekonomski in socialni položaj mobilnih delavcev.

TEMATSKI SKLOP

LE Z DRUGIMI SMO: MIGRACIJE IN IZOBRAŽEVANJE
ONLY (WITH) OTHERS ARE WE: MIGRATION AND EDUCATION

THEMATIC SECTION

UVOD: LE Z DRUGIMI SMO: MIGRACIJE IN IZOBRAŽEVANJE

Marijanca Ajša VIŽINTIN¹

COBISS: 1.20

Tematski sklop »Le z drugimi smo: Migracije in izobraževanje« predstavlja enega od zaključkov petletnega nacionalnega projekta »Le z drugimi smo« (2016–2021). Strokovnjakinje in strokovnjaki ZRC SAZU in Pedagoškega inštituta so s številnimi zunanjimi sodelavkami in sodelavci izvajali predavanja, delavnice in diskusije za pedagoške delavke in delavce. Ti so v času univerzitetnega izobraževanja pridobili premalo znanja o slovenskem izseljevanju za poučevanje v jezikovno, versko in etnično raznolikih razredih in skupinah (Kalc et al., 2020; Trebše Štolfa & Klemenčič, 2001). Vzgojiteljice in vzgojitelji, učiteljice in učitelji se vseživljenjsko izobražujejo, si izmenjujejo znanje in izkušnje ter pridobivajo nova znanja, kompetence in spretnosti, saj se družba ves čas spreminja. Ljudje se priseljujejo, ker jih potrebujemo (Kajzer et al., 2019), in izseljujejo, ker vidijo svojo prihodnost drugje. Za delavkami in delavci, ki jim izdajamo delovna dovoljenja, prihajajo njihove družine, saj želijo živeti skupaj. Zaradi vojn in nasilja prihajajo begunke, begunci. Migracije so vedno bile, so in bodo.

Projekt »Le z drugimi smo«¹ je 10.208 pedagoškim delavkam v vrtcih, osnovnih in srednjih šolah ter na ljudskih univerzah ponudil pet usposabljanj,² ki so poskušala zapolniti vrzeli v razvoju socialnih, medkulturnih in državljskih kompetenc. Seminarji so bili za pedagoške delavke in delavce brezplačni. Izvajali so se po vseh slovenskih regijah, v Ljubljani v prostorih ZRC SAZU, v skladu z individualnimi

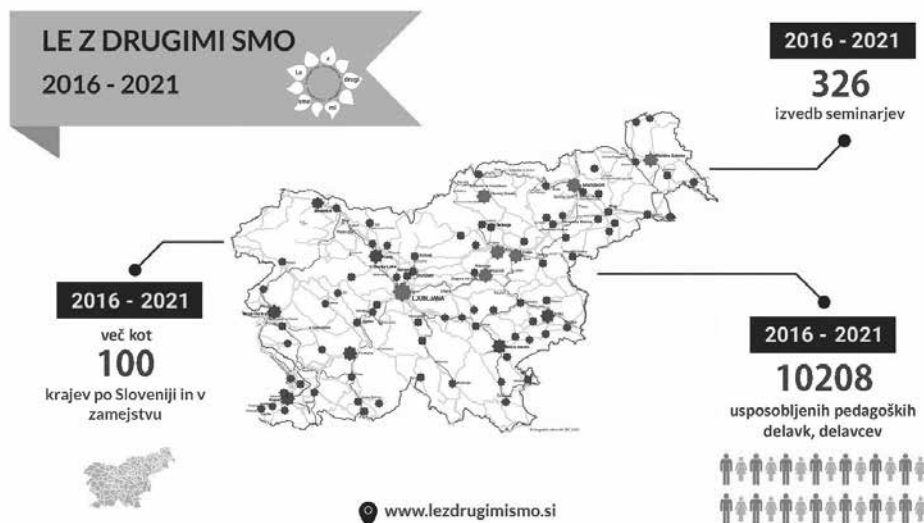
1 V okviru projekta »Krepitev socialnih in državljskih kompetenc strokovnih delavcev« (13. 5. 2016–30. 9. 2021) sta se izvajali dve vsebinski področji: »Izzivi medkulturnega sobivanja« in »Le z drugimi smo«. Projekta sta sofinancirala Ministrstvo za izobraževanje, znanost in šport Republike Slovenije ter Evropski socialni sklad.

2 Projekt »Le z drugimi smo« (<https://lezdrugimismo.si/sl>), ki ga je vodila Marina Lukšič Hacin in koordinirala Marijanca Ajša Vižintin, je ponujal pet 16-urnih seminarjev: 1) Živeti raznolikost: vključevanje priseljencev, slovenščina in medkulturni dialog (koordinatorka Marijanca Ajša Vižintin); 2) Ničelna toleranca do nasilja: izzivi in problemi, (koordinatorka Sabina Autor); Spoštljiva komunikacija in reševanje konfliktov (koordinatorki Alenka Gril, Petra Zgonec); 4) Izzivi sodobne družbe v šoli in vrtcu (koordinatorja Alenka Gril in Igor Bijuklić); 5) Medkulturni odnosi in integracija (koordinatorki Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik in Klara Kožar Rosulnik).

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naročili v vzgojno-izobraževalnih organizacijah in v pedagoških kolektivih, vključenih v vzporedni projekt »Izzivi medkulturnega sobivanja« (2016–2021).³ Izvedbe so bile prilagojene potrebam in željam posamezne šole ali vrtca. Predavateljice in predavatelji so predavali po vsej Sloveniji, o čemer priča tudi zemljevid projekta »Le z drugimi smo« (Slika 1).

Zaključek urejanja tematskega sklopa »Le z drugimi smo: Migracije in izobraževanje«



Slika 1: Zemljevid z rezultati projekta »Le z drugimi smo« (2016–2021). Avtorici: Špela Kastelec in Deja Gliha, ZRC SAZU

sta zaznamovala dva dogodka: uradno opravičilo predsednika države Borisa Pahorja izbrisanim (26. 2. 2022) in vojaški napad Rusije na Ukrajino (24. 2. 2022). Prvi priznava birokratski zločin, ki je pred tridesetimi leti na poti v slovensko osamosvojitve uničil življenja 25.671 ljudem in njihovim družinam, in prinaša je simbolno opravičilo žrtvam, ki niso bili niti potrebne niti nujne. Drugi prinaša grožnjo nove svetovne vojne. Oboje se je zgodilo in se dogaja v Evropi.

Z vojno v Ukrajini prihajajo nove begunke, begunci in njihovi otroci, ki se bodo vključevali v slovenski vzgojno-izobraževalni sistem. Z juga prihajajo begunke in begunci, ki naj ne bi bili pravi, ker prihajajo iz nekih drugih, bolj oddaljenih vojn. Umirajo v naših gozdovih, utaplajo se v naših vodah, omagajo na naših poteh, medtem ko poskušajo igrati svojo igro ponovnega življenja, t. i. *game* (Kovač, 2021; Autor, 2022). S severa prihajajo t. i. prave begunke in begunci (Center FemA, 2022) – Slovenija je obljubila, da jih lahko nastani 180.000–200.000. Če se bo to res zgodilo, bo ta številka daleč preseгла število vseh odobrenih mednarodnih zaščit v času

3 <http://www.medkulturnost.si>

samostojne Republike Slovenije: v obdobju 1995–2015 je v Sloveniji za mednarodno zaščito zaprosilo 19.889 ljudi, pridobilo pa jo je 393 ljudi, to je manj kot dva odstotka prosilk in prosilcev (Vižintin, 2017: 175). Leta 2016, ko so (tudi) čez Slovenijo bežali ljudje iz Sirije, Afganistana, Eritreje in drugih držav, je bilo v Sloveniji vloženih 1.308 prošenj za mednarodno zaščito, ta pa je bila priznana 170 osebam.

Ne glede na to, koliko časa bo trajala vojna v Ukrajini (in drugod), k nam prihajajo in bodo prihajali ljudje, ki so bili prisiljeni zapustiti dom in vse, kar so ustvarili, da bi rešili svoje življenje in življenje svojih otrok. Otroci bodo šli v šolo, in upam, da so pedagoške delavke in delavci tudi zaradi projekta »Le z drugimi smo« bolje pripravljene na njihovo vključevanje. Udeleženke, udeleženci (vsaj) enega od naših 326 seminarjev so med drugim zapisali:

Zelo kvaliteten seminar! Je idealna priložnost za seznanitev z inovativnimi pristopi poučevanja-učenja slovenskega jezika za otroke-učence priseljence, razumevanja njihovega položaja, čustvovanja. Je čudovita usmeritev za vzpodbujanje multikulturalnosti, razvijanje sprejemanja otrok in njihovih staršev, s katerimi delamo, predstavljene možnosti delovanja bodo gotovo obogatile naše delo, nam omogočile, da vzpostavimo razumevajoč, empatičen, spoštljiv odnos do priseljencev, da jim omogočimo lažje vključevanje v družbo, jih podpiramo pri uveljavljanju, napredku, ohranjanju lastne kulture ter spoznavanju jezika in kulture okolja, v katerem živijo. Izjemno sta se me dotaknila entuziazem in empatija predavateljev, njihova energija, ustvarjalnost na področjih, na katerih delujejo, multikulturalnost. Hvala za razširitev mojih obzorij. Seminar bi priporočala vsem učiteljem, vzgojiteljem, ljudem, ki živijo ali delajo s priseljenci. (udeleženka seminarja »Živeti raznolikost: vključevanje priseljencev, slovenščina in medkulturni dialog«, 18. in 19. 5. 2017 v Krškem)

Seminar se dotika aktualnih tem, pridobljena/osvežena znanja, predvsem s področja nasilja z vidika medijev ter prava bom lahko prenesla tudi v svoje delo. Predavateljji so bili odlično pripravljene. Po dolgem času zanimiv in koristen seminar! (udeleženka seminarja »Ničelna toleranca do nasilja: izzivi in problemi«, 13. in 14. 4. 2017 v Žalcu)

V Vrtcu Velenje smo v zadnjih dveh letih gostili dva seminarja v sklopu projekta »Le z drugimi smo« – »Medkulturni odnosi in integracija« ter »Spoštljiva komunikacija in reševanje konfliktov«. Vsebinski obeh seminarjev dobro nagovarjata izzive sodobne družbe. Predavateljice so teme prikazale iz različnih zornih kotov ter sproti odgovarjale na vprašanja udeležencev. Izvedbo seminarja so popestrile s praktičnimi vsebinami (delavnice). Strokovni delavci so pohvalili uporabnost vsebin ter izmenjavo izkušenj s predavateljicami iz različnih strok. Seminarja priporočamo vsem, ki se ukvarjajo z vzgojo in izobraževanjem. (vodstvo Vrtca Velenje o seminarju »Spoštljiva komunikacija in reševanje konfliktov«, 2., 4., 11. in 16. februar ter 9. marec 2019)

Zaključna konferenca projekta je bila organizirana 17. 9. 2021 v Atriju ZRC SAZU (Banjanac Lubej, 2021). Predavanja, delavnice, povezave na sorodne projekte in drugo gradivo iz projekta »Le z drugimi smo« ostaja tudi po zaključku projekta brezplačno in prosto dostopno v e-učilnici projekta na spletni strani <https://lezdrugimismo.si/sl/e-ucilnica>. Vabljeni, da gradivo uporabljate, širite in nadgrajujete ter s svojimi dejavnostmi, znanjem in delovanjem prispevate k bolj vključujoči in medkulturni družbi, katere del sta tudi vzgoja in izobraževanje.

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ZAČETNI TEČAJ SLOVENŠČINE IN MEDKULTURNI DIALOG PRI VKLJUČEVANJU OTROK PRISELJENCEV

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COBISS 1.01

IZVLEČEK

Začetni tečaj slovenščine in medkulturni dialog pri vključevanju otrok priseljencev

Prenovljena osnovno- in srednješolska zakonodaja predvideva intenzivni začetni tečaj slovenščine ter individualno spremljanje napredka vključevanja. Na voljo je vedno več didaktičnega gradiva za različno starostno stopnjo otrok, a izzivi ostajajo. Še več jih je pri izvajanju medkulturnega dialoga v okviru pouka. Učni načrti in učna gradiva bi morali odsevati družbeno raznolikost, a so priseljenke in priseljenci, pripadnice in pripadniki manjšin v njih največkrat nevidni ali prikazani pristransko. To je treba spremeniti in tudi njim samim omogočiti, da se predstavijo ter spregovorijo o izzivih vključevanja, o sestavljeni identiteti in o svoji vlogi v družbi.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: otroci priseljenci, intenzivni tečaj slovenščine, učni načrti, evrocentrizem, življenjske zgodbe

ABSTRACT

Integration of Immigrant Children in Slovenia: Intensive Slovenian Language Courses for Beginners and Possibilities for Intercultural Dialogue

The revised legislation for primary and secondary schools provides an intensive language courses of Slovenian for beginners and monitoring of an individual's integration progress. More and more didactic materials are available for children of different ages, but challenges remain. There are even more challenges in implementing intercultural dialogue in the classroom. Curricula and teaching materials should reflect social diversity yet often portray migrants and members of minority groups negatively or do not portray them at all. We must change that and offer them different opportunities to introduce themselves, to talk about the challenges of integration, their hyphenated identity, and their role in society.

KEYWORDS: migrant children, intensive language course of Slovenian, curricula, eurocentrism, life stories

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UVOD

Področje vključevanja otrok priseljencev v Sloveniji je v 21. stoletju v procesu razvoja.¹ Napredek je viden, a je pred nami še mnogo izzivov, preden bomo lahko zatrdili, da je slovenski šolski sistem vključujoč in medkulturn (Peček & Skubic Ermenc, 2016; Rutar, 2018; Zorman & Zudič Antonič, 2019; Skubic Ermenc et al., 2020). Med zdajšnjimi in bodočimi učiteljicami in učitelji je treba razvijati miselnost, da so vsi soodgovorni za vključevanje in da je raznolika, medkulturna družba, v kateri so migracije običajni del življenja, dejstvo. Na to jih je treba pripraviti že v času študija na univerzah – raznolikost družbe morajo odražati učni načrti in učno gradivo, da bodo učiteljice in učitelji o tem lažje poučevali v razredih (Vižintin, 2016, 2018) in da bodo stališča do otrok priseljencev, kulturne raznolikosti in pomoči otrokom priseljencem bolj pozitivna (Lesar et al., 2020). Sočasno je treba v učne načrte in v učno gradivo dodati vsebine o slovenskih izseljenkah in izseljencih. Znanje o slovenskih migracijah je ključno za razumevanje migracij na splošno ter migracij, ki se dogajajo danes (Milharčič Hladnik & Kožar Rosulnik, 2021).

Otroci priseljenci prihajajo in bodo prihajali, ker se družine pogrešajo in želijo živeti skupaj. Toda novi Zakon o tujcih (2021) podaljšuje obdobje, po katerem je možno združevanje družine (na dve leti), zvišuje finančna sredstva za združevanje družine in zaostruje možnosti za pridobitev mednarodne zaščite. Politične odločitve in uradna politika vključevanja poslabšujeta položaj priseljenih in otežujeta njihovo vključevanje, čeprav se ljudje priseljujejo, ker jih potrebujemo, tako delavke in delavce kot študentke in študente. Begunke, begunci prihajajo, da si rešijo življenje, da sebi in otrokom omogočijo varnejši, boljši jutri. Podatki pričajo, da sta bila najpogostejša vzroka priselitve v obdobju 2011–2015 zaposlitev in združevanje družine (Kajzer et al., 2019: 21). Ta trend se je nadaljeval tudi v zadnjih letih: v obdobju 2018–2020 je ostal najpogostejši razlog priselitve zaposlitev (58–68 %), sledilo je združevanje družine (25–31 %), drugi razlogi, npr. študij, so bili redkejši (Razpotnik, 2019, 2021).

Z novim Zakonom o tujcih (2021) je otežen študij tujih študentk in študentov na slovenskih univerzah, ki predstavljajo okoli devet odstotkov vpisanih.² Novi pogoji določajo, da naj bi imeli za pridobitev vizuma za študij v Sloveniji na tekočem računu za vpis v novo študijsko leto okoli 5.000 evrov,³ kar bi bilo težko tudi za mnoge

1 Članek je nastal v okviru projektov »Le z drugimi smo« (C3330-16-269110) in »Made in YU: Kako so neljudje gor spravili Jugoslavijo« (N5-0134) ter programske skupine »Narodna in kulturna identiteta slovenskega izseljenstva v kontekstu raziskovanja migracij« (P5-0070), financiranih s stani ARRS, MIZŠ in Evropskih socialnih skladov.

2 V študijskem letu 2020/21 je bilo v terciarno izobraževanje v Sloveniji vpisanih skoraj 82.700 študentov, med njimi približno 7.600 študentov s stalnim prebivališčem v tujini. Prihajali so iz 119 različnih držav, večina (60 %) iz držav naslednic nekdanje skupne države Jugoslavije, 28 % iz držav EU, 12 % pa iz drugih držav. Največ jih je bilo iz Bosne in Hercegovine, Hrvaške in Srbije (Klanjšek, 2021).

3 Namesto garantnega pisma skrbnikov bodo morale tuje študentke in študenti »po novem izkazati, da imajo sredstva v višini osnovnega zneska minimalnega mesečnega dohodka, ki trenutno znaša 402,18 evra. Ker se študentski vizumi izdajajo za eno leto, to v praksi pomeni,

slovenske študentke in študente; tako eni kot drugi običajno delajo vse študijsko leto preko študentskega servisa, da skupaj s starši zaslužijo dovolj za stroške študija in študentskega bivanja v Sloveniji. Novi pogoji bodo marsikomu zaprli vrata slovenskih univerz. To je v nasprotju s težnjo po internacionalizaciji študija, saj se univerze trudijo biti za tuje študentke in študente privlačne in podporne. Poleg tutorstva jim vse štiri slovenske univerze omogočajo t. i. »leto plus«, v katerem se lahko tuje študentke in študenti v okviru izbirnega predmeta brezplačno učijo slovenščino in si za eno leto podaljšajo status študenta.

Prispevek se osredotoča na dve področji v osnovni in srednji šoli: 1) napredek pri zakonodaji, učnih načrtih in didaktičnih gradivih za izvajanje intenzivnega tečaja slovenščine in 2) možnosti za razvoj medkulturnega dialoga znotraj pouka. Prvo je organizirano vedno bolj sistemsko in podporno, čeprav pomanjkljivosti in izzivi ostajajo, drugo je še vedno preveč odvisno od razvite medkulturne zmožnosti posamezne učiteljice oz. učitelja.

ZAKONSKI OKVIR VKLJUČEVANJA V OSNOVNIH IN SREDNJIH ŠOLAH

Otroci priseljenci so v osnovno šolo, ki je v Sloveniji (za razliko od srednje šole) obvezna, vključeni takoj po priselitvi v Sloveniji in vpisu, ne glede na državljanstvo, pravni položaj staršev priseljencev⁴ ali otrokovo znanje slovenščine. Področje vključevanja otrok priseljencev v slovenski vzgojno-izobraževalni sistem ureja več zakonov in pravilnikov; posebej izpostavlja Pravidnik o preverjanju in ocenjevanju znanja ter napredovanju učencev v osnovni šoli (2013), Pravidnik o normativih in standardih za izvajanje programa osnovne šole (2019, 2021) ter Pravidnik o tečaju slovenščine za dijake v srednjih šolah (2018, 2020).⁵

Pozitiven premik predstavlja uvedba dveletnega prilagojenega preverjanja in ocenjevanja znanja, izhajajoč iz individualnega programa, v osnovni šoli, in sicer v Pravidniku o preverjanju in ocenjevanju znanja ter napredovanju učencev v osnovni šoli (2013, 15. člen). Konkretizacijo izvajanja tečaja slovenščine omogoča Pravidnik o normativih in standardih za izvajanje programa osnovne šole (2019, 2021, člen 43.c). Ta uvaja dodatne ure slovenščine za učence tujce, ki se v osnovno šolo vključijo v prvem ocenjevalnem obdobju, šola pa organizira dodatne ure slovenščine v skladu z naslednjimi merili: do 4 učencev 120 ur, od 5 do 8 učencev 160 ur, od 9 do 17 učencev 180 ur. Pravidnik omogoča sistematizacijo delovnega mesta za učiteljico,

da je pogoj za študij v Sloveniji dobrih 4.800 evrov na bančnem računu pred začetkom letnika« (Bezljaj, 2021).

4 Ne glede na to, ali gre za osebe z začasno zaščito, begunke ali begunce, prosilke ali prosilce za azil, prebivalke ali prebivalce z dovoljenjem za začasno ali stalno bivanje, državljanke ali državljanke drugih držav Evropske unije, slovenske izseljenke ali izseljenke po vrnitvi v Slovenijo.

5 Pred temi spremembami je bilo stanje še bolj neurejeno (Vižintin, 2017: 203–231).

učitelja, ki poučuje te ure, in sicer za 9–17 učencev omogoča 0,25 (četrtinski) delež delovnega mesta, za 18–26 učencev 0,50 (polovični), za 27–35 učencev 0,75 (tričetrtinski) delovnega mesta in za 36–44 učencev celotno zaposlitev. V srednji šoli je določen intenzivni tečaj slovenščine v strnjeni obliki v prvem polletju šolskega leta, možnost prilaganja in postopnega ocenjevanja pa omogoča osebni izobraževalni načrt. Pravilnik določa tudi opravljanje preizkusa znanja slovenščine na ravni A2. Posodobljen Pravilnik o tečaju slovenščine za dijake v srednjih šolah (2018, 2020, 3. člen) omogoča izvedbo tečaja na vsaki šoli: za do 3 dijake 90 ur, za 4–6 dijakov 120 ur ter za 7–12 dijakov 160 ur.

Kljub vedno ustrežnejšim zakonskim podlagam je njihovo uresničevanje na posameznih vzgojno-izobraževalnih ustanovah različno in nedosledno (Vižintin, 2019; Dežan & Sedmak, 2020; Milharčič Hladnik & Kožar Rosulnik, 2021). Prav gotovo pa bo treba v zakonih in pravilnikih, zlasti pa v praksi, preseči osredotočenje zgolj na tečaje slovenščine in poskrbeti tudi za uresničitev drugih kriterijev (Vižintin, 2017), ki zagotavljajo uspešno vključevanje.

IZOBRAŽEVANJE KADRA V VRTCIH, OSNOVNIH IN SREDNJIH ŠOLAH

Zelo pomemben segment v procesu vključevanja otrok priseljencev je izobraževanje ne le pedagoškega kadra, ampak tudi drugih strokovnih in vodstvenih delavk, delavcev v vrtcih, osnovnih in srednjih šolah, s katerimi imajo otroci priseljenci stik. Vsi s svojim delom, ravnanjem, neposredno ali posredno izraženimi stališči in odnosom bistveno vplivajo nanje in na sam proces vključevanja. Le ustrezno izobraževanje lahko zagotovi oblikovanje vključujočih praks v vzgojno-izobraževalnih organizacijah, katerih odlike so medsebojno sodelovanje, spoštljiva komunikacija, konstruktivno reševanje konfliktov in medkulturni dialog v šoli in širše v družbi. Temu je bil v celoti namenjen projekt »Le z drugimi smo« (2016–2021),⁶ v okviru katerega je bilo izvedenih 326 seminarjev po vzgojno-izobraževalnih organizacijah na več kot sto lokacijah po celotni Sloveniji in tudi v zamejstvu, 16-urnih usposabljanj pa se je udeležilo 10.208 pedagoških delavk in delavcev.

V nadaljevanju bodo predstavljeni nekateri ključni poudarki s predavanj »Slovenščina kot drugi jezik: gradiva, načini poučevanja in dobre prakse« ter »Medkulturna vzgoja in izobraževanje: medkulturni model vključevanja«, ki smo jih predavateljice in predavatelji izvajali v okviru seminarja »Živeti raznolikost: vključevanje priseljencev, slovenščina in medkulturni dialog«. Pri prvem predavanju je bila velika pozornost namenjena procesu usvajanja jezika, katere zahtevnosti se – kot se je pokazalo – seminarske udeleženske, udeleženci večinoma ne zavedajo, prav tako se ne zavedajo položaja otrok priseljencev, v katerem se znajdejo ti otroci ob vstopu v

6 <https://lezdrugimismo.si/sl>

izobraževanje v slovenščini. Precej razširjena je predstava o enostavnosti in neproblematičnosti usvajanja jezika s strani otrok v smislu »otroci so kot spužve, ki kar srkajo znanje«. Zavedati pa se moramo, da proces učenja jezika novega okolja traja nekaj let – od tri do pet let za obvladanje jezika na stopnji konverzacije ter od štiri do sedem let za obvladanje jezika na akademski stopnji (Cummins, 2006: 35).⁷ Ob tem se mnogi ne zavedajo, da je že samo novo okolje za otroke stresno, kaj šele prisostvovanje pri pouku v nerazumljivem jeziku, ki ima lahko tudi druge potencialne spremstvene oteževalne vidike (predsodki, nesprejemanje ipd.).

Za uspešen uvod v predavanje se je izkazala simulacija kratkega tečaja poljskega jezika,⁸ ki je vključevala učenje osnovnih komunikacijskih vzorcev, učenje števil in branje enostavnega besedila o Poljski v poljščini. Cilj tečaja je bil postaviti udeležene v podoben položaj, v katerem se v šolskem okolju znajdejo otroci priseljenci ob vključitvi v vrtec oz. osnovno ali srednjo šolo. Po koncu tečaja je sledila refleksija in večina udeleženi je izrazila, da je bil tečaj zelo zahteven, celo stresen, saj mestoma niso mogli slediti, dodaten pritisk pa je predstavljalo dejstvo, da se niso želeli osramotiti pred svojimi kolegicami in kolegi. V kolektivih se je pogosto zgodilo, da je kdo od udeleženi popolnoma zavračal sodelovanje pri tečaju. To je eden od pokazateljev t. i. jezikovne anksioznosti, ki se pojavi pri učenju tujega jezika (Horwitz et al., 1986; Gkonou et al., 2017). Ta se pogosto odrazi na otrocih priseljenci na način, da se zatečejo k dolgotrajnejšemu molku, kar pri učiteljicah, učiteljih pogosto naleti na napačno razumevanje v smislu manka želje po učenju jezika.

Večina udeleženi, udeleženci predavanja je ob koncu izrazila, da jim je ta izkušnja pomagala živeti se v situacijo svojih učen in učencev. Izkazalo se je tudi, da so najbolj učinkovite ravno vsebine, pri katerih so udeleženi aktivno vpleteni v aktivnosti. V času diskusije je presenetilo večkrat izraženo, očitno zelo zasidrano mnenje, da bi morali straši priseljenci opustiti svoj materni jezik in s svojim otrokom govoriti v slovenščini, kar nekaj udeleženi pa se je obregnilo tudi ob dejstvo, da se otroci priseljenci v šolskem okolju med sabo pogovarjajo v svojem maternem jeziku.⁹

Najbolj naravna komunikacija z bližnjimi, s katerimi imamo isti materni jezik, je komunikacija v tem skupnem jeziku. V prihodnje bi veljalo več pozornosti posvečati ozaveščanju o pomenu vzdrževanja in nadgrajevanja znanja maternega jezika (Vižintin, 2017: 285–293) in njegovi občasni uporabi v učnem procesu (Schneider, 2016: 9). Znanje dodatnega jezika, v tem primeru maternega, je prednost, in ne

7 Dolžina procesa usvajanja jezika je odvisna od mnogih dejavnikov: od predznanja v maternem jeziku, jezikovne bližine prvega in drugega jezika, sposobnosti posameznika za učenje jezikov, osebne motivacije, podpore in možnosti za (brezplačno) učenje jezika okolja v sprejemni družbi itd. (Vižintin, 2019: 504).

8 Ali albanskega, odvisno od predavateljice, predavatelja.

9 Po drugi strani so se udeleženi, udeleženci negativno odzvali na primere, ko je bila slovenskim družinam v tujini predlagana zamenjava maternega jezika kot jezika komunikacije z jezikom okolja. Obsojali so tudi napade italijanskih predstavnikov občinskega sveta v Gorici, ki so bojkotirali nastope svetnic, svetnikov, ki so v skladu z zagotovljeno pravico na sejah nastopili v slovenščini (Šavko, 2019).

pomanjkljivost (Rot Vrhovec, 2016: 46–55). Izpopolnjevanje znanja maternega jezika prispeva k razvoju intelektualnega razvoja, osebne in kulturne identitete in povezanosti z izvorno kulturo, predstavlja dober temelj za lažje usvajanje novih jezikov in v nadaljevanju zagotavlja boljše zaposlitvene možnosti (Nishanthi, 2020).

Pomemben poudarek predavanja je bilo tudi ozaveščanje, da so v primeru otrok priseljencev vse pedagoške delavke in delavci tudi učiteljice oz. učitelji slovenskega jezika, ne glede na to, kateri predmet poučujejo oz. katero delo opravljajo v vrtcu ali na šoli, ter da so tudi vsi soodgovorni za njihovo vključevanje.

GRADIVO ZA UČENJE IN POUČEVANJE SLOVENŠČINE KOT DRUGEGA IN TUJEGA JEZIKA

Gradiva za poučevanje slovenščine kot drugega in tujega jezika, namenjena otrokom oz. mlajšim, so se v slovenskem prostoru pojavila po letu 2009. Pred tem je bil na Centru za slovenščino kot drugi in tuji jezik za otroke namenjen le kotichek v okviru prvega spletnega tečaja »Slovenščina na daljavo«, ¹⁰ ki je nastajal v obdobju 2004–2007.¹¹ Drugo gradivo je bilo namenjeno odraslim; za mlajše je bilo v uporabi gradivo, namenjeno otrokom slovenskih izseljenk in izseljencev, prilagojeno gradivo za odrasle, ter gradivo, ki so ga učiteljice in učitelji ustvarjali sami.

Danes je za slovenščino na voljo več gradiv, namenjenih otrokom za različno starostno stopnjo:¹² slikovno gradivo *Slika jezika* (Knez et al., 2010); učbenik za začetno poučevanje slovenščine za otroke od 7 do 10 let *Poigravimo se slovensko* (Vučajnk et al., 2009); učno gradivo *Na poti k učenju slovenščine* (Jelen Madruša & Klančnik Kišasondi, 2013), najbolj primerno za drugo triletje osnovne šole; učbenik Čas za slovenščino 1 (Knez et al., 2015a)¹³ in 2, tudi delovna zvezka, za tretje triletje osnovne šole in srednjo šolo; ter učbenik *Križ kraž* (Knez et al., 2015b), namenjen še neopismenjenim. Na voljo je tudi zbirka interaktivnih učnih enot *Rastoča slovenščina* (Melinc Mlekuž & Kern, 2021).

Ostaja veliko manevrskega prostora za razvoj gradiv tudi v prihodnje, predvsem v smislu priprave gradiv, ki bi bilo narejeno za govorce oz. govorce določenih jezikov. Če vemo, da največ otrok priseljencev prihaja iz Bosne in Hercegovine, Kosova, Severne Makedonije, Hrvaške in Srbije, bi pričakovali, da bi bilo na voljo gradivo v njihovih maternih jezikih.

10 Tečaj, ki je bil na voljo na spletni strani www.e-slovenscina.si, ni več dostopen.

11 Projekt je potekal do leta 2006, vendar je tudi v letu 2007 potekala nadgradnja vsebin.

12 Na potrebo po tovrstnih gradivih kažejo številni ponatisi: npr. učbenika *Poigravimo se slovensko* v letih 2011, 2014, 2017, 2021, in učbenika *Čas za slovenščino 1* v letih 2017, 2018, 2019 in 2020.

13 V marsikaterih učbenikih in delovnih zvezkih je še vedno opazen manko vključevanja različnih skupnosti tudi na ravni spremstvenega slikovnega prikaza oz. ilustracij. Problem je še veliko bolj izrazit v učbenikih za odrasle.

Na Centru za slovenščino kot drugi in tuji jezik Univerze v Ljubljani so razvili učne načrte za poučevanje slovenščine kot drugega in tujega jezika za srednjo (2010) in osnovno šolo (2020).¹⁴ Obstaja tudi drugo gradivo, ki ni namenjeno samo tej ciljni publiki, vendar je s prilagoditvami oz. izbranimi vsebinami uporabno tudi zanjo: spletni tečaj slovenščine »Slonline« (Alič et al., 2017); serija učbenikov *Slovenščina od A do Ž* z izdajami v italijanščini (Lečič, 2013), angleščini, srbsčini, nemščini; serija učbenikov in delovnih zvezkov *Pot do slovenščine* s prevodi v ruščino (Batista & Buršič, 2017), italijanščino in angleščino; *Večjezični priročnik za lažje sporazumevanje v zdravstvu* s prevodi v angleščino, francoščino (Hirci et al., 2017), ruščino, kitajščino, arabščino, farsi in albanščino; dvojezična knjižica *Žepna slovanščina* z izdajami v 24 jezikih (Alič et al., 2008) ter drugi učbeniki in delovni zvezki Centra za slovenščino kot drugi in tuji jezik (Center za slovenščino kot drugi in tuji jezik, 2022).

Pri učenju slovenščine ter sočasno spoštovanju in priznavanju maternih jezikov otrok priseljencev so lahko v podporo večjezične slikavnice (Mav Horvat, 2020; Hanuš, 2020; gl. tudi Jamnik, 2016) in otroški slikovni slovarji (npr. Majcenovič Kline, 2016; do 2021 v 14 jezikih).

VEČPERSPEKTIVNI UČNI NAČRTI IN MOŽNOSTI ZA MEDIKULTURNI DIALOG KOT DEL VZGOJNOIZOBRAŽEVALNEGA PROCESA

Evrocentričnost in osredotočenost zgolj na nacionalno zgodovino oziroma kulturo v učnih načrtih in gradivih nista značilni samo za Slovenijo (Skubic Ermenc, 2007; Šabec, 2016); podobno je npr. v italijanskih (Portera, 2004), avstrijskih (Luciak & Khan Svik, 2008), grških (Palaiologou et al., 2012) in finskih učnih gradivih (Hahl et al., 2015). Ugotovitve v različnih državah kličejo po prenovi in posodobitvi: priseljenke in priseljenci, pripadnice in pripadniki manjšin so omenjeni le v redkih primerih, večinoma označeni kot »tujci«, »drugi«, ali so predstavljeni s predsodki; fotografije in ilustracije v šolskih knjigah pogosto prikazujejo pripadnike tujih kultur kot revne ali v socialni stiski, etnična in verska raznolikost sta pogosto predstavljeni v problemskem kontekstu; večperspektivnost in razvoj medkulturnega dialoga v učnih gradivih ne igrata pomembne vloge.

Vedno več raziskovalk, raziskovalcev izraža potrebo po spremembah v učnih načrtih in učnem gradivu, v katerih bi bila večperspektivnost ter razvoj medkulturne vzgoje in izobraževanja podprta s konkretnimi učnimi cilji in vsebinami. Samo načelna podpora medkulturnosti ni dovolj. Raziskovalke, raziskovalci in učiteljice, učitelji naj zahtevajo od pristojnih organov, da iz učnih načrtov, gradiv izločijo besedila in slikovno gradivo, v katerih so predsodki, stereotipi in primeri

14 Težave pri izdajanju učnih načrtov za slovenščino kot drugega/tujega jezika (od razvoja do izida je minilo več kot 10 let) pojasnjujejo na svoji spletni strani. Problematični sta ujetost in nemoč projektnih rešitev ter zahtevnost medorganizacijskega usklajevanja, vključno z zakonodajo.

diskriminacije prikazani tako, da jih ne presegajo – še več, s svojim sporočilom utrjujejo upravičenost privilegirane skupnosti do neenakopravnega položaja v družbi. Treba bi bilo dodati besedila, ki izražajo perspektivo in stališča različnih priseljskih in manjšinskih skupnosti – kajti v večini zdajšnjih učnih gradiv prevladujejo stališča večinske populacije.

Preučiti je treba, kako so v učnih načrtih in gradivih prikazane manjšine, priseljske skupnosti, prvotno prebivalstvo, pa tudi prevladujoče in večinske skupnosti – ali ta gradiva priznavajo prispevek vseh skupnosti k nacionalni zgodovini ali svetovni kulturi (Kymlicka, 2002: 355; Gundara, 2012). Kot izpostavljata Sonia Nieto in Patty Bode (Nieto & Bode, 2008: 50–54), se veliko ljudi ob izpostavljanju tem, ki govorijo o razlikah med demokratičnimi ideali in dejansko neenakopravnostjo, počuti nelagodno, vključno z učitelji. Avtorici dodajata, da je treba spodbujati učenke, učenke h kritičnemu razmisleku in k dejavnostim za družbeno pravičnost. Učbeniki, menijo raziskovalke in raziskovalci grških učnih gradiv, »bi morali biti zasnovani in napisani tako, da vključujejo medkulturno in kritično perspektivo. Vsem učencem bi moralo biti omogočeno, da se pri različnih predmetih, ki jih poučujejo v šolah, odražajo njihova lastna kulturna okolja in življenjski slogi, tako da se lahko poistovetijo s predstavljenimi okoliščinami in liki. Učbeniki že stoletja veljajo za ključni element kakovostnega izobraževanja. V idealnem primeru so dopolnilo dobremu učitelju in vedoželjnemu učencu« (Palaiologou et al., 2012: 363).

Potrebujemo večperspektivne učne načrte in večperspektivno učno gradivo, ki bo odražalo dejansko družbeno raznolikost in spodbujalo medkulturni dialog. Primanjkljaje zaznavajo tudi pedagoške delavke, delavci: »Nisem opazila, da bi imeli vključeno medkulturno vzgojo. Učitelj mora posebej iskati taka gradiva, posebej mora pripravljati tudi gradiva glede na učence, ki jih ima v oddelku [...], pri gospodinjstvu kakšno besedilo o prehrani, kakšno pesem pri književnosti. Pri vzgojnih predmetih – pri glasbi, likovni umetnosti – bi se dalo predstaviti slikarja, glasbenika« (Vižintin, 2014: 134, učiteljica).

V učnih načrtih (največkrat) spregledani otroci priseljenci dobijo pri učiteljicah, učiteljih z razvito medkulturno zmožnostjo med poukom možnost, da predstavijo svojo izvorno kulturo, jezik, državo ali ljudi, ki so se preselili iz njihove izvorne države. Z dejavnostmi, ki jih spodbujajo pedagoške delavke, delavci z razvito medkulturno zmožnostjo, postanejo priseljene učenke in učenci vidni del šolske skupnosti, so povedali sodelujoči v okviru projekta »Eduka – Vzgajati k različnosti« (2011–2014):¹⁵ »Učenci lahko po svoji želji predstavijo svojo kulturo v angleščini; predstavijo nogometna metaša, smučarje, hrano svoje države. Jaz jih ne omejujem. Na steni visijo plakati, ki to pripovedujejo. Vedno se navezujemo na temo, ki jo jemljemo pri pouku, in jo povežemo z njihovim življenjem. Vidi se, da so jim pomembni prazniki, jezik, hrana« (Vižintin, 2014: 131, učiteljica).

15 <http://www.eduka-itaslo.eu>

Medkulturno zmožnost razvijajo posamezne učiteljice, učitelji pri različnih učnih predmetih, kar so potrdili tudi otroci priseljenci: »Predstavljala sem svojo državo, jezik. In to vedno [...], pri vsaki govorni vaji. Pri državljanski vzgoji, tudi kdaj kaj povemo pri zgodovini.« »Pri državljanski vzgoji se o tem veliko učimo. Človekove pravice, da smo si vsi enaki ne glede na barvo kože, pač, kakšni smo po postavi. Tudi pri geografiji kaj rečemo. Tudi pri zadnji uri, pri zgodovini« (Vižintin, 2014: 132–133, učenca).

Pri pouku književnosti učenke in učenci poleg svetovne običajno spoznavajo tudi nacionalno književnost, in sicer književnost večinskega prebivalstva. Poleg teh besedil bi bilo treba v učne načrte in berila uvrstiti besedila zamejk in zamejcev, izseljenk in izseljencev, priseljenk in priseljencev, pripadnic in pripadnikov manjšin ter besedila, ki tematizirajo vključevanje oziroma izključevanje. To bi pomenilo večjo možnost za obravnavo tovrstnih besedil med učnimi urami, kar bi prispevalo k temu, da bi vsi postali vidni, priznani del družbe. Obravnava besedil, ki tematizirajo vključevanje oz. izključevanje, bi omogočila strokovno in kritično razpravo o predsodkih in primerih diskriminacije (Žitnik Serafin, 2014; Vižintin, 2016). Tudi v druge učne načrte (za družbo, zgodovino, geografijo, jezike) bi bilo treba vnesti informacije o naših izseljenkah, izseljencih, saj so ti pogosto spregledani, prav tako kot priseljenke, priseljenci in manjšine. Vsi izgubimo, če je naše izobraževanje pomanjkljivo, obremenjeno s predsodki ali pristransko (Nieto & Bode, 2008).

Učno gradivo, ki odseva družbeno raznolikost, je lahko pomembno izhodišče za pogovor o dejanski razredni in družbeni raznolikosti: učiteljica nemščine je povedala, da nemški učbeniki v lekcijah prikazujejo turške otroke, ob čemer odpira pogovore o priseljenih otrocih na njihovi šoli:

Mi imamo takšne učbenike, ki nam dopuščajo skoke izven vsakdanje jezikovne problematike. Imamo veliko učencev, ki niso Nemci, so Turki. Zakaj je ta fantek, ki živi v nemškem okolju, Turek? Potem govorimo o tem. Imam veliko dijakov, ki imajo sorodnike na začasnem delu v Avstriji ali v Nemčiji. Oni mi to povedo. Učbenik nam včasih da povod, da preidemo tudi na te pogovore. Sicer pa se med sabo razumejo. Naši dijaki niso preveč poučeni o tem, kar se tiče medkulturnosti. Jo izvajajo, mogoče pa tega ne vedo. Zakaj imamo kar naenkrat toliko sošolcev, ki so drugačni? O tem vidiku bi morali več razpravljati, imeti več predavanj. Pri državljanski vzgoji bodo kaj več izvedeli. O tem bi morali razpravljati tudi pri zgodovini, zemljepisu, pa v časopisih, na televiziji itd. Med uro se o tem pomenijo kaj več. Ko imamo božičnico in zaključno prireditev konec leta, se samodejno vošči v vseh jezikih [...] Oni so tukaj v novem okolju, vendar niso izgubili stika s svojo kulturo (Vižintin, 2014: 135–136, učiteljica).

Učiteljicam, učiteljem je na voljo vedno več kakovostnih priročnikov in didaktičnih gradiv, s pomočjo katerih lahko med poukom poučujejo o migracijah in o ljudeh v njih ter razvijajo medkulturno zmožnost pri vseh svojih učenkah, učencih (Zudič

Antonič & Zorman, 2014; Toplak, 2019; Mlekuž, 2021). Pomembno je, da razvoj medkulturne zmožnosti in medkulturnega dialoga ni specifičen predmet ali poseben projekt, ampak da je medkulturna perspektiva prisotna pri vseh učnih predmetih, v vseh načrtovanih dejavnostih, da postane medkulturnost osnovno pedagoško-didaktično načelo. Pri odkrivanju stereotipov, predsodkov in v izogib nepotrebnim napakam pri spremembah učnih načrtov (in posledično učbenikov in delovnih zvezkov) je treba izpostaviti še en ključni dejavnik: sodelovanje s predstavnicami, predstavniki iz priseljenkih oz. manjšinskih skupnosti.

V SODELOVANJU Z LJUDMI Z LASTNO IZKUŠNJO PRESELJEVANJA IN S PREDSTAVNICAMI, PREDSTAVNIKI MANJŠIN

Tako študentkam in študentom ter bodočim učiteljicam in učiteljem kot že zaposlenim v vzgoji in izobraževanju je treba omogočiti več priložnosti in izkušenj za delo v jezikovno, etnično in versko raznolikih razredih, a v načrtovanih in vodenih razmerah ter pospremljeno s teoretsko in normativno podkrepljeno refleksijo. Zavedajoč se stališč, stereotipov in predsodkov – ki jih želimo preseirati, ne pa krepiti – je treba paziti, da ne bi silili pripadnikov različnih manjšinskih skupnosti v identifikacijo samo s svojo (prvotno) etnično pripadnostjo (Peček & Skubic Ermenc, 2016: 17–18). Vprašanja o sestavljeni, mešani in spreminjajoči se identiteti in kulturi ljudi, s katerimi sobivamo, so kompleksna in zahtevna. Tako identiteto kot kulturo je treba razumeti kot spreminjajočo se in heterogeno, tudi pri pripadnicah, pripadnikih večinske populacije. Tudi priseljenke in priseljenci vplivajo na razvoj znanosti, kulture, gospodarstva v sprejemni državi, k temu prispevajo s svojim znanjem in delovanjem, pa naj gre za slovenske izseljenke, izseljence v tujini ali za priseljenke, priseljence v Slovenijo (prim. Mlekuž, 2017; Kajzer et al., 2019; Grdina & Zajc, 2022).

Upoštevač naštetu se lažje izognemo pastem poenostavljanja ali celo krepitvi predsodkov in dodatni diskriminaciji pri implementaciji medkulturne vzgoje in izobraževanja (Portera, 2011: 24–27) in pri zagotavljanju kakovosti pedagoškega procesa (Rutar, 2018), ko v želji po preseiganju evrocentrizma dajemo glas ljudem, o katerih govorimo. To pomeni, da o priseljevanju in izseljevanju ne govorijo samo ljudje, ki preučujejo migracije ali poučujejo v vzgoji in izobraževanju, ampak da o svojih izkušnjah preseljevanja in vključevanja spregovorijo tudi selivke in selivci (t. i. migrantke in migranti) sami, torej ljudje z lastno izkušnjo preseljevanja in vključevanja (Vižintin, 2017: 193–194), da pripadnice in pripadniki manjšin sami predstavijo (ne vedno enakopravna) razmerja moči med večino in manjšinami. S tem ciljem so v projektu »Le z drugimi smo« kot predavateljice in predavatelji sodelovali tako priseljeni, priseljene kot pripadnice, pripadniki manjšin: Arkan Al Nawas, Arbnore Avdyčaj, Bojana Cvijić Zagorc, Mira Delavec Touhami, Lidija Dimkovska, Vael Hanuna, Astrite Humski, Sladjana Jović Mičković, Ibrahim Nouhoum, Andrea Bartolle, Aleksandro Burra, Samira Dalati, Olivera Mirković, Jutka Rudaš in Judit Zagorec Csuka.

Predstavljale in predstavljali so svojo izkušnjo preseljevanja in vključevanja ter spregovorili o kulturnih šokih in družbenih razlikah, o večletnem učenju jezika okolja, o urejanju dokumentacije za začasno, stalno bivanje in za državljanstvo, o združevanju družine, o (ne)priznavanju izobrazbe, pridobljene v izvorni državi, in (nadaljnem) izobraževanju v Sloveniji, o ponavljajočih se potovanjih med izvorno in sprejemno državo, o ohranjanju stikov z ljudmi, ki jih imajo radi v obeh (ali več) domovinah, o ohranjanju maternega jezika in kulturnih navad, o diskriminaciji, s katero so se soočali, o svoji sestavljeni identiteti, o praznovanju različnih verskih praznikov v versko mešanih družinah, o svojem profesionalnem delovanju v Sloveniji in o njihovem prispevku k razvoju družbe v Sloveniji. Namenoma so bili izbrani ljudje iz različnih izvornih držav (Bosna in Hercegovina, Irak, Kosovo, Makedonija, Mali, Sirija, Srbija idr.), z različno izobrazbo in z različnimi poklici, ki jih opravljajo v Sloveniji (npr. učiteljica, pisateljica, prevajalka, vzgojiteljica, medkulturna mediatorica, raziskovalka, slikar, krajinski arhitekt, gozdar), pri čemer je treba poudariti, da so ljudje tekom svojega življenja opravljali različne službe in poklice – nekateri so se selili v več držav (npr. Kosovo–Finska–Slovenija ali Makedonija–Romunija–Slovenija) ali še vedno delajo v tujini (učiteljica dopolnilnega pouka slovenskega jezika in kulture v Nemčiji), ter predstavnice in predstavniki italijanske, madžarske in romske manjšine, rojene in rojeni v Sloveniji, prav tako z različno izobrazbo in z različnimi poklici. Cilj vključevanja osebnih življenjskih zgodb ni bil le ozaveščanje in preseganje predsodkov ter predstavljanje (jezikovne, verske, etnične, kulturne) raznolikosti v Sloveniji, ampak tudi spodbuda zaposlenim v vzgojno-izobraževalnih organizacijah, da v svojem lokalnem okolju sami poiščejo ljudi z osebno izkušnjo preseljevanja ali pripadnice oz. pripadnike manjšin ter jih povabijo v svoje razrede, med svoje učence, učence.

ZAKLJUČEK

Na področju vključevanja priseljencev se v Sloveniji v 21. stoletju dogajajo pomembne sistemske spremembe. Prenovljena osnovno- in srednješolska zakonodaja predvideva intenzivni začetni tečaj slovenščine v šoli ter individualno spremljanje napredka vključevanja, kar presega pretekle projektne rešitve. Na voljo je vedno več didaktičnega gradiva za različno starostno stopnjo otrok, tako za poučevanje slovenščine kot drugega jezika kot tudi za razvoj medkulturne zmožnosti. Izzivi ostajajo, saj se novosti uvajajo v prakso postopoma in neenakomerno, novi Zakon o tujcih (2021) pa otežuje združevanje družine in študij tujim študentkam, študentom.

V prispevku so predstavljene izbrane izkušnje v okviru projekta »Le z drugimi smo«, konkretno ob simulaciji kratkega tečaja poljskega ali albanskega jezika. Cilj tečaja je bil postaviti udeležence v podoben položaj, v katerem se v šolskem okolju znajdejo otroci priseljenci ob vključitvi v vrtec oz. osnovno ali srednjo šolo. Večina je povedala, da je bil tečaj zahteven, dodaten pritisk je predstavljalo dejstvo, da se

niso želeli osramotiti pred svojimi kolegicami, kolegi. Tudi otroci priseljenci se lahko zatečejo k dolgotrajnejšemu molku, kar pri učiteljicah, učiteljih pogosto naleti na napačno razumevanje v smislu manka želje po učenju jezika.

Še več izzivov nas čaka pri razvoju medkulturne zmožnosti in izvajanju medkulturnega dialoga v okviru pouka. Kot ugotavljajo preučevalke, preučevalci učnih načrtov in gradiv, so ti večinoma nacionalni in predstavljajo le perspektivo večinske skupnosti, medtem ko so pripadnice in pripadniki manjšin oziroma priseljenke in priseljenci v njih večinoma nevidni, prikazani problemsko ali pristransko (Portera, 2004; Skubic Ermenc, 2007; Šabec, 2016; Luciak & Khan Svik, 2008; Palaiologou et al., 2012; Hahl et al., 2015). Na drugi strani so pedagoške delavke in delavci v projektih »Eduka – Vzgajati k različnosti« (2011–2014) in »Le z drugimi smo« (2016–2021) povedali, da jih vsebinska prisotnost družbene raznolikosti v učnih gradivih spodbuja, da z učenkami in učenci spregovorijo o dejanski raznolikosti v njihovih razredih. V obeh projektih so predavale tudi priseljenke in priseljenci, izseljenke in izseljenci, pripadnice in pripadniki manjšin, ob čemer smo bili pozorni, da jih nismo silili v identifikacijo samo s svojo (prvotno) etnično pripadnostjo (Peček & Skubic Ermenc, 2016), ampak so imeli možnost spregovoriti o izzivih vključevanja, o svoji sestavljeni identiteti in o aktivni vlogi v raznoliki družbi, h kateri prispevajo s svojim znanjem in dejavnostmi.

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SUMMARY

INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN IN SLOVENIA: INTENSIVE SLOVENIAN LANGUAGE COURSES FOR BEGINNERS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

Marijanca Ajša VIŽINTIN, Boris KERN

In the twenty-first century, Slovenia is undergoing significant systemic changes in the field of migrant integration. The revised legislation for primary and secondary schools provides an intensive Slovenian language course for beginners and monitoring of an individual's integration progress. Both measures significantly go beyond previous project solutions. More and more didactic materials for children of different ages are available. Unfortunately, the new Foreigners Act (2021) makes it more difficult for international students to study at Slovenian universities and for migrant families to reunite. The article presents selected experiences within the project "Only (with) others are we" / "Le z drugimi smo" (2016–2021), simulating a short Polish language course for teachers and other staff members in kindergartens and primary and secondary schools. The course aimed to put the participants in a similar situation as migrant children entering kindergarten, primary or secondary school. In the reflection session after the course, most participants reported that it was very challenging, even stressful. In the collectives, some participants even refused to participate in the course. This refusal is one of the indicators of the so-called language anxiety that can occur when learning a foreign language. Such anxiety often manifests in the fact that migrant children remain silent for a long time, which is often misunderstood by teachers as a lack of desire to learn the language.

There are more challenges in developing intercultural competence and implementing intercultural dialogue in the classroom. Curricula and teaching materials should reflect social diversity yet often portray migrants and members of minority groups negatively or do not portray them at all. As the researchers noted, curricula and teaching materials are primarily nationally oriented and present only the perspective of the society's majority; if they even present minorities, they portray them as problematic or from a biased perspective. On the other hand, teachers report that social diversity in the teaching materials encourages them to talk to students about the actual social diversity in their classes. The project "Only (with) others are we" also included lectures by immigrants, emigrants, and members of minorities. Care was taken not to force them to identify only with their (original) ethnicity but to encourage them to talk about the challenges of integration, their hyphenated identity, and their active role in a diverse society to which they contribute with their knowledge and activities.

VKLJUČEVANJE V VZGOJNO-IZOBRAŽEVALNI SISTEM IZ PERSPEKTIVE STARŠEV IN OTROK BEGUNCEV

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IZVLEČEK

Vključevanje v vzgojno-izobraževalni sistem iz perspektive staršev in otrok beguncev

Članek temelji na raziskavi, ki so jo avtorji opravili leta 2021. V središče postavlja izkušnje otrok in staršev beguncev z vključevanjem v slovenski vzgojno-izobraževalni sistem. Sogovorniki iz dvanajstih družin so spregovorili o pozitivnih in negativnih vidikih vključevanja v vzgojno-izobraževalni sistem. Med njimi so prevladovale težave z učenjem jezika, učne težave, diskriminacija. Proces vključevanja, ki v zakonih in strategijah deluje kot enoznačen »postopek« prilagajanja otrok na nove jezikovne, kulturne, izobraževalne in institucionalne razmere, v raziskavi predstavljamo iz perspektive »subjektov vključevanja«. Ti proces doživljajo kot dolgotrajen, niansiran in težaven.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: vzgoja in izobraževanje, otroci priseljenci, otroci begunci, vključevanje, osnovna šola, srednja šola, vrtec

ABSTRACT

Educational Integration from the Perspective of Refugee Parents and Children

This article is based on a research project executed by the authors in 2021. It revolves around the experiences of refugee children and parents within the Slovenian educational system. Data was acquired from twelve families. Interviewees spoke about the positive and negative aspects of educational integration. Those mainly consisted of language difficulties, learning difficulties, and discrimination. The presented research aims to shift the perspective from the "easy integration" read about in laws and strategies to the more complex perspective held by the "subjects" of integration. They mostly perceive it as a long-lasting, nuanced, and troublesome process.

KEYWORDS: education, migrant children, refugee children, integration, primary school, secondary school, kindergarten

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UVOD

Zanimanje za raziskovalni projekt se je med avtorji vzbudilo postopoma, ko smo se med projektnim delom srečevali z zgodbami staršev in otrok, ki obiskujejo slovenske vrtce ter osnovne in srednje šole. Njihove pripovedi so, v nasprotju z mrtvo in postano črko zakonskih in podzakonskih aktov, orisale dolge, »zgoščene«, meandrične poti vključevanja otrok v vzgojno-izobraževalni sistem. V nasprotju s strokovnimi delavci v institucijah so lahko kot »subjekti vključevanja« proces spremljali v prvi osebi ter celovito, tudi v liminalnih območjih, ki so značilna za življenje med in po prisilni migraciji: v času prehodov med institucijami (med vrtci in šolami, med različnimi osnovnimi šolami), med razredi, med pravnimi statusi, med mesti in med nastanitvami. V snovanju raziskave smo se oprli na ta »poslušalska« spoznanja. Odločili smo se zbrati, analizirati in predstaviti perspektive staršev in otrok, da bi spodbudili boljše politike in prakse vključevanja. Osredotočili smo se na otroke in starše s statusom begunca, saj se – v primerjavi z ostalimi priseljenci – s srečujejo z dodatnimi izzivi, med katere uvrščamo:

1. *Negotov pravni status in položaj*, ki ga ureja znatno število zakonov, pravilnikov in smernic, na primer Zakon o tujcih (2021) (ZTuj-2), Zakon o mednarodni zaščiti (2016) (ZMZ-1), Zakon o začasni zaščiti razseljenih oseb (ZZZRO), Pravilnik o pravicah prosilcev za mednarodno zaščito ter Zakon o zaposlovanju, samozaposlovanju in delu tujcev (ZZSDT). Njihov status lahko abruptno niha med legalnostjo in ilegalnostjo (skupno z grožnjo deportacije), vidnostjo in nevidnostjo; sploh v obdobju po vloženi prošnji za mednarodno zaščito oz. po prejeti negativni odločbi.
2. Številne menjave šol. Številni otroci, ki so prosilci za azil oziroma begunci, zamenjajo dve ali tri šole, nekateri pa celo več. Te menjave so vtakane v sam formalni proces integracije, ki družine vodi od azilnega doma (OŠ 8 talcev Logatec ali OŠ Livada v Ljubljani) in integracijske hiše (OŠ Vide Pregarčeve v Ljubljani ali OŠ Martina Konšaka Maribor) do zasebne nastanitve, večinoma v bližini urbanih središč – npr. Vrhnika, Pirniče, Medvode, Domžale, Maribor Tezno.
3. Nizek socialno ekonomski status, ki izhaja iz prepovedi dela prvih 9 mesecev po vložitvi prošnje za mednarodno zaščito ter kasnejših začasnih, trimesečnih delovnih dovoljenj; iz omejenega dostopa do trga dela, saj so delovna mesta povezana z dokazovanjem potrdil o predhodnem poklicu oz. izobrazbi, do česar ljudje po prisilni migraciji pogosto nimajo dostopa; iz neznanja slovenskega jezika; iz omahljivosti bank pri odpiranju bančnih računov ipd.
4. Nastanitveno negotovost. Družine priseljencev nimajo pravice do prijave na razpise stanovanjskega sklada, po preteklih petih letih od pridobljenega statusa ne dobijo več sofinancirane najemnine; srečujejo se z trdovratnim rasizmom stanodajalcev.

Tako je tudi izkušnja vključevanja v vrtec in šolo obtežena z večplastno marginalizacijo, ranljivostjo in grožnjo (trajne) socialne izključenosti (Dežan & Sedmak, 2020). Raziskava je v tem smislu blizu sporočilu, ki ga je zapisala Milharčič Hladnik (2012: 17):

Potrebna bo še veliko raziskovalnega truda, da bomo zaslišali glasove priseljencev, potomcev priseljencev, prosilcev za azil in beguncev, pa tudi »Drugih«, ki živijo z nami že stoletja. Njihove reprezentativne besede, raznolike izkušnje in različne interpretacije moramo slišati zato, da bomo laže – in skupaj z njimi – ponovno premislili za današnje čas preozke koncepte naroda, nacionalne identitete, državljanstva, slovenske kulture, države.

POLOŽAJ OTROK PRISELJENCEV V ZAKONODAJI IN RAZISKAVAH

Opaziti je več zanimanja in raziskav o vključevanju otrok priseljencev v slovenski vzgojnoizobraževalni sistem – tako v okviru diplomskih, magistrskih in doktorskih nalog (Vižintin, 2013; Budinoska, 2013); strokovnih in znanstvenih člankov; kot tudi v smislu oblikovanja in predlaganja ukrepov za uspešnejše vključevanje (npr. Peček & Lesar, 2006; Peček & Lukšič Hacin, 2006; Milharčič Hladnik, 2006, 2011, 2012; Skubic Ermenc, 2007, 2010; Gaber & Marjanovič Umek, 2009; Vižintin, 2014, 2017, 2018) in popisovanja primerov dobrih praks na slovenskih osnovnih šolah (Baloh, 2010; Gombač et al., 2011). To je pozitiven premik glede predhodna desetletja (od leta 1970 naprej), ko je bila Slovenija že država priseljevanja, a so potrebe otrok priseljencev ostajale neopažene. Sprva, ker je šlo za t. i. notranje razseljevanje v Jugoslaviji, po letu 1991 pa je bil manko integracijske strategije povezan s skupnim jezikom priseljencev iz Bosne in Hercegovine, Srbije, Hrvaške, z izjemo Kosova (Milharčič Hladnik & Kožar Rosulnik, 2021). Prevladujoča shema priseljencev iz držav bivše Jugoslavije vztraja tudi v 21. stoletju – med šolskima letoma 2010/2011 in 2014/2015 je bilo v slovenske osnovne šole prvič vpisanih približno tisoč otrok priseljencev, večina (81 %) iz držav bivše Jugoslavije. V šolskem letu 2015/2016 se je tem pridružil tudi večji delež otrok beguncev oz. otrok prosilcev za azil (Banjac, 2015; Vižintin, 2018).

Povečanje števila priseljencev je vplivalo na postopno izoblikovanje integracijske politike, tudi na področju vzgoje in izobraževanja. Vlogo je odigrala politika na ravni EU, tako s financiranjem programov in projektov za vključujoče izobraževanje kot tudi z »omejevanjem« moči nacionalnih držav za omejevanje priseljevanja ali obsega pravic državljanov tretjih držav (Doomernik & Burquetas-Callejo, 2016). Med pomembnejše dokumente spadajo Strategija vključevanja otrok, učencev in dijakov migrantov v sistem vzgoje in izobraževanja v Republiki Sloveniji (Ministrstvo za šolstvo in šport, 2007); Smernice za vključevanje otrok priseljencev v vrtece in šole (Zavod Republike Slovenije za šolstvo, 2012) ter Pravilnik o normativih in standardih za izvajanje programa osnovne šole (2019). Vsi navedeni dokumenti temeljijo na Zakonu o osnovni šoli (1996, spremembe 2006, 2010); ki v splošnem smislu ureja

pravico otrok, ki so tuji državljani, »do obveznega osnovnošolskega izobraževanja pod enakim pogojem kot državljanom Republike Slovenije«.

Te splošne zaznambe (v zakonu, pa tudi strategijah, smernicah in pravilnikih) sicer prispevajo k bolj učinkovitemu vključevanju v osnovne in srednje šole in učenju slovenskega jezika, a številni izzivi ostajajo. Avtorji raziskav med najbolj pereče uvrščajo pomanjkanje celostne (sistemske) podpore pedagoškim delavcem, staršem in otrokom priseljencem (Milharčič Hladnik & Kožar Rosulnik, 2021), povečano potrebo po sodelovanju med izobraževalnimi ustanovami in družinami (ibid.), ter sodelovanju osnovnih in srednjih šol z organizacijami in združenji v lokalnem okolju (Vižintin, 2013, 2017). Nadalje navajajo sistemsko (latentno) diskriminacijo do priseljskih otrok in staršev (Vižintin, 2018) ter pomembnost stališč pedagoških delavcev (Lesar et al., 2020) in njihovih stereotipov, predsodkov in pristopov (Peček & Skubic Ermenc, 2016), ki lahko nihajo od nespoštljivosti in prezirljivosti do pripadnikov drugih narodov in etničnih skupin, kultur (Ule, 2005) do brezbriznosti, ignorance in pasivnosti. Šlibar (2006: 23) opozarja na t. i. »lažno toleranco«, ki mestoma deluje v smislu individualizacije težav otrok priseljencev kot posebnih potreb. Najpogosteje pa avtorji vztrajajoče težave pri vključevanju otrok priseljencev povezujejo s pomanjkanjem znanja slovenskih učiteljev na področju medkulturne vzgoje in izobraževanja (Vah Jevšnik, 2010; Čančar, 2016). To sovпада z »vrzeljo« v univerzitetnem izobraževanju učiteljev, katerega kurikulum ne obsega sistematičnega medkulturnega izobraževanja (Lunder Verlič, 2015) in redko vključuje poučevanje slovenščine kot tujega jezika (Milharčič Hladnik & Kožar Rosulnik, 2021), večina učiteljev pa navaja, da se s tovrstnimi vsebinami v času izobraževanja sploh ni srečala (Čančar & Drlić, 2015).

Splošnemu neznanju o medkulturnosti kot vsebinskem in pedagoško-didaktičnem načelu (Skubic Ermenc, 2007, 2010) se pridružujejo še posamezna področja »potencirane odklonilnosti«, na primer do vključevanja romskih otrok (Bešter & Medvešek, 2016) ali otrok beguncev. Vižintin (2018: 43) navaja, da so učitelji zaradi neugodne politične klime in širjenja preplaha o naraščajočem številu beguncev pogosto pod stresom, kako »vključiti otroke begunce v obstoječi šolski sistem«. To je povezano tudi s pomanjkanjem (podrobnih, prvoosebni) informacij o tem, kdo so begunski otroci in starši ter kakšne so njihove »posebne« potrebe v okviru vrtcev, šol in življenja v lokalni skupnosti.

V zadnjih letih to vrzel polnijo raziskovalci, ki se v iskanju podatkov vse pogosteje obračajo k staršem priseljencem in z razvojem »otrokocentričnih« raziskovalnih pristopov (Mayeza, 2017; Gornik & Sedmak, 2021) celo k otrokom priseljencem. To je smiselna raziskovalna »protiutež« preteklosti, ko je večina podatkov o (ne)uspešnosti integracije prihajala s strani pedagoških in strokovnih delavcev. Pričujoča raziskava je droben korak v nakazano smer, pri čemer so v ospredju starši s statusom begunca, katerih otroci se vključujejo v slovenske vzgojno-izobraževalne institucije. Mnogoznačno in terminološko prepleteno skupino otrok priseljencev (imenovano

tudi »otrok tujcev«, »otrok državljanov tretjih držav«, »otrok priseljencev prve generacije« itd.) ožimo na podskupino otrok s statusom begunca.

PREUČEVANJE IZKUŠENJ STARŠEV IN OTROK BEGUNCEV

Raziskavo smo zasnovali v sodelovanju z Alaajem Alalijem, ki je pri intervjujih sodeloval kot prevajalec in kulturni mediator. Na podlagi osebne izkušnje migracije in poznavanja situacije družin z mednarodno zaščito je predlagal tudi zasnovano raziskavo. Osnovni problem predstavlja zapostavljenost perspektive otrok in staršev v raziskavah in pripravi politik vključevanja otrok beguncev v vzgojo in izobraževanje. Privilegiranje institucionalne perspektive je problematično, saj zanemarija pojem integracije kot dvosmernega procesa, pri katerem prihaja do prilagajanja in sprememb na obeh straneh – tako pri priseljencih kot pri družbi gostiteljici – oziroma dvosmernost poenostavi na seznam prilagoditev, ki so »na voljo« otrokom v institucijah, brez preiskovanja njihovih potreb.

Raziskovana skupina

Pogoj za sodelovanje v raziskavi je bil, da ima družina otroke, ki se vključujejo v vzgojno-izobraževalni sistem (predšolska vzgoja, osnovna šola ali srednja šola); da ima mednarodno zaščito; ter da v Sloveniji ne biva več kot 10 let. Ob upoštevanju kriterijev smo pridobili 12 sogovornikov, od tega 5 mater, 5 očetov in 2 otroke (stara 11 in 20 let); v enem primeru se je očetu pri intervjuju pridružil sin (7 let). V nobenem primeru ni šlo za skupno intervjuvanje para oz. očeta in matere iz ene družine. Pri skupini 12 intervjuvancev gre torej za 12 družin, katerih otroci se vključujejo v izobraževanje od vrtca do srednje šole. Nobeden od otrok ni obiskoval fakultete.

V raziskovani skupini so otroci in starši prispeli v Slovenijo na različne načine: skupaj (vsa družina) ali narazen (najprej nekateri člani družine, ki so jim sledili še drugi); postopoma ali hitro; na zakonite (z veljavnimi dokumenti in vizo, z združitvijo družine) ali nezakonite načine (z neregularnim prečkanjem državne meje, ki se »retroaktivno legalizira« z izrečeno prošnjo za mednarodno zaščito – take poti v Slovenijo so tvegane, dolge in izčrpavajoče).

- *Družinska migracija – hitra* (od države izvora do države gostiteljice manj kot en mesec)

»Hitra migracija« poenostavljeno pomeni, da vsa družina zapusti državo izvora in v relativno kratkem obdobju doseže ciljno državo (v tem primeru Slovenijo). Prisilna migracija »hitre« oblike je mogoča z začasno delovno vizo, turistično vizo ali neverodostojnimi potnimi listi (iz npr. Grčije). Poleg tega je hitro migracijo omogočal »začasni humanitarni koridor«, ki se je vzpostavil na t. i. balkanski begunski poti v letih 2015 in 2016. V raziskavo je vključena ena družina z izkušnjo »hitre migracije«, ki

je pripotovala iz Sirije v Turčijo ter v letu 2015 skozi humanitarni koridor preko Grčije in Zahodnega Balkana v Slovenijo.

- *Družinska migracija – podaljšana (več kot en mesec)*

V tem primeru družina potuje skupaj, vendar je njihova pot dolgotrajna (več kot en mesec) in bolj zapletena, pri čemer se družine neredko na poti ločijo in kasneje združijo v ciljni državi. Otroci so v nekaterih primerih začasno vključeni v izobraževalne programe in institucije »na poti«. Poleg tega podaljšano migracijo predstavlja tudi nadaljnja migracija v druge države EU in kasnejša vrnitev v Slovenijo (na primer poskus prošnje za mednarodno zaščito v Belgiji in vrnitev po Dublinskem sporazumu). Med sogovorniki je pet tovrstnih primerov.

- *Premestitev beguncev (upravičencev do mednarodne zaščite)*

Preselitve so globalni instrument nudenja mednarodne zaščite, v okviru katerih se zadovoljujejo posebne potrebe beguncev (UNHCR, 2011). Trenutno se programi preselitve izvajajo na podlagi začasnih preselitvenih shem, saj na ravni EU še ni bilj vzpostavljen trajen skupni okvir za preselitve. Slovenija je v okviru programa sprejela 34 premeščenih beguncev (UNHCR). V raziskovani skupini je en primer preselitve družine iz Turčije zaradi zdravljenja otroka v Sloveniji.

- *Združitev družine*

V tem primeru eden od družinskih članov pridobi status begunca in vloži prošnjo za združitev z družino. Ko je združitev odobrena, najožji družinski člani pripotujejo po zakoniti poti (starši, otroci, zakonci). V raziskovani skupini so štiri družine, ki so se združile po tem, ko je oče prejel status begunca v Sloveniji. Združitev družine ureja Zakon o tujcih (2021) (ZTuj).

- *Prehod z delovno vizo – prosilci za mednarodno zaščito*

Ena družina (iz Iraka) je pripotovala v Slovenijo na podlagi delovne vize očeta. Zaradi zapletene situacije (nezmožnost združitve s polnoletnimi člani družine in finančne težave) je družina kasneje (po treh letih bivanja v Sloveniji) zaprosila za mednarodno zaščito.

	Država izvora	Intervjuvavec	Migracija	Status	Leto prihoda v Slovenijo	Število otrok v družini	Število obiskovanih vrtec in šol (OŠ, SŠ)
1	Irak	otrok (Ž, polnoletna)	delovna viza → mednarodna zaščita	status begunca	2012	4	4 (3 programi SŠ, ena OŠ)
2	Palestina	oče in otrok (M, mladoleten)	združitev družine	status begunca	oče 2017, družina 2021	3	2 (vrtec, OŠ)
3	Irak	mama	podaljšana migracija	status begunca	družina 2017, mama 2019	2	1 (OŠ)
4	Sirija	oče	podaljšana migracija	status begunca	2015, ponovno 2016	4	1 (OŠ)
5	Sirija	oče	premestitev družine (angl. <i>resetlement</i>) iz Turčije	status begunca	2018	4	1 (OŠ)
6	Sirija	mama	hitra migracija, humanitarni koridor	status begunca	2015	2	3 (3 OŠ, ena SŠ)
7	Palestina	mama	podaljšana migracija	status begunca	2018	4	6 (4 OŠ, 2 SŠ)
8	Irak	otrok (M, mladoleten)	podaljšana migracija	status begunca	2018	6	4 (2 OŠ, 2 vrtca)
9	Sirija	oče	združitev družine	status begunca	ni podatka	2	1 (OŠ)
10	Sirija	oče	združitev družine	status begunca	ni podatka	4	2 (OŠ in Cene Štupar)
11	Irak	mama	podaljšana migracija	status begunca	2016	4	3 (1 vrtec, 2 OŠ)
12	Palestina	mama	združitev družine	status begunca	oče 2018, družina 2021	2	2 (vrtec, OŠ)
Skupno vključevanje v 30 vzgojno-izobraževalnih institucij v obdobju 2012–2021							

Tabela 1: Raziskovana skupina

Zbiranje in interpretacija podatkov

Empirična raziskava je zasnovana po načelih kvalitativne metodologije (Creswell, 2013, Denzin & Lincoln, 2015). Izbrali smo tehniko delno strukturiranih intervjujev (Vogrinc, 2008). Intervjuje smo opravljali v dvojicah (spraševalec oz. spraševalka in tolmač). Sogovornike smo raziskovalci poznali, zato smo se nanje obrnili z osebno prošnjo za privolitev k intervjuju. Vsi intervjuvanci so podali pisno soglasje. Intervjuji so potekali v arabskem in angleškem jeziku. Opravili smo 11 snemanih intervjujev in en intervju, kjer smo med potekom pogovora napravili zapiske – na željo sogovornice pogovora nismo posneli in dobesedno transkribirali. Intervjuji so trajali od 16 minut do 2 ur in pol. Intervjuje smo dobesedno prepisali, prevedli, jih kodirali (po dva raziskovalca skupaj). Vsebino vsakega od devetih kodov smo posamezno interpretirali. Imena so spremenjena za ohranjanje anonimnosti.

Predhodno izobraževanje

Družine z izkušnjo begunstva dosežejo Slovenijo na zelo različne načine – prisilne migracije niso preproste in enoznačne, temveč pogosto vključujejo vmesne postanke, vračanje, ločevanje in združevanje družin. Otroci posledično doživljajo kompleksne in mestoma težko sledljive prelome v osebnih izobraževalnih trajektorijah (npr. začasno izobraževanje na Nizozemskem, v Srbiji, v BiH, na Švedskem, v Turčiji itd.)

V desetih družinah so bili otroci deležni predhodnega izobraževanja v izvorni državi. V treh družinah so nekateri izmed otrok zaključili primarno izobraževanje (Sirija, Irak, Palestina), v enem primeru tudi sekundarno izobraževanje (Palestina). V enem od teh primerov so imeli težave z dokazovanjem pridobljene izobrazbe in so posledično zaključili osnovnošolsko izobraževanje na Zavodu Cene Štupar. V dveh primerih so pred začetkom migracije pripravili vse potrebne papirje ter v Sloveniji uveljavili že pridobljeno izobraževalno stopnjo (zaključena osnovna oziroma v enem primeru srednja šola).

V desetih družinah so otroci dokončali nekaj razredov osnovne šole. Družine so imele različne izkušnje z izobraževanjem v izvorni državi. V štirih primerih so navajali, da je bilo izobraževanje kvalitetno (Sirija, Palestina), v dveh primerih so bili do šole v izvorni državi kritični (Sirija in Irak). Kot opiše sogovornica (3, Irak): »Seveda jim je v šoli všeč [...] ker je v Iraku dosti težji sistem. Na primer dajo ti nalogo in rečejo 'pojdi domov', in ko prideš nazaj, mora biti narejena. Tukaj pa vse razložijo.«

V petih družinah so bili otroci deležni izobraževanja »na poti«. V prvem primeru (Sirija) so se otroci pred razselitvijo izobraževali v Turčiji. V drugem primeru (Palestina) so se pred »re-migracijo« v Sloveniji izobraževali na Švedskem. V tretjem

1 V nadaljevanju ob navajanju izjav sogovornikov v oklepajih na koncu citata navajamo zaporedno številko in državo izvora sogovornika (gl. Tabela 1).

primeru (Sirija) so se eno leto pred vrnitvijo po Dublinskem sporazumu izobraževali (predšolska vzgoja) na Nizozemskem. V četrtem primeru (Sirija) so se v teku migracije približno en mesec izobraževali v Grčiji. V petem primeru (Irak) so se otroci na balkanski begunski poti več mesecev izobraževali v javnem šolskem sistemu v Srbiji.

Nizek socialno-ekonomski status in negotova nastanitev

V proces pridobivanja mednarodne zaščite je »vtkano« pogosto menjavanje bivališč in šolskih okolišev. Družine se preselijo iz azilnega doma v integracijsko hišo in nazadnje v (subvencionirano) nastanitev (razen v primeru združitve družine, ko ima »nosilec« statusa begunca urejeno bivališče pred prihodom otrok iz države izvora). Ker imajo vsi sogovorniki nizke dohodke in težavo z diskriminacijo pri iskanju nastanitve, so bile med njimi pogoste selitve in nastanitve v naseljih v okolici večjih urbanih središč (Domžale, Vrhnika, Medvode, Črnuče, Maribor Tezno): »Imamo samo en res velik problem [...] kot vsi migranti. In to je nastanitev. Če plačaš tukaj (v Sloveniji) najemnino, ne ostane nič denarja za stroške in hrano« (5, Sirija).

Starši so v 7 intervjujih od 12 spregovorili o finančnih težavah, s katerimi se sooča družina. Težave so po njihovih besedah vključevale:

- nezmožnost otrokom zagotoviti primerno obleko in obutev (2),
- selitve in posledične menjave šol (4),
- nezmožnost otrokom zagotoviti primerno učno okolje (2) in pripomočke (2), sploh v času šolanja na domu,
- nezmožnost otrokom zagotoviti stabilno prihodnost (1).

Kot opiše oče (2, Palestina): »V kakšnih trenutkih je zame [...] težko. Oprostite, da rečem kaj takega. Ampak nimamo denarja in poskušam razložiti otrokom, 'čakajte, čakajte, naslednji teden bomo šli kupit čevlje, bomo šli kupit obleke'. In tako naprej in tako naprej. Pokličem prijatelje, rečem, 'dal ti bom nazaj, ko bom dobil denar od ministrstva' ali kaj takega. Poskušam se prebiti.«

Z nizkimi dohodki in pogostimi selitvami so povezane tudi menjave vrtcev in šol (glej Tabelo 1).

Razvrščanje v razrede

Razvrščanje v razrede je arbitrarno, v nekaterih primerih so otroke zadržali v vrtcu kljub doseženi starosti za šolsko obveznost (2), v nekaterih primerih so otroke samodejno pomaknili en razred (8) ali celo dva razreda nazaj (1); v dveh primerih so otroke testirali in tako določili njihovo stopnjo znanja (v enem primeru so jih »obdržali« na isti razredni stopnji, v drugem predstavili en razred nazaj). Kot pove sogovornica (3, Irak): »Hčerko so dali dva razreda nazaj, tako da je starejša kot vsi ostali. Rekli so, da ne zna slovensko in da bo zanjo to pretežko, če bo v istem razredu kot prej ... Tako da so jo spustili dva razreda nižje. [...] Mojega sina pa samo eno leto. Za sina so naredili

test. [...] Za hčerko ni bilo pa nobenega testa. [...] Sin pa je imel pri testu celo zraven prevajalca, da so videli, kakšno ima raven znanja.« Sogovornik (2, Palestina) razloži, da so njegovega sina testirali in obdržali v istem razredu: »Preden je začel [je] ena učiteljica iz šole poskušala ugotoviti, če gre lahko direktno v drugi razred ali ne. In ta učiteljica je govorila z njim. [...] A je OK, a lahko gre? Ali ne? Ali je pameten ali ne? Ali lahko razume ali ne? In po vsem tem reče: 'Ja ... On gre lahko direktno, ker razume vse dobro.'«

Zgodnje vključevanje v razred

V devetih primerih (osnovna šola) so otroke pred vstopom v razred sprejeli v šoli individualno, jim predstavili učiteljico, fizično okolje in svetovalno delavko: »Od začetka in vsako leto nas povabijo, naredijo turo po šoli, pokažejo nam vse sekcije, vključno s kuhinjo in knjižnico. Ko smo imeli prvič sestanek, smo imeli prevajalca, z M. [nevladna organizacija]« (9, Sirija).

V treh primerih v osnovni šoli in v dveh primerih v srednji šoli so bili otroci nemudoma vključeni v razrede – brez predhodne introdukcije. Starši so opisovali, da je prvotno vključevanje izredno stresno in da ta občutek »akutne krize« traja nekaj mesecev do enega leta: »Na začetku je bilo Noor strah, sram. Ni govorila. Za Ahmeda in Zuhoor je bilo zelo težko na začetku. Ampak sem razložila učiteljici v angleščini, ime, priimek, kaj imajo radi, kaj so njihove najljubše stvari. In potem je učiteljica razložila ostalim otrokom, sprejeli so moje otroke, povedali, da so iz Iraka. [...] Na začetku jim niso pomagali. Nihče jim ni pomagal. Samo učiteljica jim je razložila snov [v razredu]« (11, Irak).

Trije sogovorniki so podali predlog, da bi bilo potrebno na začetku vključiti prevajalce ali kulturne mediatorje, da bi otroci imeli bolj lažje prehodno obdobje. »Počutijo se [otroci] normalno, ampak še vedno kot tujci. Ne kot državljani. Ali se je pritoževal, da nihče ne razume [...]. Najstarejši otrok se je tudi pritoževal [...] Celo prvo leto. Ker ni v ni v razredu nihče razumel. [...] Na začetku bi bilo zelo pomembno, da bi vključili prevajalce in nekakšne kulturne mediatorje, da bi lahko otroci kaj razumeli« (4, Sirija).

Podpora pri učenju jezika

V osmih primerih so bili otroci v osnovni šoli deležni jezikovnega tečaja, v štirih primerih pa ne. Ob vstopu v vrtec ni imel nihče od otrok jezikovnega tečaja. V petih primerih so otroci po končanem »formalno organiziranem« učenju slovenskega jezika nadaljevali v okviru dopolnilnega pouka ali dodatne strokovne pomoči (v vseh primerih brez odločbe, zato sklepamo, da gre za »presežek« ur učitelja za dodatno strokovno pomoč)

Učne ure jezika so imeli enkrat ali dvakrat na teden, pred, med ali po pouku. Pri nekaterih je bil tečaj strnjen kot uvajalnica, pri drugih je potekal razpršeno v prvem

šolskem letu: »V šoli ni bilo dobrega jezikovnega tečaja. Imeli so eno uro jezika. Ne vsak dan ... Mogoče enkrat ali dvakrat na teden. Takrat, ko so imeli pouk. Ali pa popoldne, po pouku. Ni bil to en tečaj, bilo je malo tukaj, malo tam. Razdrobljeno, približno eno do dve uri na teden« (3, Sirija).

Komunikacija med starši in šolo

S komunikacijo s šolo so imeli starši zelo različne izkušnje. 2 od 12 sta imela pogost stik s šolo (vsaj enkrat na mesec), 9 od 12 redkejši stik (enkrat na nekaj mesecev), v enem primeru je bil stik izredno redek oziroma neobstoječ (enkrat na leto): »Skoraj ni nobene komunikacije med nami. Ne gremo tja ali pa da bi obiskovali šolo. Zaradi jezika je precej [...] Nihče nam ne pomaga iz šole, zato smo nehali komunicirati z njimi. Prevajalec stane 30, 50, 100 evrov« (4, Sirija).

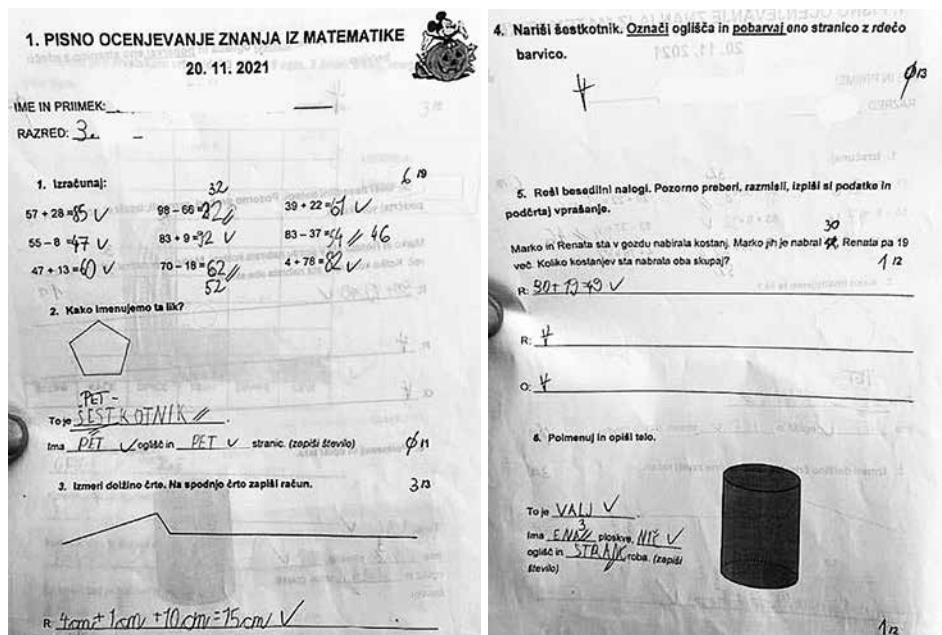
V devetih primerih starši s šolo komunicirajo v angleškem jeziku. V dveh primerih komunicirajo v slovenskem jeziku. V enem primeru komunicirajo preko prevajalca oziroma z »znaki in gestami«. V sedmih primerih so starši navedli, da so vsaj enkrat prišli v vrtec ali šolo s prevajalcem (prijateljem, prevajalcem iz društva Odnos v Ljubljani; v enem primeru je prevajalca zagotovila šola). »Ja, gremo v šolo, ves čas, ampak ... Najprej preko maila, ampak mi ne razumemo. To jezikovno bariero je nemogoče preiti. Prej smo pripeljali enega, da je prevajal. Ampak zdaj je postalo [vzdih], ker je Reza zelo sramežljiv. Vse, kar zvem od njega, je »v redu«, in konec. Kako naj potem vem« (6, Sirija). »Šola je komunicirala z nami v slovenščini. Je bilo zelo težko, ker je bilo moje znanje slovenščine zelo slabo [...]. Ko smo šli na sestanek na začetku, smo videli šolo od znotraj, drugače pa nismo dobili povabila, da bi šli pogledat šolo [...]. Z nami je bila Sonja [iz nevladne organizacije] in prevajalec Hassan« (10, Sirija).

V večini primerov je bilo med intervjujem razbrati, da sogovorniki (kljub morebitnim dvomom) sprejemajo odločitve pedagoških delavcev kot strokovno osnovane. V besedah intervjuvanke (1, Irak): »Vse je bilo dobro. Šli smo v tretji letnik ekonomske srednje šole. In potem! Pride ravnatelj in teče: 'Težko je, da so trije arabski ljudje v istem razredu.' Zato je naredil plan, da bo mene in mojo sestro [dvojčico] prestavil iz ekonomije na predšolsko vzgojo. In moj brat (eno leto starejši) je ostal v razredu na ekonomiji. [...] O tem se je zmenil v bistvu z mojim očetom. [...] Jaz sem to zvedela šele en dan pred začetkom šolskega leta.« Na vprašanje, kako to, da oče ni nič rekel, da je to malo čudno, odgovarja: »Ker oče je rekel: 'Ravnatelj ve. On je v tej šoli in on ve bolje [...] kot jaz in ti.' Strinjal se je, da greva iz tretjega nazaj v drugo leto. Saj je bilo čisto v redu. Ampak nama ni bilo všeč. Moje sanje niso bile, da bi bila vzgojiteljica v vrtcu.«

Izobraževalne težave

Deset sogovornikov je spregovorilo o učnih težavah otrok. V treh primerih je prišlo do ponavljanja razreda (v enem primeru večkrat), v dveh primerih pa je prišlo do napredovanja kljub neznanju. V enajstih primerih so starši govorili o težavah z učenjem, mučnem ponavljanju snovi, nerazumevanju, slabih ocenah. Trije starši so navedli, da otroke po pouku spodbujajo k dodatnemu učenju, čeprav pridejo iz šole utrujeni.

Večina sogovornikov je navedla, da imajo otroci težave s slovenščino in matematiko. Pri slednjem gre predvsem nerazumevanje zapletenih besedilnih nalog (glej Sliko 1 – sliko testa, ki ga je sin med intervjujem potegnil iz šolske torbe). Kot pove sogovornik: »On hodi samo tri mesece v slovensko šolo. Ampak ko pišejo test, vsi pišejo. Potem pride domov in joka: 'Jaz ne razumem, jaz ne znam.' Ampak vidiš, da zna vse račune, plus, minus. Samo ko je preveč besed, ne razume« (2, Palestina).



Slika 1: Fotografija pisnega ocenjevanja znanja iz matematike

Sogovorniki so navajali tudi težavo z drugačno učno snovjo, kot so je bili otroci vajeni od prej – glede količine, zahtevnosti, pa tudi vsebine. Večina staršev je navedla občutek nemoči, ker otrok ne zmorejo podpreti pri domačih nalogah in učenju. Večina (8) je navedla, da jim pomagajo pri predmetih, kot sta matematika in angleščina. Pri drugih predmetih se za pomoč obrnejo k sosedom (2), prijateljem, ki so prav tako priseljenci (2), naključnim neznanecem – na primer v restavraciji (1), prostovoljcem in zaposlenim v nevladnih organizacijah (12). Kot je opisal sogovornik (2, Palestina):

Trudim se, da bi mu pomagal, res! Prevajam kar znam. Kličem kogarkoli. Ja, prosim, pridite pomagat, kdorkoli, če lahko. Pošljem vsem ljudem po WhatsAppu ali e-mailu. Da prevedejo domačo nalogo in da mi pošljejo izgovorjavo besed. Včasih naredim tako, ne vedno. Ker včasih se počutim malo slabo. Vedno težim [...] Včasih najdem ljudi v restavraciji [...], medtem ko pijemo kavo. »Prosim, preberite tole,« »Kakšen je prevod tega?« [...] Čisto zares, iskreno ... To delamo včasih. Se zgodi. [se nasmehne]

Rasizem in diskriminacija s strani vrstnikov in strokovnih delavcev

V to poglavje uvrščamo izkušnje rasizma in diskriminacije, ki so jih bili deležni otroci s strani vrstnikov in strokovnih delavcev. V večini primerov je šlo za komentarje o barvi kože (2), vonju otroka (3), njegovem izvoru (2), veri (1) in negativne pripombe na nošenje hidžaba (1). Nekateri starši (3) so navedli, da učitelji sicer opazijo rasizem, zmerljivke («črnci», «cigani», «smrdiš»), a se temu ne posvečajo preveč: »Prisežem, res je slabo. Ne vemo, kaj naj rečemo, ves čas je ta problem s komunikacijo s šolo. In nazadnje obtožijo otroka. Kot da je on problem, ker nima dobrega znanja jezika, ker je iz Sirije. Lahko občutiš rasizem. [...] Res to vpliva na našega otroka, psihološko, situacija v šoli. Sploh ni lahko. Sploh zaradi pomanjkanja komunikacije med nami in šolo« (6, Sirija). Drugi starši (4) so navedli, da se učitelji pogovorijo le z otroki, s starši pa ne. »Noor je imela dvakrat problem lansko leto. Ampak učiteljica je potem govorila z otroki. In so nehali. Otroci ... Saj veš, kakšni so otroci. Zaradi njene kože rečejo: 'Umazana si, umazana si, umij se!' Ker ima črno barvo kože [se zasmehje]. In enkrat je prišla k meni, češ da so ji otroci rekli, da je 'cigan'. Sploh nisem vedela, kaj to pomeni.« »Kako pa se tvoji otroci odzivajo na to?« »Hussein se skrega, Noor pa samo joče« (11, Irak). Ena sogovornica je navedla, da v teh primerih šola odreagira celostno in korektno: »Mojo hči so enkrat zaprli v kopalnico. Zaklenili so jo v kopalnico. To je bil velik problem, zato sem šla v šolo. [...] Sedeli smo, skupaj z ravnateljem, in povabili so tudi starše od te deklince, ki jo je zaklenila. [...] Takrat so dali opozorilo tej deklici in njenim staršem. [...] Šola je naredila, kar smo od njih pričakovali« (3, Irak).

V enem primeru je bila srednješolka (sestra intervjuvanke) deležna posmehovanja s strani pedagoške delavke, učiteljice za slovenščino. Kljub intervenciji s strani ravnatelja se zlorabe niso ustavile, dokler ni zapustila šole. »Mislim, da je bila učiteljica od Naime zelo slaba. Ona eno celo leto ni šla k slovenščini. Prisežem, res ni šla. Ker vsakič, ko je vstopila v ta razred, je pobegnila, je šla ven in se jokala, ker je ta gospa govorila in [...] Govorila je z drugimi učenci, govorili so in se smejali Naimi. Tako da eno celo leto sploh ni šla k pouku« (1, Irak).

Stiske otrok in staršev

V tem poglavju obravnavamo navedbe o stiskah otrok, ki so obiskovali vzgojno-izobraževalne institucije. Mednje prištevamo jok (5), pogoste bolezni, ki so jih zdravniki označili za psihosomatske (2), jezo (1), zapiranje vase (3), žalost (1), strah pred šolo

in vrstniki (3) in upor proti obiskovanju šole (3). Starši so poročali, da se v šolah tovrstnim težavam ne posvečajo s pretirano vneto oziroma zanje pogosto ne vedo (na primer jok pred odhodom v šolo in po prihodu iz šole). Najhujše stiske so se v večini primerov pojavljale na začetku. Kot pove oče, katerega otroci so v šolo vključeni šele nekaj mesecev:

Ampak več, v šoli je zelo, zelo težko za moje otroke. Zame je to katastrofa. Zakaj? Ker ni isti jezik, ni ista kultura. Vse je drugače za otroke. In moji otroci [...], oprosti, ne zato, ker je moj. Ampak Hassan ... V mojem mestu je bil najboljši v vsej šoli. [...] Tukaj je pa zanj vse drugače. Prej so otroci prišli okrog njega, »Hassan, Hassan, Hassan!!!« Zdaj pa pride in je sam, čisto sam. In saj več ... Jezik, kultura ... Ne razume. Celó pride iz šole in joče. Joče se! In jaz poskušam izsilit pogovor z njim. (2, Palestina)

Starši opisujejo tako svoje stiske kot stiske otrok ob »soočanju« z neznanim. »Strah jih je, skrbi jih, imajo veliko strahu. Ne razumejo vsega. To je zanje nekaj čisto novega. Mislim, da jih je bilo res strah, sploh prvi dan. In jaz! O, kako me je skrbelo zanje. Ker nisem vedela pet ur, kaj se dogaja z mojimi otroki. Samo čakala sem [...] do njih, da pridejo in da vidim, kaj se je dogajalo« (11, Irak).

ZAKLJUČEK

Raziskava, v kateri je sodelovalo 12 intervjuvancev iz 12 družin, katerih otroci se vključujejo v izobraževanje od vrtca do srednje šole, orisuje splošne značilnosti življenja oseb s statusom begunca v Sloveniji ter specifično njihove izkušnje z vzgojno-izobraževalnim sistemom. Večina staršev in otrok je ovrednotila vrtce in šole kot ključne za učenje jezika in socialno vključevanje; kljub temu pa je raziskava pokazala tudi bolj duhamorne vidike integracije. Ta na ravni zakonodaje deluje kot gladek in nezapleten proces »vstavljanja« in »prilagajanja« otrok na nove (kulturne, jezikovne, socialne, institucionalne) razmere. V realnosti pa proces vključevanja poteka počasi in s številnimi težavami, ki so »institucionalne« in »izveninstitucionalne« narave. V prvem primeru gre za učne, čustvene, psihosocialne in vedenjske težave, ki jih starši in otroci opažajo v vrtcih in šolah; za težave pri učenju jezika (v štirih od dvanajstih primerov otroci niso bili deležni pouka slovenskega jezika izven rednega oddelka), pri vključevanju v oddelek. Gre tudi za pomanjkanje podpore v vrtcu ali šoli; občutek nemoči in izoliranosti; za izkušnje rasizma, diskriminacije ter splošne nenaklonjenosti strokovnega kadra; za medvrstniško nasilje, neprilagojeno ocenjevanje, prehitro vključevanje v razrede, popuščanje (skozi šolski sistem brez doseženih standardov) ali po drugi strani pretirane zahteve (na primer testi z dolgimi esejskimi vprašanji), za (neopažen) absentizem. V drugem primeru pa gre za težave, s katerimi se družine soočajo v splošnem smislu in vplivajo na potek vključevanja v vrtce in šole – za neurejen status, težavno zgodovino migracije (npr. dolga migracija po balkanski

begunski poti, »nepriznane« izobraževalne izkušnje), za nizek socialno-ekonomski status, številne menjave bivališč (in posledično šol).

Trenutno se iz načrtov in politik integracije pogosto izvzema glasove otrok in staršev, a vendar so ti – kot »subjekti« vključevanja – edini verodostojen (čtetudi subjektiven) vir podatkov o njihovi učinkovitosti. S pričujočo raziskavo smo poskušali dati glas otrokom in staršem, pri čemer smo se osredotočili na starše s statusom begunca, katerih otroci se vključujejo v slovenske vzgojno-izobraževalne institucije.

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SUMMARY

EDUCATIONAL INTEGRATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF REFUGEE PARENTS AND CHILDREN

Lucija KLUN, Alaa ALALI, Jure GOMBAČ

The article is based on a research project (2021) involving twelve families. Researchers and a cultural mediator conducted interviews (eleven audiotaped and transcribed, one noted during execution) with five mothers, five fathers, and two children (an 11-year-old boy and a 20-year-old female). At the time of the interview, all family members had refugee status. Nonetheless, it had various migratory and bureaucratic trajectories. They reached Slovenia together or separately, illegally or legally, rapidly or gradually. Researchers accounted for the complex situations defining the families' lives following migration—these vastly co-define children's educational integration. The most critical factors are precarious legal status, numerous school changes, low socioeconomic status, and housing insecurity.

The interviewed families have resided in Slovenia for no longer than ten years. They all had experiences with primary schools, some also with preschools (4) and secondary schools (3).

The analysis gave an insight into experiences with educational integration. Families generally emphasized schools as the primary spaces enabling language learning and education. However, they also pointed out some issues with the efficiency of integration. Forced migration is commonly associated with abrupt departures, stoppages in transit countries, and returns due to the Dublin Regulation. Consequently, children's education is complex and full of temporary "educational inputs." In five cases, children were included in the formal/informal education "on the route": 1) in Turkey, preceding resettlement; 2) in Sweden, preceding a voluntary return to Slovenia; 3) in the Netherlands, preceding a return orchestrated by the Dublin Regulation; 4) in Greece, during transit; and 5) in Serbia, during transit.

Designating children into classes upon arrival to Slovenia seemed arbitrary: children were appointed a year (8) or two years lower (1) than their age or had a knowledge assessment (2). In eight cases, children had a Slovenian language course upon entering the school; in four cases, they did not. Interviewees spoke about learning difficulties, including failed classes (3), low grades (11), and a lack of understanding. Interviewees mentioned racist comments from classmates about skin color (2), smell (3), origin (2), and religion (2). Interviewees talked openly about emotional distress caused or amplified by educational institutions—mostly about children crying (5), frequent sicknesses (2), anger (1), enclosing (3), and fear and reluctance toward school (4).

Even though "integration" might read as a simple, unified procedure in the policy documents, it appears to be a much more nuanced process in the children's and parents' narratives. Integration, essentially a process of "two-sided convergence"

(between migrants and national sub-systems), can only be thoroughly evaluated through the perspectives of foreigners. Being “subjects of integration”, their views, remarks, and opinions strongly weigh into the (un)success of the educational system as a whole.

UČENCI S PRISELJENSKIM OZADJEM PRI POUKU NA DALJAVO V DRUGEM VALU EPIDEMIJE BOLEZNI COVID-19 V SLOVENIJI

Alenka GRIL,^I Sabina AUTOR,^{II} Janja ŽMAVC^{III}

COBISS 1.01

IZVLEČEK

Učenci s priseljskim ozadjem pri pouku na daljavo v drugem valu epidemije bolezni Covid-19 v Sloveniji

V prispevku predstavljamo rezultate raziskave o učinkovitih prilagoditvah pouka na daljavo za učence s priseljskim ozadjem v drugem valu epidemije v Sloveniji. Odgovori majhnih vzorcev učiteljev ($N = 29$) na spletno anketo nakazujejo upad težav z opremo IKT v primerjavi s prvim valom, medtem ko so se še vedno prisotne težave, povezane z učenjem in učnim jezikom ter posledicami socialne izolacije. Učitelji so individualizirali način poučevanja in učne pomoči glede na zaznane jezikovne in učne težave ter osebne stiske. Raznojezični pristopi so se izkazali za učinkovite pri zagotavljanju inkluzivnega poučevanja v večkulturnih okoljih in bi jih veljalo krepiti tudi pri pouku v šoli.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: pouk na daljavo, epidemija covid-19, učenci s priseljskim ozadjem, inkluzivno izobraževanje, večjezičnost

ABSTRACT

Pupils With an Immigrant Background in Distance Learning in the Second Wave of the COVID-19 Epidemic in Slovenia

The paper presents a study on the effective adaptation of distance learning for students with an immigrant background in the second wave of the COVID-19 epidemic in Slovenia. The online survey of a small sample of teachers indicates a decline in ICT equipment-related problems compared to the first wave, while learning and language problems and the social isolation effects persisted. Teachers adapted the teaching approaches and learning assistance individually to the perceived language and learning problems and personal distress of students. Plurilingual approaches prove to be effective in enabling an inclusive multicultural learning environment and should be strengthened also in the school classes.

KEYWORDS: distance learning, COVID-19 epidemic, students with an immigrant background, inclusive education, multilingualism

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UVOD

Epidemija bolezni Covid-19 in ukrepi za njeno omejevanje, ki so spomladi 2020 vodili v zaprtje šol in izvajanje pouka na daljavo po vsem svetu, so se nadaljevali tudi v šolskem letu 2020/2021. Jeseni, v t. i. drugem valu epidemije, se je pouk v Sloveniji preselil na daljavo za več kot štiri mesece.¹ Sprememba načina poučevanja je povzročila težave vsem vključenim v izobraževalni proces: šolam, učiteljem, učencem, staršem. Poučevanje se je namreč preselilo iz šole, kjer se pouk izvaja v formalno temu namenjenem prostoru in v neposredni socialni interakciji, v pouk na daljavo, ki se v celoti izvaja v individualnih domačih okoljih in je povsem odvisen od informacijske tehnologije in digitalnih kompetenc uporabnikov. Posebej izrazito so se težave pokazale med učenci s priseljskim ozadjem (UNESCO, 2020),² ki so praviloma že predhodno imeli slabše domače razmere za učenje (tudi manjšo podporo staršev), omejen dostop do računalnikov in interneta ter manj razvite digitalne veščine (OECD, 2020).

V Sloveniji so bile težave UPO pri pouku na daljavo na eni strani podobne težavam drugih učencev iz splošne populacije (npr. Uršič & Puklek Levpušček, 2020): pomanjkanje opreme in veščin na področju informacijske in komunikacijske tehnologije, primerne prostora za šolsko delo, podpore staršev, učne motivacije, socialnih stikov in doživljanje čustvenih stisk itd. (Gornik et al., 2020; Žmavc et al., 2020). Na drugi strani pa so se ti učenci srečevali z zanje specifičnimi ovirami za učenje, ki so bile zlasti jezikovno pogojene, npr. nerazumevanje snovi in navodil v učnem jeziku, pomanjkanje stikov s slovensko govorečimi vrstniki, pomanjkljivo znanje slovenščine pri starših, da bi jim ti lahko pomagali pri učenju (Gornik et al., 2020; Žmavc et al., 2020). S podobnimi težavami pouka na daljavo so se pri nas soočali tudi romski učenci (Bešter & Pirc, 2020). Kot posebej ranljivi pri šolanju v pandemiji koronavirusa so se v različnih državah po svetu pokazali otroci begunci (npr. Edmonds & Flahault, 2021; Mudwari et al., 2021; Primdahl et al., 2021). Neustrezno odzivanje šol in podpornih institucij na ovire (materialne, jezikovne in socialne), ki so UPO dodatno onemogočile vključenost v izobraževanje na daljavo v prvem valu epidemije, nakužejo povečanje tveganja za neenake možnosti in izide izobraževanja zanje, tako v Sloveniji (Gornik et al., 2020) kot v drugih evropskih državah (Van der Graaf et al., 2021: 91–100).

Težave, povezane z novim načinom šolanja na daljavo v prvem valu epidemije, so precej raziskane, primanjkuje pa raziskav izvedbe pouka na daljavo v drugem valu. Takrat so imele šole z učitelji in učenci že precej izkušenj z uporabo informacijske

1 Šolanje na daljavo je v 1. valu epidemije potekalo od 19. 3. do 11. 5. 2020 (za učence 1.–4. razreda in zaključne razrede osnovnih in srednjih šol), za ostale učence in dijake pa do 24. 6. 2020. V 2. valu epidemije so se šole zaprle 23. 10. 2020, nižji razredi OŠ so se vrnili v šolo 22. 2. 2021, ostali pa 15. 3. 2021, vendar je za dijake pouk v šoli potekal le vsak drugi teden vse do 17. 5. 2021.

2 V nadaljevanju za učence s priseljskim ozadjem uporabljamo okrajšavo UPO.

tehnologije. Na pouk na daljavo naj bi bili bolje pripravljene, priskrbeli so manjkajočo računalniško opremo, izdelana so bila e-gradiva in verjetno tudi individualizirani načrti izvedbe pouka. Smernice za organizacijo pouka v času epidemije je pripravilo tudi ministrstvo (Logaj, 2020). Te domneve smo naslovile v pričujoči raziskavi z vidika subjektivnih izkušenj UPO in njihovih učiteljev s poukom na daljavo.

PRILAGODITVE POUKA NA DALJAVO ZA UČENCE S PRISELJENSKIM OZADJEM

Pri učencih, ki prihajajo iz drugačnega kulturno-jezikovnega okolja, lahko nespodobno šolsko ali domače okolje izraziteje negativno vplivata na učno uspešnost in nadaljnjo karierno pot. Raziskave po svetu kažejo, da UPO v mnogih državah dosega v povprečju nižje učne rezultate kot učenci, ki tudi doma uporabljajo učni jezik (OECD, 2020). Toda pri razumevanju izobraževalnega konteksta je ključno, da UPO obravnavamo kot heterogeno skupino. Razlikujejo se namreč glede na materni jezik, znanje učnega jezika (pri nas slovenščine), predznanje, pridobljeno v državi izvora, razvitost različnih sposobnosti in digitalnih kompetenc, socialno-ekonomsko in izobrazbeno ozadje družine ter z njima povezano učno podporo doma, pa tudi glede na specifične psihosocialne stiske idr. Vse te različne osebne in socialne okoliščine UPO lahko predstavljajo ovire pri učenju in poglobljajo neenakosti v izobraževalnih izidih (OECD, 2020). Poučevanje UPO zahteva načrtovanje in izvedbo pouka, ki pripoznava njihove potenciale in pedagoškega procesa ne strukturira okoli njihovih šibkih, temveč okoli močnih točk, kot je denimo kompetenca v maternem jeziku (Žmavc, 2021). Zato je treba specifične potrebe in okoliščine učencev upoštevati pri individualiziranem načrtovanju prilagoditev učnega okolja in načinov poučevanja tako, da bodo pri različnih predmetih ustrezno podprle vsakega učenca posebej, mu omogočile učni napredek in razvoj sposobnosti ter osebnih potencialov na različnih področjih. Ustrezen pedagoški pristop, ki zagotavlja uresničevanje otrokovih pravic, izhaja iz koncepta inkluzije (npr. Lesar, 2019; Peček & Skubic Ermenc, 2016) kot pedagoškega načela medkulturnega izobraževanja (Lesar et al., 2012; Vižintin, 2018).

V Sloveniji je inkluzivni pristop v izobraževanju UPO začrtan že na sistemski ravni, npr. z Zakonom o organizaciji in financiranju vzgoje in izobraževanja (ZOFVI, 2019) in s Smernicami za vključevanje otrok priseljencev v vrtce in šole (Zavod RS za šolstvo, 2012), ki predpisuje njihovo všolanje v redne oddelke vrtcev ter osnovnih in srednjih šol in določa obvezne prilagoditve zanje pri učenju slovenščine kot drugega jezika, dveletno prilagojeno ocenjevanje ter možnost organiziranja pouka maternih jezikov in kultur, pa tudi drugih oblik dodatne učne pomoči, sicer zagotovljenih vsem učencem. Tako so formalno zagotovljene enake možnosti izobraževanja. Težave pri učenju in sledenju pouku pa povzročata jezikovna ovira (npr. Knez, 2008), saj raznojezični pristopi v Sloveniji (še vedno) niso splošno uveljavljeni vsešolski pristopi, raven znanja učnega jezika pa UPO pogosto ne omogoča doseganja rezultatov, ki

bi bili primerljivi z dosežki v njihovem maternem jeziku. Zato so potrebne dodatne prilagoditve poučevanja, ki so odvisne od strokovne usposobljenosti učiteljev, njihove motivacije in senzibilnosti za različnost med učenci ter njihovih implicitnih prepričanj o poučevanju v medkulturnem okolju (Budinoska, 2017; Lesar, 2019). Za učinkovito šolanje UPO je torej treba zagotoviti celostno podporo, npr. po modelu medkulturnega izobraževanja (Vižintin, 2014), ki zajema že omenjeni področji sistemske podpore izvajanju pouka in razvijanja medkulturne zmožnosti učiteljev in učencev, privzemanje medkulturnosti kot pedagoškega načela, razvijanje medkulturnega dialoga v šoli in zavedanja o večkulturni družbi pri vseh učnih vsebinah ob sodelovanju šole s starši priseljenci in lokalno skupnostjo.

Pred desetletjem opravljena primerjalna raziskava poučevanja UPO med učitelji v Sloveniji in na Švedskem (Lesar et al., 2012) je pri nas nakazala manj razvite podporne mehanizme na ravni lokalne skupnosti (npr. sodelovanje s prevajalci) in šolskega sistema (takrat še neurejeno učenje materinščine in slovenščine ter dodatne pomoči pri pouku, pomanjkanje gradiv v različnih jezikih), zaradi česar so bili učenci tedaj deležni le prostovoljne pomoči učiteljev. Ti so prilagajali učne cilje, ocenjevanje in delovne liste ter jim nudili dodatno pomoč po pouku, a so se manj zavedali pomena podpiranja razvoja materinščine pri UPO za učinkovitejše učenje jezika novega okolja in učno uspešnost. Od takrat so v različnih projektih na posameznih šolah po Sloveniji razvijali svoje, lokalno specifične pristope vključevanja UPO v izobraževanje – npr. »Uspešno vključevanje otrok, učencev in dijakov migrantov v vzgojo in izobraževanje« (Center za slovenščino kot drugi in tuji jezik, 2008) in »Izzivi medkulturnega sobivanja« (2016–2021)³ in svoje izkušnje dobrih praks prenašali tudi na druge šole in podporne organizacije v skupnosti (npr. SIRIUS 2.0, 2017–2021).⁴ Nekatere rešitve so bile nedavno vključene tudi na sistemsko raven (npr. večstopenjski učni programi za učenje slovenščine kot drugega jezika, sistematizacija pripadajočega delovnega mesta učitelja slovenščine kot drugega jezika; ZOFVI, 2019). Sistemska podpora je bila zagotovljena tudi s projektnim financiranjem izobraževanja učiteljev na področju socialnih, državljskih in medkulturnih kompetenc (npr. projekt »Le z drugimi smo«, 2016–2021).⁵ Vse to nakazuje, da naj bi bile slovenske šole že pred epidemijo pripravljene na poučevanje UPO in bi lahko te prakse izvajale tudi pri pouku na daljavo.

V kvalitativni raziskavi pouka na daljavo z UPO v prvem valu epidemije Covid-19 (Žmavc et al., 2020) se je pokazalo, da so na nekaterih šolah v Sloveniji učitelji prilagodili pouk tako, da so poučevanje individualizirali, zmanjšali obseg vsebin in učnih ciljev ter ocenjevanja, se osredinili na učenje slovenščine in oblikovali prilagojena učna gradiva (večjezična, slikovna in video gradiva). Pogosteje so se povezovali med sabo in prilagajali čas ter oblike komunikacije, da bi se osebno povezali z učenci in

3 <http://www.medkulturnost.si>

4 <https://www.pei.si/raziskovalna-dejavnost/projekti/sirius>

5 <https://lezdrugimismo.si>

njihovimi starši, jih podprli pri reševanju čustvenih in socialnih stisk ter jih spodbujali k učenju tudi skupaj s starši. Vključevanje raznojezičnih pristopov ni izstopalo kot posebna strategija pouka na daljavo. Nekateri učitelji so izvajali pouk enako za vse učence. Teh ugotovitev ne moremo posploševati, saj je šlo za raziskavo na majhnem, nereprezentativnem vzorcu učiteljev, ki poučujejo UPO v Sloveniji. Toda tudi raziskava, opravljena v terciarnem izobraževanju v Avstraliji,⁶ ki je prav tako obravnavala spremembe načina poučevanja na daljavo v času epidemije koronavirusa s študenti s priseljenskim ozadjem, je pokazala, da so učitelji razvili bolj angažiran, osebni in skrben pristop v komunikaciji, ki je bil osredinjen na študente in sodelovalno strukturiran, kar je omogočilo bolj pristne in zadovoljujoče izkušnje učenja ter spodbudilo učno motivacijo (Baker et al., 2022). Na podlagi teh pozitivnih izkušenj šolanja na daljavo avtorji raziskave predlagajo razmislek, kako jih prenesti tudi v poučevanje v neposrednih interakcijah v šoli. Tudi zato se nam je zdelo pomembno, da v pričujoči raziskavi preučimo, kakšne učinke so imele prilagoditve pouka na daljavo na UPO, ko so se vrnili v šolo po skoraj polletnem zaprtju v drugem valu epidemije.

PROBLEM

Namen raziskave je bil preučiti, kako učinkovito so prilagoditve pouka na daljavo za UPO v Sloveniji v času zaprtja šol v drugem valu epidemije (jesen 2020–pomlad 2021) podprle njihove specifične potrebe, ki izhajajo iz materialnih, jezikovnih in socialnih ovir v domačem okolju. Zastavile smo si več raziskovalnih vprašanj:

1. Kako pripravljene so bili učenci in učitelji na pouk na daljavo v 2. valu epidemije glede na izkušnje v 1. valu? Katere vrste težav so se zmanjšale oz. ostale enake?
2. Kakšne prilagoditve pouka na daljavo so v 2. valu epidemije načrtovali in izvajali učitelji za UPO? Kakšne dodatne učne pomoči so bili deležni učenci? Kako so se učitelji pri podpori učencem povezovali z drugimi šolami in lokalno skupnostjo?
3. Ali so učitelji v 2. valu epidemije prilagajali pouk na daljavo UPO glede na to, kakšne težave pri pouku in osebne stiske so pri njih zaznali?
4. Kako so se učinki prilagojenega pouka na daljavo v 2. valu epidemije izrazili v znanju, komunikaciji in medosebnih odnosih UPO po vrnitvi v šolo?

6 Navajamo raziskavo iz terciarnega izobraževanja, saj druge dostopne raziskave o izobraževanju UPO v pandemiji bolezni Covid-19 v drugih državah niso podrobneje obravnavale sprememb v načinu poučevanja.

METODA

V raziskavi smo uporabile kvantitativni pristop, in sicer spletno anketiranje.

Vzorec. Vzorec sodelujočih učiteljev je bil neslučajni, priložnostni. K sodelovanju smo preko elektronske pošte povabile učitelje iz osnovnih in srednjih šol, s katerimi smo sodelovale v projektih s področja vključevanja priseljencev v izobraževanje. Prosile smo jih, da vabilo posredujejo tudi drugim sodelavcem na svoji in drugih šolah ter UPO.⁷

V raziskavi je sodelovalo 29 učiteljev. Na posamezna vprašanja je odgovorilo manj učiteljev (vsaj 19).⁸ Večina sodelujočih je bila žensk (20), manj je bilo moških (3). Stari so bili med 20 in 65 let, največ jih je bilo v starostnih skupinah med 26 in 35 let (7) ter med 46 in 55 let (6). V šolstvu delajo različno dolgo: največ manj kot 5 let (7) ali več kot 25 let (8). Dva učitelja imata priseljenko ozadje (nista rojena v Sloveniji in njun materni jezik ni slovenski). To so učitelji različnih predmetov, ki poučujejo na osmih šolah v različnih krajih po Sloveniji, večina na osnovnih šolah (20), nekaj na srednjih šolah (4). Na njihovih šolah je med 12 in 200 UPO ($M=65,3$), sami pa jih poučujejo od 1 do 45 ($M=13,2$). Nekateri so zadolženi za pomoč pri vključevanju UPO (12) oz. poučujejo slovenščino kot drugi jezik (7). Sodelovali so tudi v projektih s področja vključevanja priseljencev v izobraževanje (17).

Merski pripomočki. Pripravile smo spletno anketo. Vprašanja zaprtega tipa smo oblikovale na osnovi izsledkov kvalitativne študije pouka na daljavo z UPO v 1. valu epidemije (Žmavc et al., 2020). Vprašanja so se nanašala na zaznane težave pri pouku na daljavo v 1. in 2. valu epidemije (odgovori da/ne) in pogostost le-teh med učenci v 2. valu (odgovori v 5 kategorijah: nihče – nekateri – polovica – večina – vsi). Ocenili so tudi pogostost zaznanih osebnih stisk učencev med šolanjem na daljavo in zaznanih učinkov šolanja na daljavo po vrnitvi v šolo (odgovori v 5 kategorijah pogostosti). Poročali so o lastnih načinih načrtovanja in izvajanja prilagoditev pouka na daljavo za UPO (odgovori da/ne) in oblikah učne pomoči ter povezovanja med šolami, ki so je bili deležni njihovi učenci (odgovori v 5 kategorijah pogostosti). Pri vseh vprašanjih je bila dodana možnost prostega odgovora pod »drugo«. Nazadnje so sporočili še svoje osebne podatke (demografske in o delovnih izkušnjah).

Postopek. Spletno anketo smo oblikovale na portalu 1ka in podatke zbirale dva meseca (24. 4.–30. 6. 2021). Udeleženci so najprej podali soglasje o zbiranju osebnih podatkov, skladno z GDPR (69 učiteljev), in nato odgovarjali na vprašanja. Veliko jih je prekinilo izpolnjevanje takoj po podanem soglasju (40 učiteljev), nekateri pa pred vprašanji o osebnih podatkih (5 učiteljev). Izpolnjevanje ankete je trajalo do 10 minut.

7 Vabilu za sodelovanje v raziskavi se je odzvalo le malo UPO (18), ki tudi niso odgovorili na vsa vprašanja, zato njihovih odgovorov ne predstavljamo v tem prispevku.

8 Numeruse respondentov navajamo pri posameznih vprašanjih; na demografska vprašanja jih je odgovorilo 23.

Za celoten vzorec smo izračunale frekvence odgovorov na posamezna vprašanja. Odgovore podane v 5 kategorijah pogostosti smo združile v 3 (nihče – manj kot polovica – več kot polovica) oz. 2 kategoriji (nihče – vsaj nekateri). Na tako preoblikovanih spremenljivkah smo z neparametričnimi statističnimi testi⁹ preverile povezanost med odgovori na dve spremenljivki ali razlike v distribuciji odgovorov na eno spremenljivko od slučajne razpršenosti.

REZULTATI

Težave in osebne stiske UPO med šolanjem na daljavo

Ali so bili učitelji in UPO bolj pripravljeni na pouk na daljavo v 2. valu epidemije, smo preverile s primerjavo zaznanih težav v obeh valih. Učitelji ($N=29$) so v 2. valu epidemije zaznali manj težav (1–10, $Mo=3$) kot v 1. valu (3–11 težav, $Mo=6$), vendar ne na vseh področjih. V 2. valu so zaznali občutno manj težav z računalniško opremo kot v 1. valu ($f_1=22$, $f_2=7$; $\chi^2_{(29,1)}=11,5$; $p<.001$),¹⁰ enako pogosto pa težave z dostopom do interneta ($f_1=22$, $f_2=15$). Težave z dostopnostjo tehnologije so v 2. valu imeli le nekateri UPO ($f_0=4$; $f_{<pol}=18$; $f_{>pol}=5$; $\chi^2_{(27,2)}=13,6$; $p=.001$).¹¹ Tudi težav z uporabo aplikacij so učitelji v 2. valu zaznali manj ($f_1=19$, $f_2=10$; $\chi^2_{(29,1)}=5,8$; $p=.016$), bodisi pri nekaterih ali pri večini UPO, le redko pa pri nobenem ($f_0=3$; $f_{<pol}=13$; $f_{>pol}=11$; $\chi^2_{(27,2)}=6,2$; $p=.045$).

V obeh valih epidemije je večina učiteljev zaznala težave UPO z razumevanjem navodil ($f_1=18$, $f_2=14$) in nerazumevanjem učne snovi ($f_1=21$, $f_2=20$). Po mnenju učiteljev se v 2. valu le redko kateri UPO ni soočal z jezikovnimi težavami ($f_0=2$; $f_{<pol}=13$; $f_{>pol}=12$; $\chi^2_{(27,2)}=8,2$; $p=.016$). Težave učiteljev zaradi pomanjkanja gradiv za samostojno učenje so v 2. valu skoraj izginile ($f_1=11$; $f_2=3$; $\chi^2_{(29,1)}=6,1$; $p=.013$), medtem ko so imeli v obeh valih večinoma težave zaradi pomanjkanja gradiv v različnih maternih jezikih učencev ($f_1=20$, $f_2=19$).

V obeh valih epidemije je tretjina učiteljev poročala o odsotnosti UPO od pouka ($f_1=12$, $f_2=9$), vendar so jo v 2. valu večinoma zaznali le pri nekaterih učencih ($f_0=6$; $f_{<pol}=16$; $f_{>pol}=9$; $\chi^2_{(27,2)}=8,2$; $p=.016$). Večina učiteljev je v obeh valih zaznala, da UPO niso redno opravljali nalog ($f_1=18$, $f_2=17$). Le pri nekaj UPO niso zaznali teh težav v 2. valu ($f_0=2$; $f_{<pol}=13$; $f_{>pol}=12$; $\chi^2_{(27,2)}=8,2$; $p=.016$). Prav tako učitelji v 2. valu le pri redkih UPO niso zaznali težav z motivacijo ($f_0=3$; $f_{<pol}=12$; $f_{>pol}=12$; $\chi^2_{(27,2)}=6,0$; $p=.050$) in organizacijo učenja ($f_0=2$; $f_{<pol}=11$; $f_{>pol}=14$; $\chi^2_{(27,2)}=8,7$; $p=.013$). Tretjina učiteljev je v

9 Uporabljene neparametrične teste navajamo pri predstavitvi posameznih vprašanj. Testne statistike navajamo le za odgovore, kjer so razlike značilne ($p<.05$).

10 McNemarjev test sprememb za povezane vzorce (χ^2 , $df=1$)

11 χ^2 -test skladnosti ocen pogostosti v treh kategorijah s slučajno razpršenostjo

obeh valih čas za poučevanje namenila pogovorom o čustvenih in socialnih stiskah učencev ($f_1=10, f_2=8$)¹².

Večina učiteljev je imela v obeh valih težave z neredno komunikacijo s starši ($f_1=16, f_2=16$). V 2. valu so učitelji pri večini svojih UPO zaznali težave pri pouku, ker doma niso imeli pomoči staršev ali skrbnikov ($f_0=3; f_{<pol}=8; f_{>pol}=16; \chi^2_{(27,2)}=9,6; p=.008$). Polovica učiteljev je v 2. valu zaznala težave večine svojih UPO zaradi pomanjkanja možnosti za sodelovanje s slovensko govorečimi sošolci, druga polovica učiteljev pa tega ni zaznala pri nobenem ali le pri nekaterih učencih ($f_0=7; f_{<pol}=7; f_{>pol}=13$).

Učitelji so zaznali nekatere osebne stiske UPO ($N=23$). Večinoma so vsaj pri nekaterih svojih učencih zaznali nemotiviranost ($f_0=5; f_{nekaaj}=18; \chi^2_{(23,1)}=7,3; p=.007$), manjšo zbranost ($f_0=6; f_{nekaaj}=17; \chi^2_{(23,1)}=5,3; p=.022$) in neorganiziranost ($f_0=5; f_{nekaaj}=18; \chi^2_{(23,1)}=7,3; p=.007$) ter stisko zaradi pomanjkanja stikov ($f_0=3; f_{nekaaj}=20; \chi^2_{(23,1)}=12,6; p=.000$).¹³

Prilagoditve pouka na daljavo za UPO

Pri oblikovanju načrta prilagoditve pouka na daljavo za UPO v 2. valu epidemije je sodelovala le tretjina sodelujočih učiteljev (10), večina (19) pa ne ($N=29$). Med tistimi, ki so načrtovali prilagoditve, jih je polovica načrtovala na individualni ravni učenca (5), nekateri na individualni ravni učitelja predmeta (3), na ravni aktivov učiteljev (3) ali na ravni šole (3), le en učitelj pa na ravni razrednega učiteljskega zbora. Prilagoditve so nekateri načrtovali že na začetku šolskega leta in jih izvajali tudi pri pouku na daljavo (2), drugi na začetku zaprtja šol (2) ali vsak teden (3), nihče pa etapno. Ponekod so načrtovali prilagoditve za te učence šele v mesecu februarju (torej ob koncu zaprtja šol). Večina učiteljev je načrt prilagoditev dopolnjevala glede na spremljanje napredka učencev, mesečno ali tedensko (5). Načrtovali so prilagoditve vsebine (5), npr. individualno srečanje z razlago vsebine; metod (5); učnih ciljev (6); preverjanja znanja (5), npr. drugačne oblike spremljanja znanja, več govornega in manj pisnega preverjanja. Nekateri so načrtovali prilagoditve oblik pouka (3) ali ocenjevanja (4), npr. individualno, z dodatno razlago pojmov in praktičnih primerov; postavili nižje kriterije (minimalne standarde); manj ocen (eno na leto), samo ustno ocenjevanje; vpis samo dobrih ocen kot obliko motivacije.

Večina učiteljev je prilagajala izvedbo pouka na daljavo UPO (18), le tretjina ne (10; $N=28$). Največ jih je izvedbo pouka prilagajalo tako, da so obravnavo snovi omejili na doseganje minimalnih standardov (12), obravnavali manjši obseg snovi (11) ali uporabljali prilagojena gradiva (več slikovnega gradiva, video posnetkov, iger, kvizov, ipd.) (11), da so na videokonferencah pri pouku v matičnem razredu UPO spodbujali k dialogu s sošolci, da bi zagotovili boljše razumevanje snovi (11), ali da

12 V kvalitativni raziskavi poučevanja na daljavo UPO v 1. valu so o tem poročali vsi učitelji (Žmavc at al., 2020), kar kaže na nezanesljivost zbranih podatkov na malih vzorcih.

13 χ^2 -test slučajne razpršenosti odgovorov v dveh kategorijah

so razlago prilagajali različnim ravnom znanja (10). Učence so spodbujali tudi k rabi učnih virov v njihovem maternem jeziku (8) ali uporabljali lastna gradiva, ki so spodbujala samostojno iskanje različnih virov (8). Nekateri učitelji (7) so uporabljali ista gradiva za vse, a dopolnjena s povezavami na drugačne predstavitve obravnavanih tematik. Nekateri učitelji so pri skupinskem delu UPO razvrščali v skupine z drugimi sošolci (7). Dajali so jim različne izbirne naloge, da bi spodbujali samostojno učenje (7). Nekateri učitelji (6) so pouk občasno izvajali v sodelovanju s šolsko svetovalno službo in drugimi učitelji. Nekateri (6) so učencem ocenjevali tudi izdelke, povezane z učno snovjo (oz. spise, ustne predstavitve). Nekaj učiteljev (4) je k sodelovanju pri učenju poskusilo pritegniti tudi starše, npr. za pojasnjevanje snovi, skupno učenje slovenščine, skupne naloge za razvedrilo. Nekateri (6) so razredne ure namenili pogovoru o stiskah učencev in povezovanju med sošolci. En učitelj je učencem dodatno razlagal snov ali z njimi individualno reševal dodeljene naloge.

Najpogosteje so učitelji večini svojih UPO nudili individualno učno pomoč pri opravljanju nalog rednega pouka preko videokonferenc ali telefona ($f_0=2$; $f_{<pol}=7$; $f_{>pol}=16$; $\chi^2_{(25,2)}=12,1$; $p=.002$).¹⁴ Le pri nekaj učiteljih so večini UPO pomagali prostovoljci iz lokalnih društev ($f_0=13$; $f_{<pol}=11$; $f_{>pol}=2$; $\chi^2_{(26,2)}=7,9$; $p=.019$) ali študenti ($f_0=13$; $f_{<pol}=9$; $f_{>pol}=2$; $\chi^2_{(24,2)}=7,8$; $p=.021$), pri polovici učiteljev pa teh oblik pomoči ni bil deležen nihče. Nekaj učiteljev je za pomoč pri učenju za nekatere UPO angažiralo kulturne mediatorke, večina učiteljev pa ne ($f_0=20$; $f_{<pol}=4$; $\chi^2_{(24,1)}=10,7$; $p=.001$).

Skoraj vsi učitelji (20) so poročali, da se z drugimi šolami niso povezovali pri izvedbi pouka na daljavo ($N=23$). Le nekateri so si z učitelji drugih šol delili prilagojena gradiva za poučevanje UPO (3). Nekaj učiteljev je poročalo, da so ti učenci z več šol imeli skupne dodatne ure učenja slovenščine (3). Nekaj učiteljev jim je za pomoč pri učenju dodelilo tutorje z druge šole, ki so znali isti jezik (3). Po en učitelj je navedel, da so UPO z več šol imeli skupne dodatne ure učenja posameznih predmetov ali skupne ure učenja maternih jezikov in kultur.

Prilagoditve pouka na daljavo glede na zaznane težave in osebne stiske UPO

Preverile smo, ali so učitelji individualizirali izvedbo pouka na daljavo in dodatno učno pomoč skladno s pogostostjo zaznanih težav in osebnih stisk pri UPO.¹⁵ Rezultati nakazujejo le nekaj povezav med prilagojeno izvedbo pouka in zaznanimi težavami učencev. Učitelji, ki so obravnavo snovi omejili na doseganje minimalnih standardov, so pri UPO pogosteje zaznali težave z nizko motivacijo ($U=9,5$; $p=.025$). Na videokonferencah v matičnem razredu so dialog pogosteje spodbujali tisti učitelji, ki so pri manj UPO zaznali jezikovne težave ($U=13,5$; $p=.037$) in neredno opravljanje nalog ($U=14,0$; $p=.044$). Učitelji, ki so uporabljali lastna gradiva tudi v

14 χ^2 – test

15 Mann-Whitneyev test rangov (U)

maternem jeziku učencev, so pri manj učencih zaznali neredno opravljanje nalog ($U=5,0$; $p=.034$) ter težave z organizacijo učenja ($U=1,5$; $p=.007$) ali nizko motivacijo ($U=2,0$; $p=.013$).

Učitelji so prilagajali izvedbo pouka tudi glede na zaznane osebne stiske UPO, in sicer tisti, ki so pri več učencih zaznali nemotiviranost in nezainteresiranost za učenje ($U=23,0$; $p=.022$), težave s spanjem ($U=27,5$; $p=.035$), težave s pomnjenjem učne snovi ($U=23,0$; $p=.022$) in težave z organiziranjem samostojnega učenja ($U=21,5$; $p=.018$). Učitelji, ki so pri več učencih zaznali osamljenost, so uporabljali gradiva, dopolnjena s povezavami na drugačne predstavitve tematik ($U=12,5$; $p=.044$) ali pripravili različne izbirne naloge za preverjanje znanja ($U=12,5$; $p=.033$). Tisti učitelji, ki so pri več učencih zaznali težave z zbranoostjo pri učenju ($U=8,0$; $p=.019$), pomnjenjem snovi ($U=8,0$; $p=.022$) ali jezo ($U=11,5$; $p=.039$), so učencem ocenjevali tudi izdelke, povezane z učno snovjo. Učitelji, ki so pri več učencih zaznali težave s pomnjenjem ($U=12,5$; $p=.033$), potrnost in tesnobo ($U=9,0$; $p=.033$), jezo ($U=11,5$; $p=.014$), pomanjkanje smisla življenja ($U=16,0$; $p=.027$) in zaskrbljenost zaradi dolgega zaprtja šol ($U=10,0$; $p=.016$), so uporabljali lastna učna gradiva, ki so spodbujala k samostojnemu iskanju virov. Gradiva v maternem jeziku učencev so uporabljali učitelji, ki so zaznali manj učencev, nemotiviranih in nezainteresiranih za učenje ($U=4,5$; $p=.030$) ali s težavami pri organiziranju samostojnega učenja ($U=4,5$; $p=.036$). Tisti učitelji, ki so skušali k sodelovanju pri učenju pritegniti tudi starše, so zaskrbljenost zaradi epidemije zaznali pri manj učencih ($U=8,5$; $p=.041$). Učitelji, ki so razredne ure namenili pogovorom o osebnih stiskah in povezovanju med sošolci, so pri manj učencih zaznali telesni nemir in težave z dihanjem ($U=12,5$; $p=.049$).

Zaznani učinki pouka na daljavo na UPO po vrnitvi v šolo

O učinkih pouka na daljavo so učitelji poročali z vidika težav, ki se po vrnitvi v šolo izražajo v znanju, komunikaciji in medosebnih odnosih. Učitelji so ocenili učinke pouka na daljavo glede na pogostost opažanja različnih težav med UPO pri pouku v šoli ($N=24$).¹⁶ Najpogosteje so za večino svojih učencev ocenili, da so v znanju slovenščine napredovali manj, kot bi pri pouku v šoli ($f_{>pol}=20$, $f_{<pol}=4$, $f_0=1$; $\chi^2_{(24,1)}=10,7$; $p=.001$), da imajo večje težave pri ubesedovanju znanja ($f_{>pol}=18$, $f_{<pol}=6$; $\chi^2_{(24,1)}=6,0$; $p=.014$) in pri razumevanju govora oz. pisane besede v slovenščini pri pouku v šoli ($f_{>pol}=17$, $f_{<pol}=7$; $\chi^2_{(24,1)}=4,2$; $p=.041$). Le za nekatere učence pa so pogosteje ocenili, da so v medosebnih odnosih manj strpni ($f_{>pol}=3$, $f_{<pol}=21$; $\chi^2_{(24,1)}=13,5$; $p=.000$). Vse druge navedene učinke šolanja od doma so učitelji zaznali približno enako pogosto pri večini ali nekaterih učencih (npr. da kažejo vrzeli v razumevanju naučenega ($f_{>pol}=15$, $f_{<pol}=9$), težje osmišljajo znanje ($f_{>pol}=16$, $f_{<pol}=8$), manj učinkovito opravljajo šolsko delo ($f_{>pol}=13$, $f_{<pol}=11$), težje komunicirajo s sošolci ($f_{>pol}=12$, $f_{<pol}=12$).

16 χ^2 -test slučajne razpršenosti odgovorov v dveh kategorijah (več kot polovica – manj kot polovica učencev)

Preverile smo, ali so zaznani učinki šolanja na daljavo pri UPO povezani z načini prilagajanja pouka in oblikami pomoči ($N=24$).¹⁷ Učitelji, ki so izvedbo pouka na daljavo prilagajali UPO, so po vrnitvi v šolo pri njih redkeje zaznali težave z osmišljanjem ($U=31,5; p=.046$) in ubesedovanjem znanja ($U=30,0; p=.045$). Pogostejše težave z ubesedovanjem znanja pri pouku v šoli so zaznali učitelji, ki so pri videokonferencah v matičnem razredu UPO razvrščali v skupine z drugimi sošolci ($U=11,5; p=.011$), ki so pouk občasno izvajali s šolsko svetovalno službo ($U=15,0; p=.044$) in ki so učenec ocenjevali tudi izdelke ($U=15,0; p=.044$). Pogosteje so pri učencih zaznali, da so v znanju slovenščine manj napredovali kot bi v šoli, tisti učitelji, ki so obravnavo snovi zanje omejili na doseganje minimalnih standardov ($U=12,5; p=.043$) ali so jih razvrščali v skupine z drugimi sošolci pri videokonferencah v matičnem razredu ($U=15,0; p=.032$). Učitelji, ki so pogosteje uporabljali lastna gradiva tudi v maternem jeziku učencev, so pri njih redkeje zaznali težave pri razumevanju govora oz. pisane besede v slovenščini pri pouku ($U=4,5; p=.027$) in komunikaciji s sošolci ($U=4,5; p=.023$). Učitelji, ki so spodbujali UPO k rabi učnih virov v njihovem maternem jeziku, so pri njih redkeje zaznali vrzeli v razumevanju in obvladovanju naučenega ($U=11,0; p=.011$). Ti rezultati kažejo na jezikovno senzibilno prilagajanje poučevanja na daljavo, ki je razmeroma uspešno podprlo UPO.

ZAKLJUČKI

Ugotovitve pričujoče raziskave predstavljajo indice¹⁸ težav učiteljev in UPO pri pouku na daljavo v 2. valu, ki pa niso zanemarljivi in nakazujejo možne učinkovite prilagoditve poučevanja, s katerimi so učitelji poskušali podpreti UPO pri njihovih učnih naporih v drugem jeziku, ki so jih pogosto ovirale domače bivanjske razmere.

Odgovori nakazujejo, da so se velike težave z opremo IKT, ki so ovirale pouk na daljavo v 1. valu epidemije, v glavnem uredile in so bile v 2. valu epidemije manj prisotne. To kaže na razmeroma dobro odzivnost odločevalcev pri zagotavljanju opreme, predvsem pa na izjemno prilagodljivost vseh uporabnikov digitalne tehnologije v učnem procesu.

Druga pomembnejša ugotovitev raziskave pa meri na jezikovni kontekst izobraževanja in prav na primeru dela z učenci s priseljenskim ozadjem kaže na pozitivne

17 Mann-Whitneyev test rangov – U

18 Rezultati pričujoče raziskave izhajajo iz zelo majhnega vzorca učiteljev, zato je njihova zanesljivost omejena in jih ne moremo posploševati. Natančnih razlogov za nizko odzivnost učiteljev sicer ne poznamo. Velja pa opozoriti na neustreznost spletnega anketiranja UPO, ki so se odzvali vabilu v še manjšem številu kot njihovi učitelji, zato njihovih odgovorov nismo predstavili. Menimo, da so pri spletnem anketiranju jezikovne ovire pri razumevanju uniformno oblikovanih trditev zlasti za nedavno prispelle učence iz tujine nepremostljive brez dodatne razlage, ki je na daljavo ni mogoče zagotoviti. Dodatno oviro predstavlja tudi zakonska norma varovanja osebnih podatkov, ki v primeru mladoletnih otrok zahteva zbiranje soglasij staršev za sodelovanje v raziskavah, kar je na daljavo težko zagotoviti.

učinke vpeljevanja jezikovno občutljivega poučevanja. Težave z rabo in obvladovanjem učnega jezika so bile namreč prisotne tudi v 2. valu. Izražale so se v nizki učni motivaciji, odsotnosti od pouka, prekinjeni komunikaciji učiteljev z družinami in različnih osebnih stiskah učencev, zlasti zaradi pomanjkanja neposrednih stikov z vrstniki v šoli. Slednji so nadvse pomembni za učenje slovenščine ter vključevanje v novo učno in socialno okolje, ne le zaradi urjenja jezikovnih in socialnih veščin, temveč tudi zaradi čustvene podpore pri doživljanju različnih stisk. Različne oblike sodelovanja s sošolci, ki so jih v 2. valu omogočili učitelji pri pouku na daljavo v obliki videokonferenc ali pri skupnem dopolnilnem pouku, so bile koristne, a UPO z njimi niso mogli premostiti jezikovnih primanjkljajev tako uspešno, kot bi jih lahko v razredu. Jezikovne ovire pri vseh učencih niso bile enake. Tudi to kaže, da gre za heterogeno skupino, pri kateri je za doseganje učnih ciljev ključna učiteljeva individualizacija v načrtovanju pedagoškega procesa.

Učitelji so se v 2. valu epidemije ponovno usmerili v spodbujanje učenja slovenščine – temu so prilagodili učne vsebine, obseg snovi, metode dela in ocenjevanje znanja tudi preko izdelkov. A kot ugotavljajo sami, se pouk slovenščine za priseljence na daljavo ni izkazal tako učinkovit kot v šoli. To ne more biti presenečenje, če upoštevamo vse okoliščine učenja od doma, ki so v času zaprtja šol oteževale spremljanje pouka vsem učencem. Toda učitelji so senzibilnost za učenje slovenščine kot drugega jezika, ki je nujna za razumevanje in obvladovanje učne snovi pri pouku, izkazali tudi z uvajanjem raznojezičnih pristopov v poučevanje. V 2. valu so učencem pogosteje omogočili rabo učnih gradiv, ki so jih sami pripravili v njihovih materinščinah in jih spodbujali tudi k rabi drugih tovrstnih virov. Takšno podporo učenju materinščine so zaznali kot učinkovito, predvsem pri lažjem učenju, premoščanju vrzeli v znanju in boljšem razumevanju govora in pisane besede v komunikaciji z učitelji in vrstniki v šoli. Obenem so lahko na ta način učenci dobili tudi pomoč staršev priseljencev, ki ni tako pogosta, kadar pouk temelji zgolj na rabi slovenščine.

Vsekakor bi lahko sklenili, da so učitelji tudi pri pouku na daljavo poskušali slediti načelom inkluzivnega poučevanja v medkulturnem okolju ter z individualizacijo ustvarjali ustrezne pogoje za premoščanje ovir in težav v osebnem in socialnem okolju, da bi zagotovili nemoteno učenje UPO in ohranjanje stika s šolsko skupnostjo. Toda opazno je, da to velja za posamezne učitelje in da prilagoditve sistemsko niso oblikovane tako, da bi spodbujale povezovanje v obliki medšolskega sodelovanja in iskanja podpore v lokalni skupnosti. Šole tako ne izkoristijo lastne avtonomije za odpiranje v lokalno okolje, temveč rešitve pogosteje iščejo znotraj svojega mikro okolja.

A hkrati velja spomniti, da so v okviru mednarodne raziskave TALIS 2018 (OECD, 2019) slovenski učitelji poročali, da se jih le 27 % čuti dobro ali zelo dobro pripravljene za poučevanje v večkulturnih in večjezičnih razredih. Naša raziskava je pokazala, da je tudi v 2. valu učiteljem primanjkovalo gradiv v maternih jezikih učencev, čeprav je bilo v vmesnem obdobju organiziranih veliko izobraževanj in so nastajala didaktična gradiva za pouk na daljavo. Prav tako se šole med sabo tudi v tem pogledu

niso povezovale. To kaže, da raznojezični pristopi niso bili integralni del systemskega načrtovanja in da je bilo njihovo uvajanje ponovno prepuščeno senzibilnosti in usposobljenosti posameznih učiteljev.

Če ta podatek navežemo na glavno ugotovitev naše raziskave, se na primeru pouka na daljavo z UPO kaže pomembno spoznanje za razvoj slovenskega šolstva: pot do uspešnega obvladovanja učnega jezika, večje motiviranosti za učenje in boljših odnosov vodi tudi preko razumevanja in priznavanja didaktične vrednosti raznojezičnih pristopov pri načrtovanju in izvedbi pouka. Zato velja v prihodnosti posvetiti še več pozornosti razvijanju in implementaciji tistih vsešolskih pristopov, ki inkluzivno poučevanje utemeljujejo na večjezičnih podlagah in na razumevanju šolskega prostora kot primarno večjezičnega in večkulturnega.

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SUMMARY

PUPILS WITH AN IMMIGRANT BACKGROUND IN DISTANCE LEARNING IN THE SECOND WAVE OF THE COVID-19 EPIDEMIC IN SLOVENIA

Alenka GRIL, Sabina AUTOR, Janja ŽMAVC

In the COVID-19 epidemic, the closure of schools led to distance learning and required schools, teachers, and students to adapt to new ways of teaching and learning in changing circumstances. The lack of computer equipment, digital skills, and e-materials, the inadequate living conditions, and the effects of long-term social isolation have caused many problems for all involved in the pedagogical process. For pupils with an immigrant background, these circumstances have brought a new form of risk of exclusion from education, as all listed material and social barriers may be even amplified for them. In addition, learning a new language of instruction has been severely hampered, especially for newly arrived immigrants. To support these pupils in overcoming the many barriers to learning and ensure equal educational opportunities, it was necessary to develop linguistically and culturally sensitive ways of distance learning while providing comprehensive support at school and the local level.

The present study aimed to investigate how distance learning was adapted for pupils with an immigrant background in the second wave of the epidemic in Slovenia. A small sample of teachers participated in an online survey at the end of the 2020/2021 school year.

The results show that the problems with ICT equipment decreased compared to the first wave. In contrast, the problems related to e-learning and the language of instruction persisted, exacerbated by unfavorable domestic living conditions. Teachers individualized the way of teaching to these pupils according to perceived language and learning difficulties and personal distress. They focused on promoting the learning of the Slovenian language, adapted learning contents and their scope, working methods (individual instruction, group work, and dialog with classmates), and assessed knowledge through products, but very rarely collaborated with other schools or local communities. They also prepared learning materials in pupils' mother tongues and encouraged them to use other such resources. Such support for mother-tongue learning was perceived as effective. However, online teaching of the Slovenian language for immigrants was not as effective as teaching at school, which may not be a surprise. We suggest that multilingual approaches in the teaching of immigrant pupils should also be strengthened in the school.

POLOŽAJ NARODNIH SKUPNOSTI PRIPADNIKOV NARODOV NEKDANJE SFRJ V SLOVENSKEM ŠOLSTVU

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IZVLEČEK

Položaj narodnih skupnosti pripadnikov narodov nekdanje SFRJ v slovenskem šolstvu

Članek prinaša rezultate raziskave, izvedene med predstavniki zvez kulturnih društev pripadnikov narodov nekdanje SFRJ. Na osnovi polstrukturiranih intervjujev smo ugotavljali, kako sogovorniki ocenjujejo položaj svojih skupnosti v šolstvu in kaj od njega pričakujejo. Rezultati so interpretirani s perspektive multikulturnih politik, ki se v Sloveniji oblikujejo glede na različne pravne statuse narodnih skupin in skupnosti. Rezultati kažejo na odsotnost jasne politike izobraževanja za učence pripadnike narodov nekdanje SFRJ, do česar se sogovorniki kritično opredelijo.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: multikulturna izobraževalna politika, narodne skupnosti pripadnikov narodov nekdanje SFRJ, učenci priseljenci

ABSTRACT

The Position of Nations of Former Yugoslavia in the Slovenian Education System

The article presents the findings of a study conducted among the representatives of cultural associations of former Yugoslavia's constitutive nations in Slovenia. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain insight into the representatives' views on their nations' situation in Slovenian education, including their expectations regarding education. The results are interpreted from the perspective of emerging multicultural educational policies categorized according to the different legal statuses of the ethnical groups in Slovenia. The results indicate a lack of clear policy, causing the respondents to express several concerns.

KEYWORDS: multicultural education policy, national communities of former Yugoslavia's constitutive nations, immigrant students

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UVOD

Slovenija je do svoje večkulturnosti zelo zadržana, saj na ustavni ravni zagotavlja kolektivne pravice le madžarski in italijanski narodni skupnosti, na zakonski pa še romski. Med slovenskimi manjšinskimi skupnostmi pa so številčno sicer najbolj zastopane skupnosti pripadnikov narodov nekdanje SFRJ, to so Albanci, Bošnjaki, Črnogorci, Hrvati, Makedonci in Srbi (Deklaracija Republike Slovenije, 2011), ki imajo v slovenskem prostoru posebno mesto. Že pred osamosvojitvijo je bila leta 1991 sprejeta Izjava o dobrih nameni, s katero je slovenska država zagotovila »vsem pripadnikom drugih narodov in narodnosti pravico do vsestranskega kulturnega in jezikovnega razvoja« (Valentiničič, 2018: 12), a posebne pravice takrat zanje niso bile predvidene. Kasneje so bile večkrat sprožene pobude za priznanje in poimensko vključenost v ustavo, a so bile vedno neuspešne.

Manjšinsko varstvo je v Sloveniji urejeno na različnih ravneh (Obreza, 2010), kar se odraža tudi v različnih poimenovanjih etničnih manjšin. Termin »skupnost« (v nasprotju s skupino) pogosto označuje višjo raven zaščite in se zato uporablja za madžarsko, italijansko in romsko skupnost. Za pripadnike narodov nekdanje SFRJ povsem enotnega poimenovanja ne poznamo (Obreza, 2010; Ribičič, 2004), v članku pa uporabljamo termin »narodna skupnost«, pri čemer se sklicujemo na Deklaracijo Republike Slovenije o položaju narodnih skupnosti pripadnikov narodov nekdanje SFRJ v Republiki Sloveniji (2011). S podpisom deklaracije se je državni zbor zavezal k materialni podpori in podpori pri uveljavljanju pravnih okvirov skupnostim. Valentiničič (2018) opozarja, da v izjavi ni zaveze k sprejetju posebnega zakona o zaščiti teh skupnosti. Predlog zakona o uresničevanju kolektivnih kulturnih pravic pripadnikov narodov nekdanje SFRJ je bil leta 2017 sicer vložen v proceduro, a te do sedaj ni uspešno preстал.

Članek vsebuje rezultate raziskave, izvedene med predstavniki zvez kulturnih društev konstitutivnih narodov nekdanje skupne države (Kržišnik Bukič, 2014; Valentiničič, 2018). V teoretičnem uvodu sintetiziramo pristope, ki so bili oblikovani v času samostojne države glede odnosa do večkulturnosti, v osrednjem delu pa prikazemo, kako predstavniki zvez kulturnih društev ocenjujejo položaj svojih skupnosti v družbi in šolstvu in kaj pričakujejo od vzgojnoizobraževalnega sistema.

ŠTIRI MULTIKULTURNE IZOBRAŽEVALNE POLITIKE V SLOVENIJI

Slovenski vzgojno-izobraževalni sistem se na večkulturnost odziva postopoma. Ta postopnost se kaže v neenotnih pristopih k obravnavi različnih manjšinskih etničnih skupin in skupnosti. Glede na pravni status ciljne skupine je mogoče ločiti štiri pristope, recimo jim multikulturene politike. Pokazali bomo, da se te politike razlikujejo zlasti v razmerju med politiko pripoznanja in politiko redistribucije ter v koncipiranju vloge pouka slovenskega in drugih jezikov.

1. Vzgoja in izobraževanje na narodnostno mešanih območjih: dvojezičnost in medkulturni dialog

Slovenija je ob osamosvojitvi prevzela vse obveznosti do italijanske in madžarske manjšine, kot so za ti skupnosti veljale v času SFRJ, in tako Ustava Republike Slovenije določa, da imata obe narodni skupnosti ne glede na število njihovih članov pravico do vzgoje in izobraževanja v svojem jeziku, upoštevajoč kulturne značilnosti in identiteto. V šolah na območjih, ki so opredeljena kot narodno mešana, spodbujajo medkulturni dialog in duh sožitja med narodi. V odnosu do obeh skupnosti je prepoznati politiko pripoznanja (Fraser, 1996; Fraser, Honneth, 2003), ki na razmeroma¹ celosten način udejanja načelo medkulturnosti (Skubic Ermenc, 2006), ki poudarja izobraževanje v materinščini in ohranitveni model dvojezičnosti² (Crawford, 2002), pa tudi krepitev narodne identitete ter spodbujanje sožitja med večinskim in manjšinskim prebivalstvom. Tudi s programskimi in didaktičnimi prilagoditvami sta vzpodbujana sožitje in dialog med dvema narodoma (Zorman, Zudič Antonič, 2006). Takšen pristop je blizu multikulturni vzgoji, ki jo lahko po klasifikaciji Sleeter in Granta (2007) umestimo v t. i. »model usmerjenosti h kreptvi medosebnega razumevanja«. Model se teoretsko napaja zlasti pri humanistični psihologiji, ki izpostavlja pomen kakovostne komunikacije in sodelovanja med pripadniki različnih kultur ter odpravo stereotipov in predsodkov. Ima pa tudi značilnosti modela, imenovanega »usmerjenost k študiji posameznih skupnosti« (Sleeter in Grant, 2007), saj imajo vsi učenci na narodno mešanih območjih priložnost spoznavati tudi kulturo manjšinske narodne skupnosti.

2. Vzgoja in izobraževanje učencev Romov: kompenzacija socializacijskih primanjkljajev in spodbujanje prehoda v slovensko kulturo

Kolektivne pravice romske skupnosti so opredeljene z zakonom (Komac & Barle Lakota, 2015). Formalnopravni okvir vzgoje in izobraževanja učencev Romov odraža predvsem redistributivno politiko (Fraser, 1996; Kymlicka, 2005),³ ki se kaže v zagotavljanju dodatnih sredstev šolam za učbenike in učila (Zakon o organizaciji, 1996; Ministrstvo RS za šolstvo in šport, 2011), v prilagajanju normativov in standardov ter v konceptu kompenzacije socializacijskih, jezikovnih, učnih in razvojnih primanjkljajev teh učencev. Mestoma je zaslediti tudi ideje ohranjanja kulturne identitete

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- 1 Njihove pravice – z nekaj izjemami – niso univerzalne, ampak lokalno omejene na zakonsko opredeljena narodnostno mešana območja, saj Slovenija razvija t. i. rezervatni tip zaščite manjšin (Komac et al., 2012).
 - 2 Temeljni namen ohranitvenega modela dvojezičnosti je razviti učenčevo polno zmožnost v maternem in drugem jeziku ter ga usposobiti za polno delovanje v svoji in večinski kulturi (Crawford, 2002).
 - 3 Politika redistribucije ali prerazporeditve naslavlja problem družbenoekonomskih nepravilnosti, ki koreninijo v ekonomski strukturi družbe, in kot protiukrep predlaga prerazporeditev sredstev, ki bodo zmanjšale razredne razlike med skupinami. Politika pripoznanja pa naslavlja problem kulturne nepravilnosti, ki izhaja iz družbenih vzorcev reprezentacije, interpretacije in komunikacije. Zato kot protiukrep predlaga kulturno in simbolno spremembo, pozitivnejše vrednotenje manjšinskih skupin (Kymlicka, 2005).

in spoštovanja romske kulture, a daleč od ravni operacionalizacije, kot je značilna za italijansko in madžarsko narodno skupnost. Nekaj skromnih elementov politike pripoznanja se odraža v učnem načrtu za izbirni predmet Romska kultura (Novak, 2008), šolam pa so na voljo tudi romski pomočniki, ki predstavljajo vez med romsko skupnostjo in šolo (Brezovar et al., 2014). Z romskimi pomočniki je pridobil na veljavi tudi romski jezik, vendar ima ta predvsem vlogo premoščanja vrzeli med slovenščino in romščino⁴ – razvoj gre v smeri t. i. prehodnega, in ne ohranitvenega modela dvojezičnosti (Crawford, 2002). Tak pristop lahko po Sleeter in Grantu (2007) umestimo v model »usmerjenosti k poučevanju netipičnih in kulturno drugačnih učencev«, usmerjen na učence, ki se zaradi svojega manjšinskega ali socialnega statusa soočajo s primanjkljaji. V ospredju politike je torej ideja kompenziranja primanjkljajev, in ne ohranjanja romske kulture. Slednja se uporabi kot sredstvo, ki naj bi omogočalo postopen prehod v večinsko kulturo.⁵

3. Vključevanje učencev priseljencev v sistem vzgoje in izobraževanja: potopitev v slovenski jezik

Po vstopu Slovenije v EU se je v Sloveniji začela razvijati že tretja multikulturna politika. Njen začetek lahko postavimo v leto 2007, ko je bila sprejeta Strategija vključevanja otrok, učencev in dijakov migrantov v sistem vzgoje in izobraževanja v Republiki Sloveniji (Ministrstvo RS za šolstvo in šport, 2007). Strategija definira več skupin učencev priseljencev,⁶ med katere pa vključi nenavadno mešanico

4 Kot poudarja Strategija vzgoje in izobraževanja Romov v Republiki Sloveniji: dopolnilo k Strategiji 2004 (Ministrstvo RS za šolstvo in šport, 2011: 10), bo romski pomočnik »predstavljaj neke vrste most med vrtcem oziroma šolo ter romsko skupnostjo«.

5 Sleeter in Grant (2007) ločita med petimi modeli: (1) Usmerjenost k poučevanju netipičnih in kulturno drugačnih učencev; (2) Usmerjenost h krepitvi medosebnega razumevanja; (3) Usmerjenost k študiju posameznih skupnosti; (4) Usmerjenost k vzgoji za multikulturnost; (5) Usmerjenost k vzgoji za multikulturnost in socialno pravičnost. Zadnja dva, ki ju v naši klasifikaciji ne omenjamo, povezujeta vidika kulturne raznolikosti in človekovih pravic, posebej izpostavljata spoštovanje alternativnih življenjskih izbir; poudarjata pomen dvo oz. večjezičnosti, raznolikost osebja ipd. Peti model je najbolj družbeno kritičen, ker povezuje vprašanja medkulturne vzgoje z vprašanji razreda in rase, njegovi zagovorniki pa terjajo radikalno reformo na ravni organizacije sistema, kurikuluma, didaktičnih pristopov, ocenjevanja in izobraževanja učiteljev.

6 Termin »učenci/otroci priseljenci« se je uveljavil kasneje, s Smernicami za vključevanje otrok priseljencev v vrtce in šole (2012), kar se je odrazilo tudi v Zakonu o osnovni šoli (2016) ter v Pravilniku o preverjanju in ocenjevanju znanja ter napredovanju učencev v osnovni šoli (2013). Ostala zakonodaja na področju vzgoje in izobraževanja uporablja termin »tujec«, pri čemer se opira na Zakon o tujcih (2021), po katerem je tujec vsakdo, ki nima državljanstva Republike Slovenije (2. člen), medtem ko je v 6. členu Resolucije o migracijski politiki Republike Slovenije (2002), skladno z definicijo OZN (Bučar Ručman, 2014), med priseljence uvrščen vsakdo po preteku enega leta od prijave prebivališča v Republiki Sloveniji. Dokumenta Strategija vključevanja otrok, učencev in dijakov migrantov v sistem vzgoje in izobraževanja v Republiki Sloveniji (Ministrstvo RS za šolstvo in šport, 2007) in Smernice za vključevanje otrok priseljencev v vrtce in šole (Zavod RS za šolstvo, 2012) pa kot učence priseljence razumeta tudi tiste, ki v Sloveniji prebivajo manj kot leto dni, saj iz te definicije izhajajo tudi pravice do prilagojenega ocenjevanja in do učenja slovenskega jezika.

učencev (Skubic Ermenc, 2010). V definiciji so se znašli tudi »priseljenci s slovenskim državljanstvom: osebe, ki živijo v Sloveniji od rojstva oz. imajo državljanstvo.« (Ministrstvo RS za šolstvo in šport, 2007: 8). Odločitev, da se med priseljence vključi tudi državljane, je mogoče razumeti v smislu zavedanja, da slovenščina ni materinščina vseh državljanov Slovenije, zaradi česar ti pri pouku potrebujejo posebno skrb. A ta skrb se v operativnih rešitvah izvaja zgolj za učence, ki v državi živijo največ dve leti (Zavod RS za šolstvo, 2012; Pravilnik o preverjanju, 2013; Pravilnik o prilagoditvah, 2018; Pravilnik o tečaju slovenščine, 2018). Glede na to, da je največ teh državljanov dejansko pripadnikov narodnih skupnosti nekdanje SFRJ, se vendarle zdi, da je takšno definicijo mogoče razumeti predvsem kot odraz nepripravljenosti države na pravno-formalno ureditev kolektivnih pravic teh skupnosti.

4. Odziv na kulturne pravice pripadnikov narodov nekdanje SFRJ: meddržavne pogodbe in učenje materinščin

Pripadnikov narodov nekdanje SFRJ v treh opisanih politikah torej ni opaziti, oziroma so za politiko »zanimivi« izključno v primeru, da v družbo »še niso povsem integrirani« (Ministrstvo RS za šolstvo in šport, 2007: 9). Integrirani pripadniki teh narodov, torej državljani Slovenije, katerih narodne skupnosti živijo na ozemlju Slovenije stoletja ali vsaj več generacij, pa so zaradi problematičnega koncepta avtohtonosti, ki vzpostavlja etnični ekskluzivizem (Josipovič, 2014; Šumi & Josipovič, 2008), bolj ali manj nepripoznani (Bingham, 2001; Rutar, 2018) ter neredko podvrženi predsodkom in diskriminaciji (Brezigar, 2012). Do pozitivnih premikov je sicer prišlo v zadnjih letih, ko so hrvaščina, srbsščina in makedonščina pridobile status obveznega izbirnega predmeta v osnovni šoli (Ministrstvo RS za izobraževanje, znanost in šport, b. l.). Na osnovi meddržavnih pogodb jim je omogočen tudi pouk materinščin (Evropska komisija, 2018). V tem primeru si odgovornost delita izvorna država (ki priskrbi in plača učitelje) in Slovenija (ki zagotovi brezplačne prostore za učenje v šolah). Vendar pa nekateri podatki kažejo, da se za učenje materinščin ne odloča veliko otrok in družin (Kocbek, 2018; Vižintin, 2019). O učni uspešnosti pripadnikov narodnih skupnosti nekdanje SFRJ pa vemo zelo malo. Nedavno izvedena populacijska raziskava (Cankar, 2020) kaže, da so učenci priseljenci manj učno uspešni in da potrebujejo dve generaciji, da dosežejo izobrazbeno raven večinskega prebivalstva. Josipovič (2019) pa po drugi strani v študiji, ki zajema prebivalce Mestne občine Ljubljana, ugotavlja, da se po osamosvojitvi izobrazbena struktura med tistimi prebivalci, ki med predniki nimajo priseljencev, vseskozi izboljšuje, medtem ko za generacije s priseljsko izkušnjo to ne velja.

METODOLOGIJA

Raziskovalni problem in vprašanja

Pripadniki narodnih skupnosti nekdanje SFRJ imajo torej zelo omejene kolektivne pravice na področju vzgoje in izobraževanja. Formalno možno, a v praksi redko prisotno, je učenje materinščin, ki poteka izven pouka in zato ni del programov formalnega izobraževanja. Učenci zadnjega vzgojno-izobraževalnega obdobja v osnovni šoli lahko v okviru izbirnih predmetov izbirajo tudi med tremi jeziki narodov nekdanje SFRJ, toda učni načrti ne razlikujejo med učenci, ki so jim ti jeziki materni, ter učenci, ki so jim ti jeziki tuji (Ministrstvo RS za izobraževanje, znanost in šport, b. l.). Sicer so kulture narodov nekdanje SFRJ v izobraževanju prezrte, njihovi pripadniki pa v šolstvu prepoznani le v primerih, ko slovenskega jezika še ne obvladajo v zadostni meri. Zanimalo nas je, kako takšen položaj razumejo in ocenjujejo vodstveni člani kulturnih zvez narodnih skupnosti nekdanje SFRJ sami ter česa si na področju izobraževanja želijo. Raziskovalni problem smo razčlenili na naslednja raziskovalna vprašanja:

R1. Kako pripadniki narodov nekdanje SFRJ gledajo na ambivalentnost države do priznanja statusa narodne skupnosti?

R2. Kako pripadniki narodov nekdanje SFRJ ocenjujejo definicijo priseljenca v Strategiji vključevanja otrok, učencev in dijakov migrantov v sistem vzgoje in izobraževanja v Republiki Sloveniji?

R3. Kako pripadniki narodov nekdanje SFRJ ocenjujejo možnosti, ki jih zagotavlja obstoječi vzgojno-izobraževalni sistem na področju varovanja kulturnih pravic skupnosti, in kje vidijo prostor za izboljšave?

R4. Kako pripadniki narodov nekdanje SFRJ razumejo medkulturno vzgojo v javnih šolah in kaj jim pomeni v relaciji do odnosa njihove skupnosti z ostalimi?

R5. Kako pripadniki narodov nekdanje SFRJ ocenjujejo učno uspešnost svojih pripadnikov in kakšne so njihove izkušnje na tem področju?

Raziskovana populacija

Z vprašanji smo se obrnili na kulturne zveze vseh narodnih skupnosti narodov nekdanje SFRJ v Sloveniji in na Zvezo zvez kulturnih društev konstitutivnih narodov in narodnosti razpadle SFRJ v Sloveniji. Prejeli smo odgovore petih respondentov, ki prihajajo iz naslednjih organizacij: Bošnjaške kulturne zveze Slovenije, Zveze črnogorskih društev Slovenije, Zveze Srbov Slovenije, Zveze hrvaških društev v Sloveniji

in že omenjene Zveze zvez kulturnih društev. Naši sogovorniki so bili predsedniki in podpredsedniki, v enem primeru pa član. Zaradi zagotavljanja anonimnosti za vse sogovornike uporabljamo moški slovnični spol, ne glede na dejanski spol sogovornika. Vključene so skoraj vse skupnosti (bošnjaška, črnogorska, makedonska, hrvaška in srbska), izjema je le albanska skupnost, kjer sogovornika nismo uspeli pridobiti. Gre torej za namenski vzorec, katerega temeljna značilnost je, da ga tvorijo sogovorniki, ki so najboljše informirani o proučevani temi (Vogrinc, 2008: 56).

Metodologija

Opravili smo kvalitativno raziskavo in izbrali tehniko polstrukturiranega intervjuja: oblikovali smo enoten nabor odprto zasnovanih vprašanj, ki smo jih sproti dopolnjevali s podvprašanji (Vogrinc, 2008: 109). Intervjuje smo izpeljali v obdobju med novembrom 2019 in aprilom 2020. Ker je zaradi epidemije Covid-19 raziskovalno delo zastalo, smo v oktobru 2021 anketirance ponovno kontaktirali in jih prosili za morebitne dopolnitve in ponovno verifikacijo odgovorov. Zagotovljena jim je bila anonimnost, zato iz odgovorov narodna pripadnost posameznega sogovornika ni razvidna – oznake respondentov so naključne.

Odgovori so bili posneti in nato transkribirani. Zbrani podatki so bili obdelani po načelih kvalitativne metodologije pedagoškega raziskovanja (Vogrinc, 2008). Transkribirano in urejeno besedilo je bilo odprto kodirano, zaradi večje validnosti pa sta ga analizirala oba avtorja raziskave, ki sta v prvi fazi raziskave ločeno iskala kode in opredeljevala kategorije. Opredeljene kode in kategorije sta primerjala in preoblikovala tako, da so odražale analize obeh. Rezultat primerjave in skupne presoje je torej nov, skupen nabor kod in kategorij.

REZULTATI Z INTERPRETACIJO

Mi nismo priseljenci

Sogovornike smo vprašali, kako gledajo na ambivalentnost države do priznanja statusa narodnih skupnosti narodov nekdanje Jugoslavije (Tabela 1).

Oznake respondentov	Koda	Kategorija
A, B, Č A, B, C, Č A, B, C, Č	ni volje za spremembo ustave odsotnost formalnega statusa povzroča probleme in ni politične volje občutek potiskanja na rob, so lojalni in vključeni državljani, ponižujoč status	odsotnost politične volje za ureditev statusa
A, Č B, D	nejasno, koliko generacij je potrebnih za priznanje avtohtonosti; avtohtonost je izmišljotina so avtohtona manjšina	nejasen koncept avtohtonosti
A, B, Č A, C, Č, D B	zavzemanje za formalno zagotovljene kolektivne kulturne pravice, ohranitev kulturne identitete čeprav so državljani Slovenije, imajo na voljo malo sredstev za zadovoljevanje kulturnih potrebne terjajo izenačitve statusa z madžarsko in italijansko narodno skupnostjo, ne terjajo dvojezičnosti	kolektivne kulturne pravice

Tabela 1: Odzivi intervjuvancev na nepriznavanje statusa narodnih manjšin

Sogovorniki si prizadevajo za pridobitev z zakonom potrjenega statusa narodne skupnosti, ki bi jim podelil kolektivne kulturne pravice. Verjamejo sicer, da bi bili upravičeni tudi do ustavne zaščite, a jih večina ugotavlja, da takega statusa zaradi nepripravljenosti slovenske politike realno ne bi bilo mogoče doseči. Ena temeljnih ovir je omejujoč koncept avtohtonosti (Josipovič, 2014), čeprav odgovori kažejo, da sogovorniki na avtohtonost nimajo povsem enotnega pogleda (razvidno tudi v Perić Kaselj et al., 2016; Ribičič, 2004; Škiljan & Perić Kaselj, 2018). Ne glede na razlike pa si vsi sogovorniki želijo več dostojanstva in finančne podpore, ki bi jim omogočala izvajanje dejavnosti, s katerimi bi dejansko lahko udeleževali pravico do svoje kulturne identitete. Odgovori kažejo, da sta za skupnosti problem tako pomanjkanje pozitivnega priznanja kot tudi pomanjkanje redistributivnih pravic (Fraser, 1996). »Mi smo državljani Republike Slovenije [...], a se čutimo diskriminirani v odnosu do drugih,« izpostavlja eden med njimi.

Sogovornike smo vprašali tudi, kako ocenjujejo široko definicijo priseljence v Strategiji vključevanja otrok, učencev in dijakov migrantov v sistem vzgoje in izobraževanja v Republiki Sloveniji (Tabela 2).

Oznake respondentov	Koda	Kategorija
A, B, C, Č, D	s strategijo niso seznanjeni, niso obveščeni k pripravi niso bili povabljeni, ni operativnih izpeljav	strategija vključevanja nepoznana
A, B, C, Č, D	takšna opredelitev vodi v diskriminacijo niso priseljenci, živeli so v skupni državi ... to je podcenjujoče je škodljiva	škodljiva definicija

Tabela 2: Ocena definicije priseljence v Strategiji vključevanja (2007)

Odgovori kažejo, da Strategije vključevanja otrok, učencev in dijakov migrantov v sistem vzgoje in izobraževanja v Republiki Sloveniji (Ministrstvo RS za šolstvo in šport, 2007) sogovorniki ne poznajo in opozarjajo, da z njo uradno niso bili seznanjeni in da niso bili vključeni v njeno pripravo. Soglasno ocenjujejo, da je z vidika njihovih skupnosti škodljiva in podcenjujoča, saj jih reducira na priseljence. Vsi sogovorniki vztrajajo: »Se ne strinjamo, ker dejansko to [priseljenci] nismo« (A); »Mi smo nepriznana manjšina.« (C); »Mi smo večinoma slovenski državljani ... Ta podstat, nacionalna pripadnost je nekaj drugega.« (Č); »Rojen sem tukaj, šolan tukaj, živim v tej družbi, ampak hkrati se zavedam svojih korenin.« (D). Iz Strategije vključevanja otrok, učencev in dijakov migrantov v sistem vzgoje in izobraževanja v Republiki Sloveniji (Ministrstvo RS za šolstvo in šport, 2007) je razvidna namera odločevalcev, da se pri oblikovanju svojega pristopa oprejo na evropsko politiko s področja integracije (Skubic Ermenc, 2010; Faure Atger, 2009), in ne na evropsko manjšinsko politiko. Ta odločitev je začrtala celotno filozofijo pristopa in ima zato specifične konsekvence za izobraževanje, saj v ospredje postavlja vprašanje učnega jezika, ostale vidike vključevanja in pripoznanja pa postavi v ozadje.

Želimo urejen dostop do učenja materinščine

Nadalje nas je zanimalo, kako sogovorniki gledajo na možnosti, ki jih zagotavlja obstoječi vzgojno-izobraževalni sistem na področju varovanja kulturnih pravic skupnosti, in kje vidijo prostor za izboljšave (Tabela 3).

Oznake respondentov	Koda	Kategorija
A, C	odsotnost priznanega položaja ovira na vseh področjih status manjšine je osnova za določanje položaja tudi v šolstvu država manjšin ne kontaktira in ne informira	odsotnost formalnega priznanja je izvorna ovira
B, Č, C, D	njihova skupnost je premajhna, da bi lahko terjali uvedbo našega jezika v šole, bi pa želeli, da se uvede in financira kot dodatni jezik; tečaje jezika organizirajo sami pouk jezika poteka na osnovi meddržavne pogodbe; izvaja se redko, imajo enega učitelja za celo državo pouk je izven šolskega sistema, kot interesna dejavnost in nima statusa predmeta, mora biti tudi vsaj 5 učencev ni jasnih normativov skupnost sama obvešča ljudi prek društev, cerkve, družabnih omrežij; izvedbene težave zaradi razpršenosti učencev po šolah	neenotno in neurejeno poučevanje materinščin
Č, D	MIZŠ je investiralo v pripravo nekaj učnih načrtov za makedonski, hrvaški in srbski jezik; ne govori se o črnogorskem in albanskem jeziku v pomoč bi bilo, če bi zaživel srbski jezik kot izbirni predmet med 7. in 9. razredom; če se starši ne bi sramovali vpisati svojih otrok	pouk jezikov kot izbirnih predmetov

Tabela 3: Poznavanje in ocena udejanja kulturnih pravic pripadnikov ABČHMS7 v slovenskem VIZ sistemu

Respondenti si želijo bolj urejeno poučevanje materinščin v okviru šolskega sistema. Pri tem vprašanju so njihovi odgovori najbolj obsežni in konkretni. Identificirajo dva sklopa ovir: na eni strani so pravno-formalne, programske in finančne nedorečenosti, na drugi pa tudi nižji ugled teh jezikov in samih skupnosti. Kar zadeva prvi sklop, sogovorniki identificirajo tri ovire: (a) izvajanje pouka materinščine je odvisno od meddržavnih pogodb in ni dano kot načelna pravica narodne skupnosti; (b) organizacija pouka materinščin kot zunajšolska dejavnost je otežena zaradi razpršenosti poselitve pripadnikov narodnih skupnosti; (c) umeščenost pouka jezika v programe

7 Gre za pripadnike albanske, bošnjaške, črnogorske, hrvaške, makedonske in srbske narodne skupnosti.

osnovnošolskega izobraževanja ni zadovoljiva: položaj obveznih izbirnih predmetov, ki se izvajajo med 7. in 9. razredom OŠ, imajo le hrvaščina, srbsščina in makedonščina.

Hkrati sogovorniki izpostavljajo majhen interes za učenje materinščin s strani samih pripadnikov narodnih skupnosti, kar povezujejo z nizkim statusom njihovih skupnosti v slovenski družbi. Kot pravi eden izmed sogovornikov: »Ker nekateri, recimo sploh ti, ki so se sedaj preselili, se bojijo. Ne samo oznak, ampak bi tudi želeli, da se njihovi otroci čimprej asimilirajo v slovensko družbo. [...] Te razlike nas bogatijo in se lahko drug od drugega marsikaj naučimo.«

Odgovori potrjujejo velik razkol v politikah, kjer na eni strani razvijamo model medkulturne vzgoje, ki temelji na dvojezičnosti in medkulturnem dialogu, a je namenjen le dvema skupnostnima, na drugi strani pa pristope, ki medkulturnost ožijo bodisi na domačo kulturo bodisi so sredstvo za lajšanje prehoda od manjšinske k večinski, slovenski kulturi.

Podpiramo sobivanje in medkulturnost

Sogovornike smo vprašali tudi, kako gledajo na pomen medkulturne vzgoje v javnih šolah (Tabela 4).

Oznake respondentov	Koda	Kategorija
A B	dvom, da so v programih zastopani književniki s področja nekdanje Jugoslavije možnost učenja zgodovinskih tematik	odsotnost medkulturnega kurikuluma
B	med pripadniki skupnosti ABČHMS obstaja sodelovanje	sodelovanje med narodnimi skupnostmi
C, Č	nepriznani status je glavna preokupacija sodelujejo z lokalno skupnostjo, so vključeni	želja po pripoznanju
D	namen je medkulturno sodelovanje in sožitje status narodne manjšine bi prispeval k medkulturni barvitosti	sožitje med vsemi narodi

Tabela 4: Omogočanje medkulturne vzgoje v šolah s perspektive pripadnikov ABČHMS

Respondenti podpirajo medkulturno vzgojo in medkulturni dialog tako v družbi kot izobraževanju. Ocenjujejo, da bi njihovo priznanje prispevalo k boljšemu medkulturnemu dialogu. Vendar se tudi pri tem vprašanju vedno znova vračajo k temeljnemu problemu, to je k nepriznanemu statusu, kar jih zelo obremenjuje. V tem kontekstu je med njimi zaznano tudi zavedanje o odsotnosti njihovih kultur v programih izobraževanja: »Logično bi bilo [...] da se skozi šolo tudi tega [o svojih književnikih] učijo. Da se naučijo nekaj iz svoje sredine in neko svetovno književnost,« izpostavi

predstavnika ene izmed skupnosti. Če v primeru italijanske in madžarske narodne skupnosti lahko govorimo o medkulturnem kurikulumu (Resman, 2003; Vižintin, 2016), pa to ne velja za v ostale narodne skupnosti (vključno z romsko). Učni načrti v programih izobraževanja so zasnovani ciljno, kar učiteljem daje številne možnosti prilagajanja na specifične svojih učencev, a priročnikov in učnih gradiv za učitelje, ki bi jih usmerjali v načrtovanje bolj medkulturno zasnovanih učnih ur (npr. ZA medkulturno sobivanje, b. l.), še ni veliko. Poleg tega zelo redko naslavljam problem nezadostne medkulturne zasnove učbenikov – medkulturne narave učbenikov niti ni med kriteriji ocenjevanja kakovosti učbenikov (Košak Babuder et al., 2021).

Naši otroci so učno uspešni

Nazadnje nas je zanimala tudi ocena sogovornikov o problematiki učne in izobrazbene uspešnosti pripadnikov njihovih skupnosti (Tabela 5).

Oznake respondentov	Koda	Kategorija
A	starši težko zadovoljijo eksistencialne potrebe, več morajo delati manjša je podpora družine in slabše poznavanje šole	eksistencialne težave družin
B, C, Č, D	ne zaznajo nizke uspešnosti, člani so visoko izobraženi, številni doktorji znanosti in magistri neka raziskava kaže, da so Hrvati v Sloveniji nadpovprečno izobraženi pogosto bolj izobraženi, a prisiljeni sprejeti delovna mesta z nižjimi kvalifikacijami; številni so profesorji, tehnično izobražen kader v Slovenijo se priseljujejo visoko izobraženi ljudje	številni visoko izobraženi člani
Č	gre za napačne predstave težje dobiti zaposlitev zaradi predsodkov	napačne stereotipne predstave
Č	starši svoje otroke pogosto bolj silijo v šole, da bi izboljšali svoj življenjski položaj	ambiciozni starši
D	lahko so ovire v nespodbudnem okolju, tudi šolskem otroci, ki jih zbadajo, postanejo uporniški, razvijajo negativno samopodobo	nesprejemajoče okolje

Tabela 5: Učna in izobrazbena uspešnost pripadnikov skupnosti ABCĤMS

Sogovorniki so v veliki večini zelo kategorični pri zagovarjanju stališča, da učenci, ki so člani njihovih skupnosti, niso učno slabši od večinskega prebivalstva. Dva izpostavita eksistencialne probleme nekaterih družin, kar vpliva na učni uspeh. Ocene teh dveh sogovornikov so skladne z rezultati omenjene populacijske raziskave (Cankar, 2020), ki nakazujejo, da izobrazba morda za pripadnike narodnih skupnosti ni ključen problem, čeprav je podatkov premalo za povsem objektivno oceno. Upoštevati je potrebno, da so sogovorniki seznanjeni s situacijo aktivnih članov svojih društev in zvez, kjer se združujejo številni izobraženi ljudje, ki se zavzemajo za pravice svoje skupnosti. Kot poročajo sogovorniki, so njihovi člani dobro vključeni državljani, tudi ambiciozni glede izobrazbe za svoje otroke, ki se neposredno ne posvečajo težavam novo priseljenih ljudi. Opozarjajo pa, da so zaradi svojega ozadja tarče žalitev in pomanjkanja sprejemanja s strani okolice in tudi šole: eden izmed sogovornikov opozarja, da učni problemi ne izhajajo toliko iz družinskega okolja, »ampak [so prisotni] v vzgoji in izobraževanju. Tudi sam sem v času svojega šolanja slišal marsikatero opazko na račun svojega porekla. Edino srečo imam, da se moj priimek ne konča na -ić.« Kot opozarja sogovornik, lahko tak odnos vpliva na slabšo samopodobo učencev. Stereotipi in predsodki, ki so jih deležni, negativno vplivajo tudi na zaposlovanje: »Samo da slišijo, da je 'ta spodnji', je že dovolj,« zaključuje eden od sogovornikov. Ugotovitve kažejo, da je v slovenskem izobraževalnem prostoru prisotnega še veliko neznanja, nerazumevanja in stereotipnega posploševanja o dosežkih in specifičnih potrebah učencev, ki so pripadniki narodnih skupnosti nekdanje SFRJ. Kaže se zlasti potreba po celovitejših raziskavah.

ZAKLJUČEK

Rdeča nit odgovorov sogovornikov je problem neurejenega pravnega statusa njihovih skupnosti. Sogovorniki ostro nasprotujejo rešitvi, ki v šolskem sistemu njihove pripadnike vidi bolj kot priseljence in manj kot pripadnike narodnih skupnosti. Pristojni se namreč pri iskanju rešitev opirajo na integracijsko (in ne na manjšinsko) politiko EU, ki rešuje vprašanja vključenosti priseljencev v družbene sisteme in zagotavljanja človekovih pravic. Pri tem izpostavlja pomen medkulturnega dialoga, a ne posega v vprašanja kolektivnih pravic. Narodne skupnosti nekdanje SFRJ pa svojih težav ne vidijo v slabi vključenosti, niti ne v nezmožnosti uresničevanja svojih individualnih človekovih pravic ali v učni neuspešnosti svojih otrok. Svoje težave vidijo v zanikanju kolektivnih pravic in v nepriznavanju njihovih narodnih in kulturnih identitet. Od države ne pričakujejo, da bo zanje vzpostavila posebno ureditev izobraževanja, pričakujejo le boljši dostop do učenja materinščin za svoje otroke in takšen status v družbi, ki bo njihovim jezikom in kulturam dal enak status kot ostalim. Verjamejo, da so njihovi otroci v šoli uspešni, a opozarjajo na obstoj predsodkov in žalitev, ki so jih deležni njihovi pripadniki zaradi svojega jezikovnega in kulturnega

ozadja. Očitno je, da se med izobraževalno politiko in narodnimi skupnosti kaže velik razkol v opredelitvi problema in ciljev, ki naj bi jih dosegli.

V uvodnem delu smo pokazali, da se politike razvijajo glede na pravni status ciljne skupine, kateri so namenjene, ne pa glede na pedagoške kriterije. Če bi politiko gradili na pedagoških kriterijih, bi preprosteje raziskovali in tudi razvijali šolstvo v enotnem inkluzivnem in medkulturnem duhu, ki bi bil hkrati povezovalen in odziven na specifične potrebe. To bi denimo pomenilo, da bi lahko dobro vključenost velikega dela pripadnikov narodnih skupnosti narodov nekdanje SFRJ v slovensko družbo in njeno societalno kulturo (Kymlicka, 2005) ter njihove uspehe na področju izobraževanja uporabili tudi kot enega izmed sredstev za vključevanje novo priseljenih članov teh skupnosti: dobro je, da imajo novo priseljeni dostop do intenzivnega učenja slovenščine in da se razvijajo različni pristopi postopnega vključevanja v šolo in pouk (Jelen Madruša & Majcen, 2018). Toda te elemente redistributivne politike bi morali povezati s politiko pripoznanja ter učence tesneje povezati s svojimi skupnostmi. Te skupnosti pa bi veljalo kot partnerje vključiti v razvoj novih rešitev na šolskem področju ter omogočiti nadaljevanje učenja materinščin in ohranjanje svojih kulturnih identitet. Nenazadnje bi morali na ravni sistemskih, kurikularnih in metodičnih rešitev okrepiti tudi elemente medkulturnega kurikulumu in vzgoje.

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SUMMARY

THE POSITION OF NATIONS OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA IN THE SLOVENIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

Jaka KLUN, Klara SKUBIC ERMENC

The article presents the findings of a study conducted among the representatives of cultural associations of former Yugoslavia's constitutive nations in Slovenia. The associations strive to attain legal acknowledgment of their national communities so that some of their collective rights gain legal protection. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain insight into the representatives' views on their nations' situation in Slovenian society and education, including their expectations regarding education. The results are interpreted from the perspective of emerging multicultural policies categorized according to different legal statuses of the ethnic groups in Slovenia: education in ethnically mixed areas (referring to Italian and Hungarian national communities); Roma education; integration of immigrant students (including members of nations of former Yugoslavia) into education. Due to the lack of legal acknowledgment, their collective educational rights are very limited; based on bilateral intergovernmental agreements, their mother tongues can be taught as an extra-curricular activity in schools. Some of the nations' languages also gained the status of elective subjects in primary schools.

Additionally, the educational needs of members of nations of former Yugoslavia are addressed within an integration strategy for immigrant students in education, adopted by Slovenian education authorities in 2007. The strategy also refers to those citizens who need support in the Slovenian language learning and social integration. Results of the study indicate the respondents' strong opposition to tackling the issue of educational rights within the immigrant integration policy. They do not see themselves as immigrants needing support in language learning and integration into Slovenia society. As citizens, they are well integrated, yet they claim collective cultural rights that would provide better opportunities for the teaching of their mother tongues and the recognition of their cultures in the school curricula.

NAČRTI O »TRETJI SLOVENSKI UNIVERZI« KOT DEL ODGOVOROV NA IZZIVE BEGA MOŽGANOV SEDEMDESETIH IN OSEMDESETIH LET DVAJSETEGA STOLETJA

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COBISS 1.01

IZVLEČEK

Načrti o »Tretji slovenski univerzi« kot del odgovorov na izzive bega možganov sedemdesetih in osemdesetih let dvajsetega stoletja

Tekom štiridesetih let razprav o begu možganov na Slovenskem so se porodile različne ideje o tem, kaj storiti, da bi preprečili dolgoročne negativne družbenoekonomske posledice bega možganov. Predlogi se razpenjajo od ukrepov za omejevanje izseljevanja izobraženega in visoko usposobljenega kadra prek razmislekov o nujnem spodbujanju vračanja do ideje o mednarodnem sodelovanju, ki je bilo v jedru predloga za »Tretjo slovensko univerzo«. Odhajanje bi morali urediti tako, da to ne bi predstavljalo odliva znanja, ampak njegovo oplemenitenje – z organiziranjem transnacionalne mreže, po katerih znanje kroži in se tudi vrača.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: migracije, beg možganov, Tretja slovenska univerza, izseljenci, mobilnost

ABSTRACT

Plans for a "Third Slovenian University" as Part of the Response to the Brain Drain Challenges of the 1970s and 1980s

During the forty years of debate on the brain drain in Slovenia, various ideas have emerged on how to prevent the long-term negative socioeconomic consequences of the brain drain. Proposals range from measures to curb the emigration of educated and highly-skilled personnel to considerations of the need to encourage return, to the idea of international cooperation, which was at the heart of the proposal for a "Third Slovenian University." Outflows should be regulated in a way that does not represent an outflow of knowledge, but its enrichment—the organization of transnational networks through which knowledge circulates and returns.

KEYWORDS: migration, brain drain, Third Slovenian University, emigrants, mobility

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UVOD

Zgodovina izseljevanja iz slovenskega etničnega prostora ter iz življenja naših ljudi in njihovih potomcev v različne države sprejema je bila ena od pomembnih izhodiščnih tematizacij pri enem izmed petih seminarjev projekta »Le z drugimi smo«, naslovljenem »Medkulturni odnosi in integracija«. Poznavanje razmer, razlogov in odločitev, ki so pripeljali do odhodov, ter spoznavanje izzivov novega življenja, s katerimi so se soočali naši ljudje, pogosto prispevata k boljšemu razumevanju izzivov, pred katerimi se znajdejo tisti, ki se priselijo v Slovenijo. Vsebina selitvene dinamike slovenskega prostora je sicer v številnih vidikih že sistematično prikazana, še vedno pa ostajajo sive lise nepokritih področij. Tako npr. tematizacija bega možganov oziroma širše mobilnostne dinamike visoko izobražene in usposobljene populacije še ni celostno in sistematično umeščena v izseljenske študije. Po drugi strani pa je kot pojav, s katerim se soočata slovenska država in družba v zadnjih časih, vse bolj prisotna. Pričujoči prispevek zapolnjuje vrzel za obdobje od konca osemdesetih let dvajsetega stoletja do prvih let po osamosvojitvi Slovenije ter je nadaljevanje in nadgradnja članka »Beg možganov od konca petdesetih do začetka devetdesetih let dvajsetega stoletja s poudarki na Sloveniji«, ki obravnava tematiko bega možganov od petdesetih do devetdesetih let dvajsetega stoletja (Lukšič Hacin, 2020).

TEORETSKA IN ZGODOVINSKA KONTEKSTUALIZACIJA BEGA MOŽGANOV

Pojem beg možganov je v teoriji običajno opredeljen kot odhajanje tistega visoko usposobljenega in izobraženega kadra na delo v tujino, ki ima negativne dolgoročne posledice za izvorno državo, predvsem za njen gospodarski (ne)razvoj, in prek tega za njeno celotno družbeno dinamiko (Castles & Miller, 1998: 91–93, 156–157; Lowell, 2003: 1–2; Lukšič Hacin, 2020: 118–119).¹ Pomen definicije je veliko bolj kompleksen, ko ga skušamo razumeti v kontekstu zgodovinske dinamike. Pojem izobraženosti, ki je njen del, je namreč relativen. Razumeti ga moramo v kontekstu družbenih odnosov in časa, ki ga opazujemo. Nivo formalne izobrazbe, ki ga definicija zajame, je odvisen od izobrazbene strukture prebivalstva v okolju izselitve (Lukšič Hacin, 2004: 3–4). Še v sedemdesetih letih dvajsetega stoletja je bila univerzitetna izobrazba v Sloveniji redkost. Srednja šola je že predstavljala dobro formalno izobrazbo. Danes srednja šola predstavlja šele izhodišče. Z dvigom izobraženosti večinske populacije prebivalcev je na nek način statusna degradacija oz. relativizacija doletela tudi višjo in visokošolsko izobrazbo. Pojem visoke izobrazbe, točneje najvišje izobrazbe, se je pomaknil proti stopnji magisterija in doktorata. Na kontekstualni pomen pojma »izobrazba« se

1 Več o kategorialnih razpravah v Lukšič Hacin, 2020: 114–119.

navezuje tudi razumevanje bega možganov, ki ga moramo proučevati v konkretnem prostoru in času. Tako podatki o begu možganov za šestdeseta in sedemdeseta leta dvajsetega stoletja nujno vključujejo drugačno strukturo formalno izobraženih kot podatki za osemdeseta, sploh pa za devetdeseta leta dvajsetega stoletja. Skupno je, da so ljudje, ki so bili v določenem obdobju upoštevani v sklopu proučevanja bega možganov, v državi oziroma družbi izvora takrat predstavljali izobrazbeni vrh ali razvojni potencial različnih gospodarskih panog ali pa najpomembnejši družbeni potencial. Za tehnološko manj razvite države, ki so v globalnih ekonomskopolitičnih razmerjih moči vpete v polperiferne ali periferne položaje (Wallerstein, 1974), je (bilo) ključno vprašanje, kako v nastali situaciji poiskati rešitve in doseči razvojni preboj ter zamejiti dolgoročno negativne posledice bega možganov.

Množična emigracija visoko izobraženega in usposobljenega kadra se je v Evropi začela po drugi svetovni vojni, točneje konec petdesetih let prejšnjega stoletja. Razlogi za to so bili povezani s hitrim gospodarskim in tehnološkim razvojem v določenih delih sveta. Situacija je bila v različnih državah seveda različna. Za ta čas se npr. navaja, da je Grčija izgubila 25–33 % svojih diplomantov, Norveška 25 % inženirjev in naravoslovcev, Švica 22,4 % diplomantov, ZR Nemčija 8,2 % visokošolskih izobražencev, Anglija 7,4 %, Italija 1,3 % in Francija 0,9 % (Šter, 1974: 1074). Smeri selitev so bile z juga proti severu in z vzhoda proti zahodu, podobno kot so tekle smeri t. i. mednarodnih delovnih migracij, določenih z globalnimi relacijami med ekonomsko oz. tehnološko razvitimi ter nerazvitimi državami. Podobno so se, kot migracijska podpopulacija, selili tudi (pogosto mladi) strokovnjaki. Odhajali so v gospodarsko in tehnološko razvitejšo državo, kjer so imeli ugodnejše pogoje za delo, boljše možnosti za poklicno uveljavljanje in višji življenjski standard. Kar 75 % bega možganov iz vseh držav izvora po svetu je bil usmerjen le v štiri države sprejema: v Avstralijo, Kanado, Veliko Britanijo in ZDA (Pirher, 1985: 25; Oommen, 1989: 411–412; Ong et al., 1992: 543–544). Med njimi edino ZDA niso poznale izseljevanja tovrstnega kadra. Druge tri omenjene države so bile hkrati države sprejema in države izvora, saj so njihovi visoko usposobljeni kadri odhajali v tujino, največkrat v ZDA (Šter, 1974: 1074; Pirher, 1985: 28).² Migracijska dinamika podpopulacije ni bila povezana zgolj s »spontano« globalno gospodarsko dinamiko, ampak tudi z aktivno t. i. *brain gain* politiko ekonomsko najrazvitejših držav, ki so načrtno intenzivno privabliale, točneje rečeno rekrutirale, strokovnjake z vsega sveta (Lukšič Hacin, 2020: 119–121). Tako se je dogajalo, da so gospodarsko nerazvite države in države v razvoju gospodarsko razvitim državam dajale mnogo več strokovnjakov, v izobraževanje katerih so vlagale svoj kapital, kot so v zameno dobile v obliki tehnične pomoči (Šter, 1974:

2 Za Veliko Britanijo je bila npr. v 1960. letih značilna visoka stopnja znanstvene emigracije, predvsem v ZDA. To se je dogajalo kljub hitremu naraščanju izdatkov za raziskovanje in razvoj (Mali, 1993: 658).

1075). S tem je prišlo do pojava »obrnjenega transferja tehnologije«³ kot družbene posledice globalne eksploatacije, ki je potekala v ozadju omenjenih procesov.⁴

V opisano dinamiko je bila kot »polperiferija« (Wallerstein, 1974) vpeta tudi socialistična Jugoslavija (in kot njen del republika Slovenija). SFRJ je bila prostor rekrutacije delovne sile za potrebe tujega, zahodnoevropskega in prekomorskega kapitala (Lukšič Hacin, 2018b). Znotraj potekajoče mednarodne rekrutacije delovne sile v SFRJ, in ožje v Sloveniji, se je odvijala tudi rekrutacija visoko izobraženih in usposobljenih kadrov, ki je v jugoslovanski gospodarski situaciji in njenem polperiferem globalnem položaju pomenila beg možganov (Lukšič Hacin, 2020: 121–122). Za samo Slovenijo najdemo podatke, da so visoko izobraženi in usposobljeni kadri odhajali v tujino že v petdesetih, sploh pa v šestdesetih letih dvajsetega stoletja. Iz statističnih podatkov, pridobljenih za leti 1960 in 1965, lahko razberemo, da je bilo v odhajajoči populaciji delovnih migrantov med dvema in tremi odstotki (za tisti čas) visoko izobraženih oseb. Po popisu prebivalstva iz leta 1971 naj bi bilo na začasnem delu v tujini 2,9 % prebivalcev Slovenije, pri čemer so strokovnjaki, umetniki in vodilno osebje predstavljali štiri odstotke vseh začasno zaposlenih v tujini. Vendar so bili podatki nepopolni, zato se ocenjuje, da je bilo takrat v populaciji, ki je bila v tujini, dva do tri odstotke visoko izobraženih in usposobljenih strokovnjakov (Šter, 1974: 1075–1076; Stare, 1977). V popisu prebivalstva desetletje pozneje (1981) vidimo, da je trend odhajanja v tujino zelo upadel (Pirher, 1985: 43). Razlogi za to so povezani tudi s posledicami naftne krize, zaradi katere gospodarsko najrazvitejše države sprejema niso več dovoljevale priseljevanja oziroma so ga dovoljevale zgolj izjemoma in selektivno (Lukšič Hacin, 2018a: 63–64). Na podlagi popisa prebivalstva iz leta 1991 vidimo, da je bilo v tujini »začasno« 2,7 odstotka stalnih prebivalcev Slovenije. V primerjavi z letom 1981 je prišlo do rahlega zmanjšanja, se je pa med njimi zvišala stopnja izobrazbe, in to bolj, kot je narasla povprečna izobrazbena stopnja prebivalstva v Sloveniji. Delež visoko izobraženih v populaciji na začasnem delu v tujini se je z 2,5 odstotka povečal na tri odstotke. (Slovenski) delovni migranti so bili povprečno najbolj izobraženi v Veliki Britaniji, najmanj pa v Nemčiji in Avstriji (Sosič, 1987: 28; Bevc, 1993: 693–694; Bevc, 1995: 96, 98). Pri tem je pomembno, da se je v tem desetletju dvignila tudi povprečna izobrazbena raven prebivalcev v Sloveniji, kar je pomembno vplivalo tudi na izobrazbeno stopnjo delovnih emigrantov in sam pojav bega možganov.⁵

3 Obrnjeni transfer tehnologije izpostavlja dodatni vidik globalnega izkoriščanja ekonomsko manj razvitih držav s strani razvitejših. Poudarek je na dejstvu, da gospodarsko manj razvite države brez plačila izvažajo znanje v obliki visoko usposobljene delovne sile, nato pa tuje znanje, v obliki tehnologije, zopet kupujejo (Pirher, 1985: 21; Mali, 1990: 19).

4 Več o zgodovinski kontekstualizaciji v Lukšič Hacin, 2020: 119–125.

5 Neposredna primerjava podatkov s preteklim desetletjem mora biti dodatno osvetljena s podatki o splošnem dvigu izobrazbe prebivalstva v 1980. letih. Ni se namreč zgolj povečeval delež višje in visoko izobraženih na ravni diplomske izobrazbe, ampak je bilo tudi vse več magistrandov in doktorandov. Dvig splošne izobraženosti prebivalstva poveča verjetnost, da bo sorazmerno višji tudi delež visoko izobraženih tudi med tistimi, ki so odšli v tujino. V

V šestdesetih letih dvajsetega stoletja, ko se je globalno odvijal proces, ki ga je Adams (1968: 6–8) opredelil kot beg možganov, so bile predvsem v državah izvora intenzivne družboslovne raziskave o njegovih vzrokih. Z rahlim zamikom, v prvi polovici 1970. let, je raziskava potekala tudi v Sloveniji. Šterova raziskava o vzrokih in motivih bega možganov za Slovenijo je izhajala iz Adamsove teorije *brain drain – brain gain*, ki je temeljila na Leejevi teoriji faktorjev privlačnosti in odbojnosti,⁶ in iz Otiezove teorije razlik, na podlagi česar je Šter oblikoval štiri analitske skupine dejavnikov.⁷ Če strnemo Šterove rezultate o vzrokih za beg (slovenskih) možganov v 1960. in 1970. letih, vidimo, da so bile najpomembnejši vzrok za odhode organizacijske slabosti. Sledijo medčloveški odnosi na delovnem mestu oziroma konflikti v delovnih organizacijah (nemožnost poklicnega napredovanja, konflikti v kolektivu, v tujini so pomembne sposobnosti, in ne formalnosti, v tujini je večja možnost strokovnega izpopolnjevanja itn.). Šele potem sledijo materialni vzroki, predvsem boljši absolutni in relativni osebni dohodek. Na koncu so še drugi vzroki, kot so npr. brezposelnost, poroke in stanovanjsko vprašanje (Šter, 1974: 1082–1086). Podobne rezultate kažeta raziskavi, ki sta bili izvedeni deset in trideset let kasneje: raziskava iz leta 1985 (Pirher, 1985: 49–51) in raziskava iz leta 2004 (Bevc et al., 2004: 155). Raziskovalci v obeh raziskavah izpostavljajo kot pomembno predvsem dejstvo, da so bili glavni motivi za začasni ali trajni odhod predvsem možnosti za napredovanje v poklicni dejavnosti, možnosti za razvoj kariere, možnosti za (mednarodno) projektno delo, možnosti za (do)izobraževanje in dodatno usposabljanje ter šele za tem boljši zaslužek.

Tekom štiridesetih let občasnih razprav o begu možganov na Slovenskem so se porodile tudi različne ideje o tem, kaj storiti, da bi preprečili dolgoročne negativne družbenoekonomske posledice bega možganov doma. Predlogi, ki jih najdemo, se razpenjajo od ukrepov za omejevanje, celo preprečevanje izseljevanja izobraženega in visoko usposobljenega kadra, prek razmislekov o nujnem spodbujanju vračanja, do ideje o sodelovanju oziroma koncepta t. i. »Tretje slovenske univerze« konec osemdesetih let dvajsetega stoletja. Prvi ukrepi v sedemdesetih letih dvajsetega stoletja, ko se je tematiziralo in spoznalo dolgoročne negativne posledice bega možganov za gospodarstvo in družbeno dinamiko izvorne države, so bili (tiho) restriktivni. Uvedeni so bili mehanizmi in ravnanja za neposredno omejevanja izseljevanja. Kmalu se je izkazalo, da ukrepi nimajo zelenega učinka. Na migracijsko dinamiko je veliko bolj omejevalno vplivala naftna kriza sredi 1970. let, a tudi ta le začasno, saj se je po gospodarskem okrevanju v državah sprejema nadaljevala selektivna, k politiki *brain gain* orientirana migracijska politika mednarodnega rekrutiranja imigrantov. V Sloveniji je neučinkovitemu sistemskemu omejevanju iz 1970.

podskupino »bega možganov« so vključeni le najvišje izobraženi, torej je (bo) potreben postopen premik k magistratom in doktorjem.

6 Za več o modelu in teorijah glej Lukšič Hacin, 2010.

7 Gre za štiri skupine dejavnikov: razlike v dohodkih med državami; razlike v dohodkih strokovnjakov v primerjavi z drugimi zaposlenimi; razlike v družbeni obravnavi strokovnjakov; druge razlike (Šter, 1974: 1082).

let sledil razmislek o alternativnem pristopu, ki bi se namesto na omejevanje osredotočil na spodbujanje vračanja, na t. i. povratništvo. Že prve raziskave poudarjajo, da lahko tok emigracije zaustavimo, predvsem pa zagotovimo povratek emigrantov le, če odpravimo vzroke za emigracijo (Šter, 1974: 1088). Glavni vzroki za emigracijo v Sloveniji pa so bili na individualni ravni povezani z že opisanimi razlogi,⁸ na sistemski, globalni ravni pa s polperifernim položajem SFRJ in s tem Slovenije, kar je predstavljalo tudi dolgoročno sistemsko nemoč izvorne države na (globalnem) trgu konkurence za rekrutiranje delovne sile v primerjavi z gospodarsko najmočnejšimi centri, ki so vodili aktivno rekrutacijsko politiko *brain gain*. Tako že Šter ugotavlja, da vseh razlogov za odhajanje ne bomo mogli nikoli odpraviti in da lahko zato govorimo le o zmanjšanju bega in povečevanju vračanja (Šter, 1974: 1088). Rezultati nadaljnjih raziskav o povratništvu v sedemdesetih in v osemdesetih letih 20. stoletja (Klinar, 1985; Bevc, 1993) so pokazali, da se je vračal le majhen del ljudi. Izpostaviti je potrebno, da to niti ne čudi, saj na področju odpravljanja ključnih vzrokov za odhajanje, kot so bili izpostavljeni v raziskavah, v Sloveniji ni bilo izvedenih resnejših dolgoročnih sistemskih ukrepov ali prestrukturiranj. Izvedeni niso bili niti tisti ukrepi, ki bi jih Slovenija lahko izvedla.

Konec osemdesetih let Klinar zaključuje, da Slovenija v sodobnosti ne more preprečiti bega možganov, zato ji ne preostane drugega, kot da spremeni odnos in išče rešitve v kombinaciji dveh teoretskih modelov odgovorov na izzive bega možganov v državah izvora. Pravi, da bi morali iz kozmopolitskega modela spoznati, da moramo doma ustvariti takšne sistemske razmere, ki zagotavljajo možnosti za uspešno delovanje strokovnjakov v domačem izvornem okolju, hkrati pa razvijati različne oblike sodelovanja s strokovnjaki slovenskega rodu po svetu. Hkrati pa težnje po razvijanju dolgoročnih sistemskih profesionalnih razmer, ki omogočajo delovanje strokovnjakov v domačem okolju, pomenijo tudi uveljavljanje nacionalnega modela, ki zadeva beg možganov (Klinar, 1989: 1064). Prvi del predloga, ki se je nanašal na korenite strukturne spremembe, ki bi izboljšale (razvrednoteni) položaj znanosti v Sloveniji, je zelo kompleksen in se ga vse do danes ni razrešilo, čeprav je od Klinarjeve razprave preteklo že trideset let. Drugi del predloga, o sodelovanju z našimi strokovnjaki, ki živijo po svetu, pa se nanaša na vsaj dve ključni vprašanji: prvič, ali so strokovnjaki, ki živijo po svetu, pripravljeni sodelovati, in drugič, ali smo v Sloveniji sposobni vzpostaviti razmere, v katerih se bo lahko takšno sodelovanje sistemsko oz. strukturno dolgoročno vzpostavilo in obstalo.

Konkretno sodelovanje in morebitna pripravljenost za sodelovanje sta bila med slovenskimi strokovnjaki na tujem predmet raziskovanja že v sedemdesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja. Izkazalo se je, da skoraj polovica vključenih v anketo ni imela

8 Še v začetku 1990. let Mali izpostavlja, da se je v zvezi z možnimi aktivnejšimi politikami za preusmeritve negativnih procesov bega možganov v Sloveniji treba najprej zavedati, da so bili vzrok za naš beg možganov v bolj ali manj oddaljeni preteklosti vsi klasični dejavniki, ki jih sodobne migracijske teorije označujejo kot t. i. dejavnike *pull* in *push*, zato bi jih morali tako tudi naslavljati (Mali, 1993: 657).

nobenih strokovnih stikov ne s posamezniki ne z organizacijami, 29,6 % jih je imela strokovne stike s posamezniki, 3 % jih je nudilo usluge organizacijam in posameznikom v Sloveniji (npr. sodelovali so pri urejanju specializacij v tujini, posredovali strokovne informacije ali literaturo ipd.), 7,7 % jih je sodelovalo z organizacijo, kjer so bili prej zaposleni, 2,1 % pa jih je sodelovalo s Slovenijo z vključevanjem v projektno delo (skupni projekti). Kot glavni razlog za opisano situacijo se je izkazalo dejstvo, da sodelovanje ni bilo možno, ker s strani Slovenije ni bilo potrebnih sistemskih, dolgoročno strateških podpor takšnim povezavam. To potrjuje tudi dejstvo, da je v nadaljevanju raziskave večina sodelujočih na vprašanje o pripravljenosti za sodelovanje odgovorila zelo pozitivno. Večina jih je bila zelo naklonjenih sodelovanju, če bi bilo to omogočeno. Le 7,7 % je bilo takšnih, ki ne bi sodelovali, med njimi šestina zato, ker jim je to prepovedovala konkurenčna klavzula v pogodbi o zaposlitvi (Šter, 1974: 1087–1088).

Očitno so torej ogromne razlike med možnostmi in njihovo uresničitvijo. Več kot tri četrt naših strokovnjakov je pripravljeno strokovno sodelovati. [...] Naj bo kakorkoli že, že samo dejstvo, da so emigranti večinoma pripravljeni sodelovati, vendar naše organizacije tega ne znajo ali nočejo izkoristiti, je izredno žalostno. S tem seveda izgubljammo velike koristi, ki bi jih nam tako sodelovanje lahko prineslo. Razen tega pa bi takšno sodelovanje verjetno pozitivno vplivalo tudi na hitrejšo in večje vračanje slovenske pameti (Šter, 1974: 1088).

Neodzivnost nosilcev politične moči, ki bi lahko sprejeli oziroma bi morali sprejeti ukrepe prestrukturiranja in sistemskega urejanja položaja znanosti in »gospodarsko razvojnih strok« ni zaustavila občasnih intenzivnih razmišljanj o tem, kako bi morali ukrepati na izzive razmer zaradi bega možganov– vključno z omenjenimi možnostmi za mednarodno, sistemsko urejeno sodelovanje. Iskanje možnosti za sodelovanje je šele deset let pozneje, konec osemdesetih in v začetku devetdesetih let, pripeljalo do idej o institucionalizaciji transnacionalne mreže, takrat poimenovani »Tretja slovenska univerza«.

IDEJE »TRETJE SLOVENSKE UNIVERZE«

Od sredine osemdesetih let dvajsetega stoletja do osamosvojitve Slovenije se je vse več govorilo o ideji Tretje slovenske univerze, med drugim tudi kot o odgovoru na izzive, ki jih je pri nas odpiral proces bega možganov. Leta 1987 je Sosič izpostavljal, da se v Sloveniji vse pogosteje govori o tako imenovani Tretji slovenski univerzi, »to je o visoko izobraženih in ustvarjalnih ljudeh, ki so po določenem izobraževanju zapustili domovino in se kot visokošolski profesorji, raziskovalci, vodilni strokovnjaki in priznani ustvarjalci na različnih področjih zaposlili v tujini in tam bolj ali manj stalno živijo« (Sosič, 1987: 28). O tem so leta 1987 razpravljali na RK SZDL in na plenumu

kulturnih delavcev (Sosič, 1987: 28). Pobudo o Tretji slovenski univerzi je sprejelo in priporočilo tudi Predsedstvo SR Slovenije (Sorčan, 1989: 5).

Zadnja leta na Slovenskem precej govorimo o tako imenovani tretji slovenski univerzi. »Sestavljali« naj bi jo strokovnjaki slovenskega porekla, ki živijo v različnih delih sveta. Gre za izseljence in ekonomske migrante ter njihovo drugo ali celo tretje potomstvo. Pod tem si seveda nihče ne predstavlja nove »svetovne« slovenske univerze v dobesednem pomenu. S tem izrazom bi radi predvsem poudarili potrebo po tesnejšem znanstveno-raziskovalnem in strokovnem sodelovanju z ljudmi slovenskega porekla po vsem svetu. Na ta način ne bi prispevali le k ohranjanju njihove etnične identitete, marveč bi lahko poglobljali tudi medsebojno sodelovanje slovenske znanosti, in njeno odprtost v svet. [...] Gre za zamisel o takšni »ustanovi«, ki bi zadostila potrebam po tesnejšem znanstvenoraziskovalnem in strokovnem sodelovanju z ljudmi slovenskega porekla po svetu (Devetak, 1987: 3).

Istega leta Sosič izpostavlja, da je ploden stik možen samo takrat, ko se srečajo strokovnjaki po sorodnih vsebinskih področjih in si eni želijo vzajemnega mednarodnega sodelovanja s tujino oziroma drugi z domovino. Za začetek je nujno evidentirati, kateri strokovnjaki so to in kateri med njimi so, po svojih doseženih rezultatih, tudi sposobni za dialog na mednarodni ravni. V nadaljevanju bi jim morali pomagati pri postavljanju mrež za začetek sodelovanj. Tiste med njimi, ki že imajo mednarodne stike in trajnejša (osebna) sodelovanja, pa bi morali vsestransko in organizirano podpreti. Za učinkovito sodelovanje je nujna močna inštitucionalna in širša sistemska podpora. Zagotoviti je potrebno finančna sredstva in delovne pogoje, ki bi omogočali mednarodni strokovni dialog, kvalitetno delo in pogoje za hitro odzivanje na ponudbe iz tujine. Vsebina sodelovanja bi bila lahko v začetku vezana na različna svetovanja, predavanja in izmenjavo informacij, manj pa je bilo možnosti za neposreden prenos tehnološkega znanja. Sosič poudarja, da bi pri tem morali preseči politične, ideološke in značajske razlike, ki lahko negativno vplivajo na strokovno sodelovanje. Z vidika poklicev je verjetnost za mednarodno sodelovanje največja pri zaposlenih na univerzah, v univerzitetnih inštitutih in bolnišnicah. Ti strokovnjaki so praviloma bolj odprti za sodelovanje v primerjavi s strokovnjaki, ki so zaposleni po posameznih podjetjih, kjer jih zavezujejo tudi poslovne skrivnosti in konkurenčne klavzule. Na koncu kot najpomembnejše izpostavi, da je za realizacijo načrta kot nujen predpogoj potrebno doseči, »da znanje pri nas dobi svojo pravo ceno« (Sosič, 1987: 28).

Dve leti pozneje je bil ob praznovanju sedemdesetletnice ljubljanske univerze (1989) organiziran širok mednarodni posvet na temo Tretje slovenske univerze (Mali, 1989: 285; Sorčan, 1989: 5), ki ga je čez tri leta, v prvih letih osamosvojitve Slovenije, vsebinsko nadaljeval posvet pri Slovenskem svetovnem kongresu. Tekom opisanih večletnih razprav sta se izoblikovala dva sorodna, a v določenih točkah različna pristopa k realizaciji programa Tretje slovenske univerze. Prvi je bil sistematično

predstavljen npr. v razpravah Klinarja (1989), drugi v razpravah na posvetu Svetovnega slovenskega kongresa (Nendl, 1992).

V prvi skupini so bile zamisli in razprave o Tretji univerzi razdeljene na več vsebinskih sklopov:

- A. Bogatenje slovenskih univerz in znanosti z znanjem strokovnjakov slovenskega rodu, ki delujejo na tujem. Njihovo občasno vključevanje v pedagoški proces na slovenskih univerzah. Njihovo habilitiranje tudi na slovenskih univerzah in vključevanje v habilitacijske komisije. Njihovo sodelovanje v znanstveno-raziskovalni dejavnosti, predvsem v temeljnih raziskavah (v vseh znanstvenih disciplinah). Znanstvenike slovenskega rodu, ki delujejo v tujini, bi lahko spodbudili, da bi povezovali različne slovenske in tuje raziskovalne centre in posameznike, ki proučujejo slovensko in jugoslovansko družbo. Spodbudili bi lahko ustanavljanja novih centrov in pridobivanja novih strokovnjakov, ki bi delali na omenjenih temah. V Sloveniji in v zamejstvu bi lahko sodelovali pri razvijanju in ustanavljanju univerzitetnih in znanstvenoraziskovalnih inštitucij. Pomembne so tudi možnosti, ki se odpirajo za izmenjavo znanstvenoraziskovalnega gradiva, dokumentacije in literature (Klinar, 1989: 1065–1066; Sorčan, 1989: 5).
- B. Poglobljanje znanstvenega raziskovanja v okvirih skupnega slovenskega kulturnega prostora in spodbujanje čezmejnega sodelovanja v mednarodnih primerjalnih raziskavah. Tretja slovenska univerza odpira možnosti za dialog in srečevanja ter sodelovanja med znanstveniki iz Slovenije, zamejstva in po svetu. Ta dialog bi bil hkrati »dialog med raznoterimi slovenskimi skupnostmi znotraj skupnega slovenskega kulturnega prostora« (Klinar, 1989: 1066).
- C. Vključevanje Slovencev izven meja Slovenije v izobraževanje in raziskovanje v Sloveniji ter v izobraževanje pri učenju slovenskega jezika, zgodovine, kulture, sodobnih družbenih pojavov. Pri teh izobraževanjih bi poleg strokovnjakov, zaposlenih v Sloveniji, sodelovali tudi strokovnjaki, zaposleni v zamejstvu in po svetu. Slovenska izseljenska matica bi bila zavezana, da sodeluje s slovenskimi znanstveniki v zamejstvu in tujini pri raziskovanju (različnih) pojavov v zamejstvu in v izseljenskih skupnostih. Rezultati raziskav bi morali biti objavljeni v skupnih publikacijah. Slednje bi predstavljale tudi pomembno dokumentacijsko gradivo o ustvarjanju zamisli znanstvenega sodelovanja v okvirih skupnega slovenskega kulturnega prostora (Klinar, 1989: 1066).
- D. Prodor slovenske znanosti v svet s pomočjo znanstvenikov slovenskega rodu na tujem. Odpiranje možnosti za izpopolnjevanje in izobraževanje naših strokovnjakov na uglednih svetovnih univerzah. Pomoč pri vključevanju raziskovalcev, ki delajo v Sloveniji, v zamejstvu in po svetu, v mednarodne

znanstvenoraziskovalne projektne skupine. Pri tem bi bila zelo pomembna vloga, ki bi jo lahko imeli naši znanstveniki po svetu pri izboru in pripravah slovenskih raziskovalcev za njihovo vključitev v izobraževanje na uglednih svetovnih univerzah, v delo v mednarodne znanstvenoraziskovalne skupine ali pri organizaciji gostujočih predavanj na tujih univerzah. Njihova mentorska vloga bi bila zelo dragocena za mlajše raziskovalce. Pomembna bi bila pomoč pri uveljavljanju slovenskih dosežkov po svetu in pri vzpostavljanju stikov s pomembnimi znanstvenoraziskovalnimi univerzitetnimi in drugimi središči, pri navezavi stikov z njimi, izmenjavi gradiv in literature (Klinar, 1989: 1066; Mali, 1989: 286).

Klinar je izpostavil, da so številne aktivnosti že obstajale, potrebno pa bi jih bilo sistematično podpreti in okrepiti. Poudaril je, da se je potrebno zavedati, da Tretja slovenska univerza, kot je bila zamišljena, ne bi mogla nastati s formalnimi ustanovitvenimi akti, pač pa s konkretnim sodelovanjem med slovenskimi znanstveniki po svetu, v zamejstvu in doma. Ti stiki bi morali biti razširjeni na neformalno in formalno raven ter sistemsko dolgoročno omogočeni in načrtno podprti (Klinar, 1989: 1067). Pri tem pa se moramo zavedati, pravi Mali (1989: 286), da je ključnega pomena vsestranska korist vseh sodelujočih – iz zamejstva, tujine in Slovenije.

Saj menda nihče ne pričakuje, da se bodo ljudje, ki so se z nadarjenostjo in s trdim delom uveljavili v svetu neizprosne znanstvene konkurence in ki niso, kot je dejal eden izmed njih, nikakršni zbeganci v tujem svetu – stojijo na trdnih nogah, vračali v svet družbene in siceršnje zaostalosti, od koder strokovnjaki trumoma beže? [...] Naši rojaki iz tujine so izrazili pričakovanje, da bo pri katerikoli obliki znanstvenega sodelovanja upoštevano načelo medsebojne koristi. Prav tako mora biti znanstvenim ustanovam v Sloveniji jasno, da v primeru prevzemanja mentorskih vlog za naše podiplomce pri strokovnem izpopolnjevanju v tujini morajo nositi svoj del finančnega bremena. Iluzorno je tudi pričakovanje, da se bodo sedaj v elitnih raziskovalnih organizacijah, kjer sicer marsikdo od udeležencev posveta iz tujine zavzema vodilni položaj, trumoma odprla vrata tem postdiplomcem. V razvitem znanstvenem svetu so »pravila igre« znana (Mali, 1989: 286).

Za zaključek prikaza prvega pristopa k realizaciji programa Tretje slovenske univerze, ki je bil javno predstavljen še pred osamosvojitvijo Slovenije, pa naj kot najpomembnejše izpostavim poudarke, da so brez interesa in angažiranosti slovenskih strokovnjakov doma vsi načrti zgolj utvara.

Tretja slovenska univerza mora nastati v slovenski znanosti sami. Biti mora znak pripravljenosti slovenske znanosti za večje vključevanje v svetovne znanstvene tokove. Slovenski izobraženci po svetu nam pri tem lahko samo pomagajo. Z njihovo vključitvijo v naše znanstveno-raziskovalne projekte mednarodnega in domačega

pomena bi se povečal pretok mednarodno relevantnega znanja, kar bi nedvomno pomenilo hitrejšo razvijanje naše znanosti (Sorčan, 1989: 5).

V drugi skupini so bile zamisli in razprave o Tretji slovenski univerzi veliko bolj osredotočene na predloge o konkretni izvedbi ideje v realnosti. Pregledno in celovito jo je v svoji razpravi na konferenci 1992 predstavil Velikonja (1992). Izhajal je iz stališča, da univerza že obstaja in jo sestavljajo strokovnjaki slovenskega rodu, ki delujejo na različnih univerzah v zamejstvu in po svetu, kjer so del učnega osebja univerz: raziskovalci, predavatelji, vodje raziskovalnega dela itd. Sodelujoči v Tretji slovenski univerzi so posamezniki, in ne izseljenske ali manjšinske skupnosti. Slednji že delujejo na določenih delovnih mestih znotraj določenih inštitucij, a te inštitucije nimajo sedeža v Sloveniji. Za izgradnjo mreže med njimi ne bi bilo zahtevno ustvariti dolgoročnega institucionalnega okvira. Organizacijsko bi potrebovali predvsem skupen naslov, prek katerega bi bila vodena dolgoročna koordinacija in ohranjanje stikov. Za začetek pa bi bilo potrebno te (zainteresirane) posameznike evidentirati (Velikonja, 1992: 135–136). Velikonja omenja, da si je za uresničitev organizacijske oblike vztrajno prizadeval Hribar: »Predlogi, ki jih je prof. Hribar navedel v svojem referatu v Novi reviji, so izvedljivi s skromnimi finančnimi sredstvi. Treba je spremeniti miselnost in sprejeti individualne stike kot najbolj uspešno obliko potencialnega sodelovanja. Inštituti niso pomembni za realizacijo stikov« (Velikonja, 1992: 136) in nadaljuje, da se vloga inštitutov pojavi šele, ko je potrebno konkretizirati sodelovanje: finančne kompenzacije, strokovni dopusti, socialna zaščita itd. Institucionalni dogovori in sporazumi so potrebni le ob zaključevanju sporazumov, pred tem pa mora potekati aktivnost na individualni ravni (Velikonja, 1992: 135–136).

Predlogi za konkretizacijo tretje univerze po korakih, kot jih je predlagal in povzel Velikonja (1992: 137–139), so bili:

1. določiti sedež, kjer naj bi bila evidenca dejanskih in potencialnih sodelavcev;
2. objaviti biografije in bibliografije sodelavcev;
3. povabiti strokovnjake, ki živijo v tujini, da bi postali polnopravni člani slovenskih strokovnih društev, kar do takrat ni bilo mogoče. To je tudi način, kako se lahko realizira enotni slovenski kulturni prostor;
4. aktivirati SAZU. Statut SAZU je potrebno spremeniti tako, da bi bilo redno članstvo odprto tudi za Slovence, ki živijo po svetu;
5. ustvariti možnosti za sodelovanja uglednih strokovnjakov slovenskega rodu kot gostujočih profesorjev v Sloveniji z razmislekom, da tu ne gre samo za strokovnost, ampak tudi za razširitev slovenskega intelektualnega sveta.
6. Univerzitetni center na Brdu bi se lahko okrepil s Tretjo slovensko univerzo, če bi se bolj naslonil na strokovnjake v svetu in ne toliko na »svetovne potnike«.

7. Majhen del Tretje slovenske univerze že deluje. Nekateri strokovnjaki z univerz v Trstu, Vidmu, Celovcu in na Dunaju ter z nekaterih nemških znanstvenih inštitucij že sodelujejo pri raziskavah ljubljanske in mariborske univerze. To dejavnost bi bilo potrebno okrepiti.
8. Politična neodvisnost in avtonomija Tretje slovenske univerze, ki bi morala biti v začetku proračunsko financirana s sredstvi posameznih ministrstev. Financiranje bi bilo potrebno zagotoviti vsaj prehodno, za določen čas, da bi se lahko zagotovilo sredstva tudi iz privatnih virov.
9. Za izvedbo plana je potrebno močnejše ministrstvo in položaj »ministra brez listnice« ne bo dovolj.

Za zaključek Velikonja izpostavlja:

Še vedno se od časa do časa pojavi gledanje, da so slovenski strokovnjaki zunaj v svetu tam zato, ker zanje doma ni bilo prostora; da torej stremijo za tem, da bi čimprej prišli nazaj v Slovenijo. Četudi je to resnica za nekaj posameznikov, na splošno ne drži. Zato se je treba znebiti gledanja, da slovenski strokovnjaki po svetu komaj čakajo na »povabilo« in so ga pripravljene sprejeti brez odlašanja. Strokovnjaki po svetu so na svojih delovnih mestih »doma«. To niso »naši na tujih tleh«, to niso ljudje s problemi manjvrednosti in bolečega domotožja; četudi je vprašljivo, koliko bi jih smeli šteti za »naše«, je še bolj dvomljivo, če bi jih smeli postaviti na »tuja tla«. Zato so stiki z njimi potrebni na strokovno nevtralnem nivoju. Glavna sposobnost, ki jo imajo za Slovenijo, je pač ta, da lahko predavajo v slovenščini in da jim slovenski miselni okvir ni tuj. S tem so za Slovenijo koristnejši kot kak XY od koderkoli (Velikonja, 1992: 138–139).

Oba predstavljena pristopa o razvoju Tretje slovenske univerze naslavljata izzive bega možganov pri nas in pri tem iščeta rešitve v mednarodnem sodelovanju. V tem sta si podobna. Različna pa sta si v zamisli o sami izvedbi. Pri prvem pristopu so kot nosilci dejavnosti naslovljeni številni (različni) državni in družbeni profesionalni akterji, ki naj bi po svojih poteh prispevali k izvedbi načrta, s tem pa bi se gradila dolgoročno razpršena mreža mednarodnega sodelovanja. Za razliko od tega je pri drugem jasno izpostavljeno, da je za dolgoročno uspešno naslavljanje izzivov bega možganov iz gradnje mednarodne mreže sodelovanja in izmenjave strokovnjakov nujno zagotoviti načrtno sistemsko, strukturno in finančno stabilno dolgoročno podporo ter centralizirano koordinacijo na določeni (novi) inštituciji, ustanovljeni s tem namenom. Kaj se je z idejami o Tretji slovenski univerzi dogajalo v nadaljnjih letih, že leta 1991 najbolje odgovori v intervjuju minister, pristojen za Slovence po svetu in narodnosti v Sloveniji:

Toda zadeva se pravzaprav dlje ni premaknila, ker brez financ in brez ljudi, ki bi za tako sodelovanje stalno skrbeli in ga organizirali, ne gre. To bi sprožilo velikansko korespondenco, za katero bi potrebovali cel štab, v »resorju« pa nimamo niti enega človeka, ki bi se lahko posvetil samo temu. [...] Hvala Bogu, da takrat še nismo sprožili konkretnih dogovorov s slovenskimi znanstveniki po svetu, ker jih zdaj zaradi pomanjkanja denarja in moči ne bi mogli uresničiti. [...] Druga stvar je sodelovanje samih univerz s posameznimi tujimi strokovnjaki – to se bo seveda nadaljevalo (Novak Kajzer, 1991: 6).

SKLEPNE MISLI

Beg možganov z njegovimi posledicami lahko dokončno razumemo šele, ko se z individualne ravni razlogov in odločitev posameznikov premaknemo na družbeno oziroma državno raven in se vprašamo o njegovih dolgoročnih posledicah. Pri iskanju rešitev se je pri nas pojavilo nekaj alternativnih odgovorov. Prvi odgovor je bil, da je potrebno politično oziroma zakonsko zamejiti odhajanje najbolj izobraženega in usposobljenega kadra v tujino in tako zmanjšati obseg bega možganov. Gre za zdravorazumsko rešitev, ki se še danes takoj ponuja, a ima dolgoročno nasprotni učinek. Dejstvo je, da sta znanje in znanost transnacionalna, globalna. Le pretok, sodelovanje in oplajanje vzdržujejo njuno neprestano dinamiko. Zapiranje in zamejevanje pa ju, dolgoročno gledano, osiromašita, onemogočita ali celo uničita. Druga možna rešitev je naslavljanje pogojev za vračanje znanstvenikov in strokovnjakov, ki so odšli na delo v tujino, ter spodbujanje povratništva. Vendar je treba poudariti, da razlogi odhajanja niso zgolj individualni, ampak tudi (ali predvsem) globalni. Globalni ekonomski položaj, s katerimi se soočajo polperiferne in periferne države izvora, in gospodarska (ne)moč povzročata, da te države težko konkurirajo z najrazvitejšimi gospodarskimi centri pri tekmovanju za delovno silo (ožje gledano z zagotavljanjem najboljših delovnih pogojev in odličnim plačilom za delo, širše gledano pa tudi z življenjskim standardom in drugimi pogoji za vsakdanje življenje posameznika in njegove družine). Države izvora težko konkurirajo ponudbi, ki jo lahko zagotovijo ponudbe *brain drain* v državah sprejema. Slednje je lahko razlog tudi za neuspele poskuse spodbujanja povratništva. Tretja možnost je spodbujanje in organiziranje alternativnih oblik mednarodnega sodelovanja s strokovnjaki, ki so odšli v tujino, s čimer bi ta »doma vzgojeni potencial« pritegnili k sodelovanju z izvorno državo in družbo. Tako bi prišlo do kroženja znanja na način, ko ne bi bilo potrebno povratništvo. Prav to je izhodišče predlagateljev ideje o Tretji slovenski univerzi. Ideja ne vključuje več potrebe po preprečevanju odhajanja ljudi v tujino. Namesto omejevanja bi morali odhajanje urediti na način, ko slednje ne bi predstavljalo odliva znanja, ampak njegovo oplemenitenje, nadgrajeno s transnacionalnimi mrežami povezovanja, po katerih znanje kroži in se tudi vrača. Predpogoj za to je ureditev položaja znanosti v Sloveniji ter zagotovitev delovnih pogojev za odlično

delo znanstvenikov. Z izboljšanjem položaja znanosti in pogojev dela v znanosti bi v kroženje znanja veliko bolj zajeli izmenjavo možganov, ki se v delu svoje definicije nanaša tudi na prihod strokovnjakov iz tujine k nam. Definicija kroženja znanja namreč vključuje tako odhod in beg možganov ter prihod in izmenjavo možganov kot tudi (ali predvsem) mednarodne mreže znanstvenega sodelovanja. Slednje je vse pomembnejše tudi zaradi globalne digitalizacije, tehnoloških sprememb in strukturnih sprememb v gospodarstvu, ki smo jim danes priča, pa tudi zaradi samega bistva znanosti kot takšne. Naj razpravo zaključim z mislimi Sorčana, ki je že pred tridesetimi leti poudarjal:

Znanost je po svoji naravi nujno internacionalna. [...] Tretjo slovensko univerzo moramo zato začeti graditi doma. Kakršnokoli sodelovanje s slovenskimi izobraženci v tujini v okviru Tretje univerze bo ostalo na obrobju znanstvenega razvoja, če se ne bodo hkrati doma urejale razmere, ki beg možganov oziroma intelektualne migracije sploh povzročajo. [...] Če so bile emigracije intelektualcev nekoč še imperativ znanstvenega razvoja, danes tega ne bi mogli več trditi. Razvoj informacijskih in drugih tehnoloških sredstev je danes že tako daleč, da so geografske razdalje postale nepomembna ovira pri mednarodnem znanstvenem komuniciranju. Zato pa postaja danes imperativ znanstvenega razvoja znanstveno-raziskovalna politika nacionalnih vlad, oziroma preišljeno, za družbeni in nacionalni razvoj relevantno usmerjanje znanstvenega razvoja, ki se mora odražati zlasti v ustvarjanju takšnih družbenih pogojev, ki znanstveno-raziskovalni sferi zagotavljajo nemoten ustvarjalni razvoj (Sorčan, 1989: 5).

ZAHVALE IN DRUGI PODATKI

Prispevek je nastal v okviru projekta »Le z drugimi smo« (C3330-16-269110), raziskovalnega projekta »Omilitev posledic bega možganov in krepitev mehanizma kroženja možganov« (V5-1928) in programske skupine »Narodna in kulturna identiteta slovenskega izseljenstva v kontekstu raziskovanja migracij« (P5-0070), ki so bili financirani s stani ARRS, Ministrstva RS za izobraževanje, znanost in šport in Evropskih socialnih skladov.

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SUMMARY

PLANS FOR A “THIRD SLOVENIAN UNIVERSITY” AS PART OF THE RESPONSE TO THE BRAIN DRAIN CHALLENGES OF THE 1970s AND 1980s

Marina LUKŠIČ HACIN

Forty years of sporadic discussions about the brain drain in Slovenia have given rise to various ideas about what to do to prevent the long-term negative socioeconomic consequences of the brain drain at home. They range from measures to prevent the emigration of educated and highly-skilled people, to considerations on encouraging return, to the idea of international cooperation. The latter is at the heart of the “Third Slovenian University” proposal of the late 1980s. In the late 1980s, Klinar pointed out that Slovenia could not prevent a brain drain, which is linked to its semi-peripheral economic position within the global (in)power structure of different countries. It has no choice but to change its attitude and seek solutions to the brain drain challenge in a combination of two (theoretical) models of response. The first part addresses the need for radical structural changes to improve the devalued position of science in Slovenia, while the second part is about cooperation with our experts around the world. The latter was the basis for the idea of the Third Slovenian University. At the forefront was a proposal to organize alternative forms of international cooperation with experts who have gone abroad. Instead of limiting departures and encouraging returns, the dynamics should be regulated in such a way that departures do not represent an outflow of knowledge but rather its enrichment. A prerequisite for the circulation and exchange of knowledge is to regulate the status of science in Slovenia and provide working conditions for excellent work by scientists, which would also attract experts from abroad to Slovenia. The circulation of knowledge, in its definition, includes brain drain, brain gain, brain exchange, and—above all—international networks of scientific cooperation. The latter is increasingly important given global digitalization, technological change, and the structural changes in the economy we are witnessing today.

K N J I Ž N E O C E N Ě

B O O K R E V I E W S

Elena Sommer, *Social Capital as a Resource for Migrant Entrepreneurship: Self-Employed Migrants from the Former Soviet Union in Germany*
Munich: Springer VS, 2020, 331 pp.

According to the author, this book aims to explore the accessibility and use of social capital within and outside the migrant community from the former Soviet Union (FSU) for migrant enterprises that operate in various markets over time. Elena Sommer's book aims to shed light on a phenomenon that has spawned an international lexicon of words and phrases that include "ethnic entrepreneurship," "ethnic business," or "ethnic economy," "middleman minority," "sojourners," "transculturality," "orthodox ethnicity," and "reactive ethnicity." In her exploratory research, based on evidence from 62 qualitative interviews, Sommer examines the usage of social capital for entrepreneurial practices of self-employed migrants from the former Soviet Union in Germany. The study resulted from the author's doctoral research at Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS). It was designed to show how business-related social relationships are influenced by a company's marketing policy and access to specific entrepreneurial social networks. The author investigates the types of relationship networks migrants use as a platform for creating and growing small enterprises and how migrants' entrepreneurial social networks evolve.

The book starts with a brief overview of migrant business research. Sommer has deliberately formulated the study questions in the introductory section to facilitate the reader's active interest in the rigorous contemplation that the book is supposed to introduce. The introduction is followed by Chapter 2, which delves into the main theoretical principles and analytical observations in migrant entrepreneurship, social capital, and migration studies that are important to studying migrant entrepreneurs' network features. The chapter ends with an outline of the study's research issues and methodological framework.

Chapter 3 gives a short description of the migration of former Soviet Union citizens to Germany, accompanied by an overview of analytical studies on their social and labor market integration. The final subsection discusses results from previous studies on self-employment among former Soviet Union migrants.

Chapter 4 describes the research structure, sample, and methodology. It begins with a definition of the terms used in the research design, followed by an explanation of the chosen environment for the study and the rationale for using a qualitative method. This chapter concludes with the data processing methods applied in the study.

Chapter 5 focuses on the economic operations of the migrant market from the former Soviet Union, which can be narrowly defined as migrant retail enterprises with a largely co-ethnic clientele. It begins with an overview of the key features of the Russian-speaking migrant market in two German cities: Düsseldorf and Waldbröl. In particular, the author notes that the Russian-speaking migrant market is a social space that fosters internal bridging between different subgroups of the same

migrant community and allows for interaction among migrant subgroups. In addition, the chapter provides a data-driven grouping of migrant sector companies into four groups, highlighting the key characteristics of their services, customer base, and professional relationships. Motivations for starting a company in the migrant industry, customer recruiting methods, and typical social capital attributes and functions in this market segment are also addressed.

The use of social capital by migrant enterprises in the diverse sector simultaneously serving co-ethnic and general population customers is demonstrated in Chapter 6. It begins by demonstrating techniques necessary for gaining access to native clients used by migrant businesses that began in the migrant market and then expanded to a larger market. It is followed by a segment concentrating on companies that began their work in the conventional market but later migrated to the mixed market after recognizing the financial benefits of approaching co-ethnics as a separate client community. The chapter ends with an example of an entrepreneurial network in a mixed market.

In Chapter 7, the author illustrates the use of social capital by companies operating in the mass market with a large general population clientele. The chapter shows how access to and use of social capital by companies working in the mass market varies between businesses offering knowledge-intensive services in high-skilled sectors and businesses in low-entry barrier sectors. The core features of self-employed social capital in these two divisions of the mainstream economy are illustrated, supplemented by two illustrative descriptions of business network maps in the mainstream market.

Chapter 8 looks at the different forms of social capital that FSU migrants use as they partake in various transnational entrepreneurial practices. The types of transnational economic activities discovered in empirical evidence are listed first, followed by reasons for participating in or not participating in transnational economic activities. The chapter then reflects on the empirically derived forms of transnational entrepreneurship practices and their main social capital characteristics. The chapter comes to a close with an example of case analysis.

Chapter 9 summarizes the study's conclusions and flaws and makes recommendations for potential studies.

Overall, Sommer's *Social Capital as a Resource for Migrant Entrepreneurship* is important reading for both scholarly and business audiences. The writer has gone to great lengths to combine the inherent scientific vocabulary in social science with straightforward language that makes the topic easy to understand. The author has also succeeded in presenting migrant entrepreneurship as both science and activity.

Yulia Kryvenko

Francesco Della Puppa & Giuliana Sanò (eds.), *Stuck and Exploited. Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Italy Between Exclusion, Discrimination and Struggles*

Venezia: Edizioni Ca'Foscari, 2021, 362 pp.

At a time when the guarantees that international protection seemed to offer are being constantly undermined across the Global North, *Stuck and Exploited* offers a comprehensive approach to the current processes of retrenchment of reception rights and the dismantlement of reception structures through an in-depth analysis of the Italian case. With a strong ethnographic lens, Della Puppa and Sanò's edited volume compiles 16 contributions of academics, activists, and practitioners working in the field of asylum to examine the processes of exclusion and discrimination of asylum seekers in their passage through an asylum reception system marked by arbitrariness, neglect, and opacity. Divided into two parts, the first part of the volume examines the national developments and characteristics of the Italian asylum reception system in its insertion within wider tendencies of migration governance through reception in the Global North. However, it does not fail to deepen in the particularities of different Italian regions and municipalities, highlighting how the implementation of national and EU policy is interpreted and reinterpreted at the local level and how, within this context, the discretion of "street-level bureaucrats," as described by Lipsky, and other intermediaries, as well as the actions of social movements or the civil society can become a tool for "debordering" or yet another strategy of further control over migrants' lives. In this sense, one of the main contributions of this book is that it offers a perspective of migration governance from the ground, including the voices of activists, practitioners, and academics alike, and proposes a strong ethnographic lens that captures the intimacy and experience of refugee reception. It complicates and nuances the field beyond essentializing narratives and discourses over refugee reception that plague the public discourse and, sometimes, academic work, which present public reception structures either as activist defenders of migrant rights or solely as complicit tools of state power over migrant subjects. Instead, *Stuck and Exploited* explores the complex relations (and lack thereof) between migrants and the state through a number of intermediaries, showing how both reception and migration control are enacted through the voices of the very protagonists of the implementation of reception policies, who embody the tension between humanitarianism and control. Within this, the volume opens a particularly engaging discussion as it points to evidence that reveals the intersections between the experiences of the precarity of migrants and the struggles of the Italian citizenry for the protection of fundamental rights, particularly regarding the labor market (see the chapters by Storato; Sanò and Della Puppa; Marabello and Parisi; and Pascualetto and Perocco). While these questions escape the scope of this book, they would certainly make a case for a further publication.

In this in-depth exploration of the Italian reception system, it becomes clear that processes of externalization to the third sector exacerbate the opacity and arbitrariness of the system, if merely by increasing its complexity, but mainly due to structural lacks and policies of abandonment through the underfunding and reduction of costs of the system. Within this context of lack of resources, hierarchical categories of desirability and deservingness become central to the experience of asylum-seeking even among those already deemed “undesirable and undeserving” and excluded from the mainstream reception system. Between these narrow labels, the complex migration paths of people on the move highlight the precariousness of the different statuses forced onto people seeking asylum—or regularization or a livelihood. If something is missing from the volume, it could be to know more about how this comes to be, how the organizational socialization, the institutionalization of social interactions, and professional habitus within reception reinforce racialized, gendered, ableist, and nationalist discourses and narratives among reception workers that contribute to the give-and-take of migration statuses and what are their intersections with the humanitarian and humanist understandings of care that most organizations in reception hold.

The second part of the book focuses on the consequences of the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic among the migrant population in their journeys through Italy. Although the two parts of the book can appear somewhat disconnected, the focus on the pandemic and its consequences for migrants provides a very necessary picture of how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the right to asylum and reception conditions. Far from being a contingent event, the pandemic has had a profound impact on life in Europe, with substantial consequences on the rights of citizens and non-citizens alike. As shown by the six chapters in this part, asylum reception systems force mobility and immobility among migrants, experiences that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated. The “emergency” narrative has led to “emergency” responses that have not hesitated to curtail the few existing mobility rights for asylum seekers and refugees and have had dire consequences on their reception conditions and the possibilities to access the right of asylum. Beyond that, sanitary measures have often had reverse effects on the asylum population as measures to prevent illness have become the source of insalubrity and malaise, particularly for those in situations of encampment or living in the street, thus exacerbating their processes of exclusion through reception. As Perocco notes in his chapter, the pandemic has become a litmus test—exposing the structural problems of contemporary societies—but also a “social accelerator” and “detonator” pushing forward existing societal trends and exacerbating existing hardships and inequalities. Thus, these chapters confirm worrying tendencies over the retrenchment of the right of asylum, where the few guarantees that still seemed to hold dissipate “emergency” after “emergency” and “crisis” after “crisis”.

The collection of papers in *Stuck and Exploited* thus shows how, despite posing as “citizenship technologies”—to use a construct created by Jonathan Xavier

Inda—aiming to reinsert those excluded, the fundamental structural deficiencies of the reception system make that “integration” measures such as the promotion of labor market incorporation, actually pave the way for exclusion and precariousness, effectively becoming “anti-citizenship technologies,” that seek to control and contain excluded citizens. This tendency has become more evident by the shift in the Italian reception model from the SPRAR system, which, while far from being ideal, relied on facilitating asylum seekers’ processes of incorporation by offering “integration” services and possibilities of community engagement with the current model that excludes asylum seekers from the ordinary reception system and favors “emergency” solutions, often based on the encampment and large centers that preclude processes of incorporation (see the chapters by Ferrero and Roverso; Dal Zotto, Lo Cascio, and Piro; and Caroselli and Semprebon). Similarly, the role of reception workers also seems to mimic this trend as control duties take over humanitarian and “integration” tasks (see the chapter by Ferrero and Roverso). However, despite the heightened control, or perhaps because of the heightened control, the slippages of the system become as revealing of its underlying rationale as its efforts for incorporation. All through the book (see the chapters by Caroselli and Semprebon; and Pontiggia), the lack of statistical data on people on the move through Italian territory, particularly those that are in the most vulnerable situations and those excluded from reception, becomes yet another testament of how neglect is used as a strategy for the governance of mobility.

In short, this is a very rich book, which provides the most extensive look at the Italian reception system to date, and opens crucial discussions over the governance of migration within European democracies.

Alèxia Rué

Navodila avtorjem za pripravo prispevkov za revijo *Dve domovini / Two Homelands*

Najnovejšo verzijo navodil lahko najdete na naši spletni strani http://twohomelands.zrc-sazu.si/sl/navodila_avtorjem ali pa na <https://ojs.zrc-sazu.si/twohomelands/prispevki>.

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Revija *Dve domovini / Two Homelands* je namenjena objavi znanstvenih in strokovnih člankov in knjižnih ocen s področja humanističnih in družboslovnih disciplin, ki obravnavajo različne vidike migracij in z njimi povezane pojave. Revija, ki izhaja od leta 1990, je večdisciplinarna in objavlja članke v slovenskem ali angleškem jeziku. Letno izideta dve številki v tiskani in elektronski obliki na svetovnem spletu (<http://twohomelands.zrc-sazu.si> in <https://ojs.zrc-sazu.si/twohomelands/>).

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2. Sestavine prispevkov

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- c) Članek v zborniku:
Milharčič Hladnik, Mirjam (2009). Naša varuška. *Krila migracij: Po meri življenjskih zgodb* (ur. Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik, Jernej Mlekuž). Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU, 15–20. <https://doi.org/10.3986/9789612541125>.
- d) Članek v reviji oz. časopisu:
Vah, Mojca, Hacin, Marina (2001). Theorising Immigrant/Ethnic Entrepreneurship in the Context of Welfare States. *Migracijske i etničke teme* 27/2, 249–261, <https://hrcak.srce.hr/74487>.

Turk, Helena (1925). Moja pot po svetu. *Amerikanski Slovenec*, 8. 10. 1925, 2, <https://www.dlib.si/details/URN:NBN:SI:doc-6OZVFZCN>.
- e) Spletna stran:
Becker, Howard (2003). New Directions in the Sociology of Art. <http://www.howardsbecker.com/articles/newdirections.html> (14. 6. 2021).

ILO (2018). *Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers*. Ženeva: ILO, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_652001.pdf (12. 10. 2020).

Kochhar, Rakesh (2020). *Hispanic women, immigrants, young adults, those with less education hit hardest by COVID-19 job losses*. Pew Research, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/06/09/hispanic-women-immigrants-young%20adultsthose-with-less-education-hit-hardest-by-covid-19-job-losses> (5. 1. 2020).
- f) Arhivski viri:
Arhivski viri naj vsebujejo:
 - o ime avtorja oz. naziv institucije, če avtor ni znan,
 - o naslov dokumenta,
 - o opis gradiva,
 - o ime zbirke;
 - o lokacijo;
 - o vir.

Primer:

Pitamic, Leonid (1930). [Pismo Leonida Pitamica Ministrstvu za zunanje zadeve o izseljencih iz Prekmurja], 13. 2. 1930. Veleposlaništvo Kraljevine Jugoslavije v Washingtonu (fond 371, mapa 50, enota 65), Arhiv Jugoslavije, Beograd.

6. Grafične in slikovne priloge

- Preglednice oz. tabele naj bodo narejene v programu Microsoft Word in vključene v besedilo. Oblikujte jih čim enostavneje (zanje ne uporabljajte posebnih slogov).
- Vseh drugih prilog (slike, zemljevidi, ilustracije, grafi ipd.) **ne** vključujte v besedilo.
- Vse preglednice, tabele in fotografije morajo biti označene v besedilu (npr. Tabela 1, Slika 1). Točno lokacijo v besedilu navedite po naslednjem vzorcu: ... (Slika 1) ... (Preglednica 1).
- Vse preglednice in drugo slikovno gradivo mora imeti pripis, ki naj se vedno začne z naslovom Slika/Preglednica (in zaporedna številka), npr.:
 - Slika 1: Kuharica Liza v New Yorku leta 1905 (avtor: Janez Novak, vir: Arhiv Slovenije, 1415, 313/14)
 - Preglednica 1: Število prebivalcev Ljubljane po popisu leta 2002 (vir: Statistični urad RS, *Statistične informacije*, 14).
- Pripisi k slikam in preglednicam naj ne vsebujejo opomb.
- Datoteke slikovnega gradiva poimenujte s priimkom avtorja in zaporedno številko gradiva, npr. 'Novak1.jpg', 'Novak2.jpg' itd.
- Velikost slike naj bo takšna, kot bo natisnjena, ali večja. Fotografije naj bodo v enem od naslednjih formatov: TIF, EPS, SVG, JPG, PNG v polni kakovosti in s tipografijami v krivuljah. Ločljivost slik naj bo najmanj 300 dpi.
- Za grafične in slikovne priloge, za katere nimate avtorskih pravic, morate dobiti dovoljenje za objavo in uredništvu predložiti dokazilo.

Instructions for Authors Preparing English Articles for Publication in *Dve domovini / Two Homelands*

For the latest version of instructions for authors, please refer to our website: http://twohomelands.zrc-sazu.si/en/instructions_for_authors or <https://ojs.zrc-sazu.si/twohomelands/prispevki>.

1. Editorial content

Dve domovini / Two Homelands welcomes scientific and professional articles and book reviews from the humanities and social sciences focusing on various aspects of migration and related phenomena. The journal, established in 1990, is multidisciplinary and publishes articles in Slovenian or English language. Two volumes are published per year in print and digital format online (<http://twohomelands.zrc-sazu.si> and <https://ojs.zrc-sazu.si/twohomelands/>).

Articles should be prepared according to the instructions below and sent to the editorial board at the e-mail address hladnik@zrc-sazu.si. All articles undergo a peer-review procedure. Authors are responsible for language and style proficiency. Manuscripts accepted for publishing by the editorial board should not be sent for consideration and publishing to any other journal. By publishing their articles in *Dve domovini / Two Homelands*, the authors also grant permission to publish them online.

2. English article elements

The length of the entire article can be up to 60,000 characters with spaces (including the References section) and should contain the following sections in the following order:

- Article Title (Title Case, bold): should be clear and concise and include the article's keywords.
- Name and surname of the author. The surname should be followed by a footnote with the following four elements separated by a semicolon:
 - o the author's education (e.g., PhD in history);
 - o the author's affiliation – Institution, Department, City (e.g., ZRC SAZU, Slovenian Migration Institute, Ljubljana);
 - o e-mail address;
 - o ORCID ID.
- Type of contribution (original, review, or short scientific article)
- Abstract: up to 700 characters with spaces (will be translated into Slovenian by the journal)
- Keywords: up to 5 words
- Main text: divided into sections and subsections, if necessary
- Information about the project or funding (if the article was written as part of a project) and any acknowledgments by the author(s) (optional)
- Reference list (References): see point 5 below for instructions
- Summary: up to 3,000 characters with spaces (will be translated into Slovenian by the journal)

3. Document formatting

- The style of the entire text should be "Normal" – no formatting, defining styles, or similar.
- Please use American English spelling and serial (Oxford) commas.
- Page margins: "Normal" (2.5 cm margins at all sides)
- Page numbering: Arabic numerals, bottom right
- The document should not contain any page breaks.
- Font
 - o Main text: Times New Roman, 12 pt, justified, line spacing 1.5
 - o Footnotes: Times New Roman, 10 pt, justified, line spacing 1, Arabic numerals

- There should be no spacing or blank lines between paragraphs. Each paragraph (except those after subtitles/headings, figures, tables, and long quotations) should begin with a first-line indent of 1.25 cm.
- The Title and Section (Sub-section) headings should be manually formatted: The Title and Level 1 Headings are bold, Title Case; Level 2 Headings are bold, Sentence case. Headings should not be numbered.

Avoid underlining words or parts of sentences, as well as using bold and italics. Italics should be used only when citing titles of artworks, books, newspapers, and journals. Indicate omitted parts of a citation with square brackets and an ellipsis [...].

Book reviews should contain the following elements in the order given: name and surname of the author or editor of the book, title of the book, name of publisher, place of publication, date of publication, number of pages. Reviews should be 5,000–10,000 characters with spaces and include the name and surname of the reviewer at the end.

4. Citations and quoting in text

The following instructions should be followed for citing sources in the text:

- Long quotations (five lines or more) should be formatted in a separate paragraph indented by 1.25 cm, without quotation marks, in normal font (not italics).
- Quotations shorter than five lines should be included in the main text and separated with quotation marks in normal font (not italics).
- Cite sources using In-Text Author-Date citations in parentheses: *author's surname, year of publication: page number(s)*. Examples:
 - citing a single source: (Anderson, 2003: 91–99);
 - citing multiple sources: sources separated by semicolons and sorted by the year of publication in ascending order (Hladnik, 2009: 15; Vah & Hacin, 2011: 251–253; Hladnik et al., 2019);
 - citing multiple works by the same author published in the same year: years marked with lowercase letters (Anderson, 2003a, 2003b).
- When citing archival documents or sources, state the author's name (if available) and the year of the document, e.g., (Pitamic, 1930). If the author of the document is not known, state the title of the document and the year, e.g., (Report on Prekmurje Immigrants, 1930). If the document does not have a title, provide a description in square brackets, e.g., ([Letter from the Ambassador to the Minister of Foreign Affairs], 1931).

5. Reference list

A list of references should appear after the main text in a separate section named "References". The reference list should include all and only those sources that are referred to and cited in the text. The entries should be arranged alphabetically by the authors' surnames (or titles of newspapers/articles or other sources where authors are unknown), with multiple references by the same author arranged by year of publication. Multiple references by a single author published in the same year should be separated with lowercase letters (e.g., Ford, 1999a, 1999b). Each entry should be formatted with a hanging indent of 1.25 cm, with no line spacing between entries.

English book and article titles (except conjunctions, articles, and prepositions) should be capitalized in Title Case. The entries in the reference list should contain DOI addresses (<https://doi.org/...>) when available. The permanent web address is always the last information in a reference entry (see examples below).

If a printed source is also published online, this information should be included. If the online publication includes any persistent identifiers (PIDs), such as DOI, ARK, URN, Handle, or URI, provide the URL address without the last access date. If the URL of the online publication is in any other form, add the date of last access to the website in parentheses, e.g., (15. 2. 2021), using dd. mm. yyyy.

Our journal accepts reference lists in the following digital formats: BibTeX, RIS, and JATS XML.

For editing the reference list in digital formats, we recommend reference management software such as Zotero, EndNote, Mendeley, Citavi, etc., which enable downloading or exporting a structured reference list as a file in one of the abovementioned digital formats.

If you are unable to provide the reference list in one of the abovementioned formats, please prepare it according to the instructions below:

- a) Book:
Anderson, Benedict (1995). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- b) Collection of articles:
Milharčič Hladnik, Mirjam, Mlekuž, Jernej, eds. (2009). *Krila migracij: Po meri življenjskih zgodb*. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU. <https://doi.org/10.3986/9789612541125>.
- c) Article in a collection:
Milharčič Hladnik, Mirjam (2009). Naša varuška. *Krila migracij: Po meri življenjskih zgodb* (eds. Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik, Jernej Mlekuž). Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU, 15–20. <https://doi.org/10.3986/9789612541125>.
- d) Article in a journal/newspaper:
Vah, Mojca, Hacin, Marina (2001). Theorising Immigrant/Ethnic Entrepreneurship in the Context of Welfare States. *Migracijske i etničke teme* 27/2, 249–261, <https://hrcaak.srce.hr/74487>.

Turk, Helena (1925). Moja pot po svetu. *Amerikanski Slovenec*, 8. 10. 1925, 2, <https://www.dlib.si/details/URN:NBN:SI:doc-6OZVFZCN>.
- e) Internet sources:
Becker, Howard (2003). New Directions in the Sociology of Art. <http://www.howardsbecker.com/articles/newdirections.html> (14. 6. 2021).

ILO (2018). *Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers*. Geneva: ILO, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_652001.pdf (12. 10. 2020).

Kochhar, Rakesh (2020). *Hispanic women, immigrants, young adults, those with less education hit hardest by COVID-19 job losses*. Pew Research, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/06/09/hispanic-women-immigrants-young-adults-those-with-less-education-hit-hardest-by-covid-19-job-losses/> (5. 1. 2020).
- f) Archival sources:
Archival sources should include:
 - o name of the author or name of the institution if the author is unknown,
 - o document title,
 - o description of the source,
 - o name of the collection,
 - o location,
 - o source.

Example:

Pitamic, Leonid (1930). [Letter of Leonid Pitamic to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the emigrants of Prekmurje], 13. 2. 1930. Embassy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in Washington (fond 371, folder 50, unit 65), Archive of Yugoslavia, Belgrade.

6. Graphics and illustrations

- Tables should be created in Microsoft Word and included in the text. Use simple formatting (no special builtin styles).
- All other figures (pictures, maps, illustrations, graphs, etc.) should **not** be included in the text but should be sent as separate files.
- All figures and tables should be referenced in the main text, e.g. (Table 1), (Figure 1).
- Please add the figure captions at the exact locations where they should appear in the text.
- All tables and other visual material should be captioned, always starting with the title Figure/Table [number], for example:
 - Figure 1: Lisa the Cook in New York in 1905 (Photo: Janez Novak, source: Archives of Slovenia, 1415, 313/14).
 - Table 1: The population of Ljubljana according to the 2002 Census (source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, *Statistics*, p. 14).
- Captions to visual material should not include footnotes.
- All digital files for visual material should be named with the author's surname and numbered, e.g., "Brown01.jpg", "Brown02.jpg".
- The size of images should be the same as they should appear in print or larger. Photos should be submitted in one of the following formats: TIF, EPS, SVG, JPG, PNG in full quality and fonts in curves. The image resolution should be at least 300 dpi.
- Permission to publish must be obtained for all copyrighted graphic and illustrative material. Please include proof of permission alongside the copyrighted visual material you submit to the editor.

