

Introduction

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The processes of social transformation that arise from globalization are the crucial context for understanding 21st century migration and refugee movements (Castles, 2007). On the one hand, social transformation drives migration movements and changes its directions and forms. On the other hand, migration is an intrinsic part of social transformation and is itself a major force in re-shaping communities and societies. Following this argumentation line, (forced) migration, similar to other working fields of social work, transcend the micro-macro divide and thus connect the local context to broader global societal transformation processes. As Lorenz (1994, p. 2) correctly points out, “social work is enmeshed in global processes of change” . In line with this, Lyons (1999, p. 163) argues that an understanding of global interconnections “can contribute to a refocusing on the core values of social work, as concerned with human rights and social justice”. The single contributions of this chapter have to be understood against this background. In fact, by working out different perspectives, the authors show how social professionals are often facing paradox situations, characterized, on the one hand, by their human rights mandate and, on the other hand, by an institutional environment, which impedes rather than promotes the implementation of this mandate in practice.

As Cinzia Zadra correctly points out in her contribution, more than ever before, social work professionals need reflexive and critical competencies in order to better confront with the pluralistic dimension of society and an increasingly complex world. This is particularly true regarding the core ethics and principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities, which often fundamentally contradict with the right-wing policy tendencies that can be observed in many European member states (Kjærø, 2002; Liebau & Blichfeldt Johnsen, 2000). Following this

argumentation line, it is argued that the so-called European refugee crisis of 2015 has contributed and indeed intensified the change of the social and political landscapes in Europe in terms of an intensification of the security rhetoric, which tends to criminalize migrants and refugees in the public and political discourse (Papadopoulos, 2007). Accordingly, Giddens (1994, p. 5) points to the revival of local nationalism and with it an accentuating of local identities that are directly bound up with globalizing influences to which they stand in opposition. In line with this, social work as a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development is not excluded from these processes but must face them in a critical way. This is also a core issue that Marco Accorinti discusses in his contribution. Central to his paper is the question of how the intervention of professionals change when the institutional- political framework is changing. Taking the example of the recent Italian law 132/2018 that highlights how racism is ceasing to appear as a censorship practice, he proposes the construction of anti-racist aware networks, which can allow alliances between services, in the territorial realities, between migrants and associative networks, implementing information and complaint campaigns.

Similarly, Marina della Rocca in her contribution advocates critical reflection in dealing with the remnants of a traditionalist reading inherent in institutions and social services. She does so by taking the institutional response to migrant women in situations of violence as an example. She promotes an intersectional approach in social work and links it with a critical and reflexive reflection and thus legitimation of institutional settings.

A critical reflection of the existing structural environments and with it the capabilities of social services to adapt in a flexible way to mixed migration flows, is also discussed in the last two contributions of this chapter. Based on two case studies, both contributions discuss the question of how accessibility to health and social services can be provided also for the most vulnerable social groups in (but not only) times of crisis. In doing so, Franca Zadra gives insights into an empirical case study in South Tyrol's main hospital to explore successful initiatives to enhance the accessibility of such services towards vulnerable groups and analyzes their replicable strategies. She highlights the approach of social innovation and the potential of bottom-linked governance

as particularly well suited to explain and support the transformation of service organizations to widen accessibility also for the most vulnerable.

Finally, Claudia Lintner and Karina Machado focus on the limits of access to services for refugees during the Covid-19 Lockdown in Italy. In doing so they underline the intersection of increasing social and digital inequalities provoked by the Covid-19 pandemic. The authors show, how the lack of digital accessibility, usability and not least the affordability (Faith, 2018) for refugees hindered the resolution of the urgent necessity for digitalization of services during the two-month Lockdown in Italy, promoting new forms of social and digital exclusion.

To conclude, Engbersen (2016) shows that more than ever before it will be a challenge to enable specific migrant groups in vulnerable positions to progress from non- or partial membership to full social membership. This might be true, however, the chapter also shows the willingness of social professionals to accept this challenge by developing new and creative forms of organization and communication, thus changing social work practices by bottom-linked governance in order to work against institutional and political stratification as well as against old and new forms of inequality.

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