

## Abstracts

### **Eastern European temporary migrants: fault lines of differential inclusion in the EU labour and mobility regimes during a global pandemic**

The global COVID-19 pandemic shed light on the interconnections between mobility of capital and labour and the existing modes of exploitation and social exclusion. What we witnessed is the essential role that labour supply chains play in the global spread of the virus and its effect on social and economic life. Drawing on the case of Eastern European migrant workers within the European Union, this paper traces the effects that the lockdown and the severe mobility restrictions in the spring of 2020 had on migrants' lives and on how they were framed in the public discourse. It looks at the conflict between closing national borders and restricting mobility as a tool for protecting the health of citizens on one hand and the need for workers in particular areas which conditioned selective relaxation of these mobility restrictions. Focusing on agriculture and the food industry in Germany and Austria, the paper explores the ambivalent role of Bulgarian and Romanian workers both as essential for the reproduction of Western societies, and as dangerous subjects who spread the disease across borders. The argument builds on the specific position that these workers have as EU citizens with full labour and mobility rights on one hand, and as excluded in practice from a series of social rights by virtue of their status as temporary workers. Ultimately, the ambition of the paper is to map global resemblances through using examples from the Global South that go beyond the division of internal and international migration and citizen/migrant status, and focus on the practices and strategies of differential exclusion based on labour conditions.

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