



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

“Population and Environment:
Challenges and Perspectives”
International Scientific Conference





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Transnational families in times of global crisis: the importance of infrastructure availability

The paper discusses the intersections of different migration infrastructures using the temporary labour migration from Serbia during the COVID-19 pandemic as an example to better understand the complex relationships of relevant actors, networks, institutions, and technologies involved in organizing migration and transnational family support and practices in conditions of a global crisis. Strategies for building and maintaining family relationships and connections between members of transnational families (TNF) are multiform. With the progress of transport and ICT infrastructure, opportunities for regular and diverse types of TNF communication between countries of origin and destination are also developing. Digital technologies improve the opportunities for migrants and TNF members to communicate more effectively with relevant state institutions, both in the countries of origin and destination, which can ease their often-vulnerable position. However, the investigation of communication methods and how the available migration infrastructure affects different types of communication and the well-being of TNF members has been significantly less researched. This topic is particularly important for a better understanding of migrant and TNF features in times of global crises, when the state brings sudden and restrictive measures, such as, for example, border closures and controls during the COVID-19 pandemic. In such situations, the state's response often does not recognize the transnational forms of family relations and vulnerabilities, which appear and deepen in times of crisis. Also, in relation to the domicile population, it is significantly more difficult for the state to communicate important information about crisis measures and legal protection to the migrant population, especially if they are on temporary visa regime. Also, in the countries of origin, the records of the left-behind population are often missing, negatively impacting their social protection. In such conditions, transnational family agency and complex informal infrastructures become dominant in preserving family support and care.

Keywords: Transnational families, migration infrastructures, global crisis