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## **Lessons for counselling practice at the IAEVG /AIOSP congress in Montpellier**

In this article, the author reports and discusses lessons for counselling practice, formulated at the international AIOSP/IAEVG congress in Montpellier, France, in 2013. The first part of the article describes the mission of counselling as one of the key themes referred to by many speakers. The author evokes contradictions and ambiguities of the counselling mission emphasised by the congress participants. In the next part of the article the postulates of changes are categorized one by one. The author gives also a detailed account of accompanying events and meetings essential for the future actions of the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance.

**Key words:** counselling, AIOSP/IAEVG congress, mission, changes, lessons

Counselling practice usually seeks its rationalisations, evaluations and suggestions of interventions in the scholarly literature, in the experience of master-empiricists, in the press and/or in the proposals of the organisers of social life. In exceptional situations, the resources for counselling can also be found in fairy tales, wise-sayings or diaries of eminent people. Other interesting sources of inspirational lessons for counsellors are discussions held in various settings – thematic workshops, general assemblies, symposiums, conferences and seminars. The international congresses organised under the auspices of the IAEVG (International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance/Association internationale d'orientation scolaire et professionnelle) undoubtedly offer abundant, precious takeaways of this kind. They have already become an established part in the events calendar of counselling researchers and professionals. This being said, the conference titled ***Career counselling – human or civil right?*** held on 24-27 September, 2013, in Montpellier, France, was indeed exceptional and, in truth, worth special attention. The organisers not only emphasised the anniversary character of the meeting (the first congress was held 60 years ago, also in France) but also spared no effort to make the congress genuinely relevant to career counselling professionals. Therefore, my report will not be a typical example of its genre written in a dry, descriptive, bullet-points form. I would like to share my critical reflection on the lessons the congress conveyed

and, also, highlight the practical guidelines articulated in discussions, requests of counselling practitioners who needed real solutions, and objections against the theoretical, often fruitless discourse of theorists and politicians. This congress was not yet another well-balanced academic meeting but a brave public debate in which difficult and embarrassing questions were not avoided. The grounds of the current rife tensions, barriers and problematical situations were recognised and discussed even though this showed the mutual relations among counselling professionals, theorists and politicians as fraught with disharmony and ignorance. In short, the counsellors put political correctness aside to reveal the everyday life of their institutions, the theorists tried to use their knowledge to support counsellors, and the politicians searched for the causes of the problems at hand.

### **The idea and mission of counselling**

The IAVEG congress in Montpellier received about 200 abstracts and assembled 750 delegates from more than 40 countries. The rich programme included 18 plenary symposiums, 126 presentations and workshops and 22 posters. The main theme of the congress – “career counselling – human or civil right?” – referred to the primary mission of counselling, that is, to ensuring the fair and universal access to counselling support for all those who need it but do not receive it due to various obstacles. The basic tasks of counselling work were reminded – providing help and support not just for those who actively seek advice, consultation and/or psychological counselling, but specifically for people with “wasted lives” (Bauman, 2004), people who are rejected, made “invisible” in the institutional system, excluded from the statistics – people who would not stand up for their rights.

Formulating the main theme of the congress, the organisers drew on the first point of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. They reflected on how the principles inscribed in the Declaration could be enacted by planned measures and applied solutions in counselling and career guidance on the micro-, mezzo- and macro-structural levels. They pointed to dichotomies and tensions arising from the intentional disregard for this problem and from the unexamined belief that these rights are respected and observed.

### **The consequences of political entanglements of counselling practice**

Scholars in counselling theory took on board the mentality of Western societies, which view individuals as independent entities endowed with distinctive identities. Identity is formed in the social and political context which provides a suitable environment for its development. The process, however, has also negative outcomes, such as an ever growing gap between the individualistic “ME” and the social “US.”

This exacerbating polarisation produces acute alienation, with the community, reference groups and local environments potentially losing their relevance.

Additionally, the individuals oscillate between expectations of managing difficult situations by themselves and enmeshment “in the net” of politically correct, “available” help offered by the institutional system. Consequently, counselling practitioners are sometimes entangled in formal expectations to enact egalitarian slogans despite actually recognising their utopian character. Worse still, in organising social care-provision, in the broadest sense of the term, for their local communities, they are forced to implement the radical rules of neo-liberal policy.

Those who need counselling also have their attitudes affected by finding themselves precariously positioned between Scylla and Charybdis. Some of them demand that their human rights be respected and the individual needs-oriented approach be endorsed. Other people in need of help radically demand that recovery programs be implemented and make specific claims upon social services agencies. They cite the provisions of international documents that guarantee social welfare, such as the already mentioned *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which regulates social and migration policy in many countries. It also serves as a framework of reference for handling asylum applications and launching inclusive education programmes, which marshal support for foundations, associations set up by ethnic minorities and migrant communities. Unfortunately, although high-minded, the notions of the common good and solidarity in community advocacy often prove empty ideas only. Compensation measures for the rejected social groups gain recognition, but they are seen as too expensive and unprofitable. When it comes to support-provision, priority is given to those considered resourceful, useful, promising in convalescence and low-cost.

The congress participants were encouraged to reflect on the practical dimension of executive power laid down in the documents guarding human rights. They looked into how the fair access to help and support, as well as organising a well-functioning counselling system, is based on realising the postulates of the *Declaration*, ratified by many countries. To what extent are the objectives of sustainable action respecting the rights of individuals, societies and the natural environment observed and pursued? They insisted that the individual potential developed in social processes and in relations with other people and should ideally contribute to the universal good. This conception was also underscored by Alicja and Andrzej Czerkawski, who distinguished three dimensions of good in counselling practice (Czerkawska A., Czerkawski A. 2005, pp. 21-35).

An important comment was offered on the IAEVG mission. This well-functioning organisation, which enjoys a considerable standing and assembles many famous researchers, can exert influence and engage in advocacy on behalf of those whose voice is not heard. The IAEVG's duties can also be described as ensuring the quality of counselling and defending it against the inroads of profiteering. Profiteering spreads among counsellors who implement neo-liberal policies and are inclined

to “judge” counselling services in terms of gain and loss, cost-effectiveness and financial returns on social welfare “management.”

### **Disappointments and awareness of ambiguities**

All the scholars participating in the congress offered practical commentaries and remarks. For instance, Lester Oakes – the head of the IAEVG – spoke about the sources of reflection on the theme of the congress. He underlined that the international IAEVG meeting offered a great opportunity to work out a comprehensive diagnosis and to plan global actions aimed at implementing viable solutions in practice. Oakes pointed out that in many countries counselling service was still non-existent, no counselling-related research was conducted, and the pioneers who realised that more systematic resources should be provided did not receive the expected support from government agencies. These counselling researchers and practitioners could use the IAEVG net as a site which offers reassurance, helps “charge the batteries” to continue their struggle, inspires and assists in coping with resistance and obstacles.

Oakes raised also another issue. In the world of academia with its ever more pervasive and ubiquitous virtual communication, it is still important to make sure that researchers meet face-to-face. Therefore, congresses serve as important educational occasions, where the participants can learn directly from each other, find out about their colleagues’ research interests, arrange partnerships to do research projects together and get immersed in the international and intergenerational community of counsellors. First of all, however, they can take part in international activities working toward the achievement of individual and universal good.

Christian Philip – the head of the Montpellier regional board of education – also referred to the IAEVG mission. He emphasised the important role of career counsellors and of those responsible for their training, professional development and identification of their needs. He outlined the situation of young people, who should become the priority group to be offered support by local counselling services. The time of precarious employment, when even university education does not guarantee jobs, pressure to keep upgrading one’s qualifications and aggressive devaluation of acquired skills, all make more and more young people believe that formal education is not worth investing in. The speaker appealed to the delegates to seek ways of re-kindling the learners’ hope and faith in the sense of institutionally provided education. The frightening picture of young unemployed degree-holders in Spain, Greece, Portuguese, Bulgaria and Romania has discouraged an increasing number of students from pursuing education and taking their A-levels. Their dejected attitudes are also triggered by the fear of debts incurred by taking student loans, which many graduates are unable to pay off. Another reason of leaving education prematurely is the necessity of taking up a job, often a low-paid and

manual one, with the earnings barely covering the cost of living in one household shared with the parents and grandparents.

In his opening address, Jean Guichard reflected on the paradigm of career counselling and intervention methods which can support a sustainable development of the individual and the natural environment. In the first part of his speech, Guichard described the historical background of changes in the counselling models dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Between the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the 1970s, the (then innovative) goals which vocational guidance pursued included the betterment of the working conditions and the improvement of occupational preparation. It was believed that compensation measures launched in those areas would result in creating an effective society aligned with the fair and egalitarian rules. However, the radical economic transformation spanning over the last 40 years has shown the insecurity and alienation of the individual, caused by the loss of stable employment and the devaluation of once-acquired skills. The slogans of lifelong learning and career constructing sound unconvincing in the world without employment.

In my view, the negative developments addressed by Guichard, such as a sense of insecurity, pointlessness of action and helplessness of counselling professionals, are felt even more acutely in Central-Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. The closing down and downsizing of factories and other, once stable, companies, currency devaluation and governments' inability to keep coming up with policy solutions have contributed to shifting the responsibility for lifelong career-designing onto individuals. The pressure to develop life-management skills, the reification of people and the re-formulation of human values in economic terms (utility, efficiency, profit-making, etc.) have resulted in the focus on the meeting of individual needs. Consequently, governments are withdrawing from their protective function and promoting the belief in the necessary individual self-reliance and personal coping with difficult situations.

A slightly different and more detailed assessment was presented on the second day of the congress by Peter Plant from Aarhus University (Denmark), a former deputy chairman of the IAIEVG. Currently, Plant is an active member of the coordinating board of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). He also emphasised the tensions and ambiguities with which counselling and career guidance are fraught at the moment. On the one hand, career guidance is a useful and representative tool used by the authorities to prove that they are realising the postulates of social justice. On the other hand, it is a subtle instrument of social control; it is increasingly becoming an ostentatious, illustrative way of solving social problems (cf. Szumigraj, 1998). As the researcher observed, the local authorities pressed by budgetary constraints seek funding for social work and social services (including career guidance) through international projects. The beneficiary groups are selected by those who fund the project. In order to promote good practice, certain activities are performed even though there is no real need for them in the local community. The outcomes – partial or complete solutions to the local social

problems – are expected to be reported as quantitative evidence, using numbers and percents. Independent, self-earning guidance services are held up for praise in local communities as an economically sound model of the management and distribution of social welfare funds.

In his courageous, critical speech, Plant cited, as an example, oppressive policies targeting a very popular beneficiary group – young people (aged 18-35). The “supportive” solutions with a clear objective to curb unemployment in this age group can easily be interpreted as manipulatory. Young people are advised to choose an educational and career path that leads to occupations with the highest employment rate. Thus, the technical disciplines are favoured while the humanistic studies are in retreat. Many educational institutions offer workshops, training schemes and courses which foster entrepreneurial capacities, economic expertise and concrete skills. Career advisers at schools, employment counsellors, social workers and specialists in education, sociology, culture and ethnology are all examples of low-paid professions suitable for “the naïve,” who are doomed to become ultimately disaffected with the egalitarian postulates undercut by austerity budgeting.

In the situation of contradiction, when the counsellors’ possibilities and the advice-seekers’ needs are mutually exclusive, the image of institutional help becomes ambiguous. Such services as career centres can be viewed as an example of good practice geared toward the ideals of social justice, but they can also be sites of the manipulative use of social control instruments. According to Plant, the existing tensions have caused a decrease in trust to formal institutions and inclined people to look for informal help and advice in everyday life (cf. Siarkiewicz 2010, pp. 26-28). Therefore, following the Danish solutions, counselling and guidance should not be organised exclusively in the formal settings. If counsellors and advisors simply wait for their clients in advice centres, their work becomes only all the more easily controllable by the government. The challenge for the present-day advisors is to seek their clients – to leave the office and go out into the communities, where people who need support live their lives. Out there, the counselling professionals can start constructing community hubs or advice and intervention points anchored in the local social environment. In this way, advisors can reach those who would never be clients of formal institutions and would never demand their rights. This type of counselling and guidance requires a lot of activity; advisors need to become animators, mediators and moderators supporting local communities. In this way, they can establish themselves as those who listen, help in writing applications, show accessible systemic and legal solutions, suggest ways of negotiation and remind about civil rights.

Another leading figure and a key-note speaker at the congress was philosopher Jean-Claude Michéa. He also started from a historic perspective, pointing out that as early as in the 18<sup>th</sup> century human life had been shaped by the rules of increasingly capitalistic markets and, at the same time, by the developing legislation for protection of workers against exploitation and instrumental treatment. The

individual always seeks balance between autonomy, self-determination and limitations imposed by the invisible hand of the liberal market. However, the philosopher observed that this permanent dialectic should not be perceived as a burden or a destructive fate only as it could be effectively used to revise basic human rights and create global, international institutions that would demand respecting human rights, especially where they are ignored and violated. Michéa agreed that individual lives were bound to be more and more disrupted by the new aggressive rules of political economy. The rules of the market will be overriding in determining human needs and will have the last say in interpreting and “correcting” the universally recognised documents which guard the human dignity.

After Michéa’s presentation, I had an opportunity to talk about it with some other (mainly French) listeners. They agreed that the image of human life Michéa depicted was rather pessimistic. Humans are puppets whose strings are manipulated by the brutal economy. The individual’s efforts to cooperate with the world of employment are met with disappointment. Only few are able to keep pace with its changing demands, and nobody can predict in which direction the economy will develop. People consent to their rights being limited one by one. They have no other choice but to be constantly torn between the harsh, impersonal rules of the market and governmentally enacted social control, on the one hand, and the ideals of human rights and dignity inscribed in the internationally valid documents, on the other.

In the address closing the congress plenary sessions, Mark Savickas also reflected on the changes which counselling has undergone over the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Discussing his theoretical constructs and practical solutions, he drew largely on such notions as individualism, permanent pressure on self-realisation, continuous relocation of skills and flexible adaptation to new cultural and social conditions. He believes that, facing such expectations of self-determination and goal-achievement, individuals experience alienation. The solution to the predicament lies in the transition from the focus on satisfying individual needs to engagement in the processes of identity construction, which unfold in relations with other people and are realised in various social groups and local communities. Savickas referred to the career counselling intervention methods based on biographical narratives, which can be interpreted not only as stories of individual life-courses but first and foremost as diagnostic descriptions of societies and communities. They are sources of knowledge about the life of a group, the history of local society and the social and cultural contexts in which the threads of an individual biography get interwoven with the common social texture.

The renowned counsellor went on to insist that the strategies of life-designing should not be developed exclusively around individual personal skills but should also take into account the potential and resources of the local environment. The individual’s activities should aim not only at pursuing self-interest but also at contributing to the common good, mindful of the system’s sustainability. Savickas

proposed also to outline new tasks for counselling. Instead of being reduced to an instrument of obtaining a well-paid job or a satisfying career, guidance and support-provision should rather aim to discover and attain general well-being. Counselling interventions should also seek to re-make the social reality into a more friendly and equitable environment. In this context, the individual's engagement in informal activities becomes crucial (e.g. carrying out projects important for local society).

### **In search of foundations for change**

All the talks I participated in and reported above were chosen based on my research interests, such as biographical research informed by counselling studies and intercultural psychology. The symposium which proved particularly interesting to me was held by British specialists in biographical research (Linden West, who is the chairman of the ESREA biographical research section, Hazel Reid, Alison Fielding and Rebecca Tee). The four speakers presented counselling intervention methods based on biographical narratives. They used narratives of students and alumni who had signed up at the career office of Canterbury Christ Church University (UK). Another research project they discussed dealt with career advisors in everyday life, e.g. members of the school council (mainly volunteers), including students' parents, alumni, community activists, representatives of associations and the local authorities and seniors of considerable standing. The researchers sought to find out what sense the narrators made of counselling activities and how they described the process of becoming a counsellor (cf. Siarkiewicz, Trębińska-Szumigraj, Zielińska-Pękał, 2012). The other questions raised were: What dilemmas are they facing? What are their tasks and in how far are they expected to execute them?

Another symposium I found interesting focused on a slightly different topic: *Green guidance: time for action* and was held by an international team of researchers (Lyn Barham, Peter Plant, Barrie A. Irving and Christopher J. Manley). They outlined the mission of a project broadly referred to as *green guidance*. The speakers reminded that the IAEVG members had committed themselves to meeting the demands defined in 1995 and insisted on including ecological education in the training curricula in career-designing. The mission of *green guidance* should be to counteract the consequences of tensions generated by abandoning the systems-thinking heedful of the homeostasis of the ecosystem. The imbalance of in the natural environment, the excessive concentration on ensuring the financial sector's liquidity and the prioritisation of economy over ecological awareness radically affect the quality of well-being. Accelerating and overlapping trajectories coupled with the constant displacement of biographies into new cultural and economic contexts exacerbate the need for counselling support. The counsellors' responsibilities, consequently, include making the clients aware of the urgency of sustainable, holistic

development. The environment-conscious attitude should be a crucial component of lifelong strategies for career construction.

A similar issue was discussed in another symposium titled *Embracing social justice in Career Education and Guidance. Moving beyond the rhetoric towards a critical social justice*. The speakers – Beatriz Malik, Nancy Arthur, Barrie A. Irving and Gabriela Cabrera – pointed out that advisory and counselling activities, particularly in the West, were devised to form greatly independent individuals, to support their development and self-determination, to construct highly individualised biographies and to realise personal passions and interests. These processes “breed” certain threats (cf. Kargul, 2004, p. 49-54) and require reflection on the hidden dimensions and latent areas of counselling oriented in this way – counselling which “correctly” fulfils the expectations of aggressive neo-liberal politics.

The researchers identified the tensions between high-minded action (which supporting and helping should be) and an equally high-minded ideal of equal access to help as a universal right, on the one hand, and the governmentally implemented legislative and executive policies which deepen marginalisation and exclusion, on the other. The requirements of measurability, evaluation and profit-making boost competition among helping institutions. Only the most efficient, comprehensive and demanded services involved in many international projects are to survive. Yet, which social groups are to be the beneficiaries of the services is defined each year by government agencies and private enterprises which fund the projects. The speakers also stirred a discussion asking provocatively: “What about care, systemic thinking, global help actions for ‘distant’ others who live in poverty?” “What activities can the counsellor undertake at the micro and mezzo-structural levels in order to eliminate the differences in place?” “How to help the exploited who work for entrepreneurs and agents without adequate pay for the job done and emigrate in search of livelihood and dignity?”

A different theme was tackled in the (French language) session in which I was one of the speakers. We talked about practical counselling intervention methods. The speakers in this session included Laurence Cocandeu-Bellanger from the University of Angers (France), Philippe Jacquin from the University of Bordeaux (France), Katia Terriot from the Centre CNAM – INETOP (France) and Aneta Słowik from the University of Lower Silesia (Wrocław, Poland). These methods enable the counsellor to analyse the advice-seeker’s personal identity at the point of transition in his/her life, to examine the displacement and integration of possessed and demanded skills of immigrants in the culture of arrival and to identify a person’s interests and commitment to develop them. We also addressed guidance on developing a lifestyle in which a balance is preserved between private and professional life.

The speakers’ presentations were followed by a discussion initiated mainly by French counselling practitioners, who appreciated the practical side of the presentation. They inquired about the details of the methods described and possibilities of

applying them in their work settings. They critically reflected on the subjects discussed and shared their difficulties and dilemmas; they also identified formal obstacles encountered in French advice centres.

### **Important accompanying events**

The congress abounded in other interesting initiatives and meetings. For example, all the participants were invited to join the IAEVG forum, where the executive board presented a report on their activities. All those present were divided into smaller groups, with at least one official member of the board joining each of them. They discussed new targets and tasks the IAEVG should engage with in order to meet more adequately the current human needs in keeping with the statutory aims of the international community.

Another important event was an innovative official meeting of the IAEVG ethic section, which revised the organisation's statute regarding advisory and counselling activities. The principles that guide and underpin the IAEVG mission include: pursuing the social good, promoting social justice and equal rights, supporting the rejected and those at risk of marginalisation and working toward a sustainable technological, economic and industrial development aligned with the needs of the ecosystem.

A meeting of young IAEVG members attended by the head of the association, Lester Oakes, was also an engaging event. Designed as a workshop, the session gave the young researchers an opportunity to articulate their needs, expectations and initiatives which could be realised through the IAEVG. There was a space for critical reflection, debate and creative ideas coming from different continents. The proposals put forward included, among others, organising training workshops for the young researchers (with at least a PhD degree) to present various projects and discuss them at length. Emphasised was the need to create and tighten relationships with new members of the IAEVG. One of the important postulates regarded the generational continuity and a more visible presence of young researchers on the IAEVG board.

Congresses are also a good occasion to honour eminent contributors to the counsellologists' community – distinguished scholars, renowned researchers, initiators of international actions promoting counsellogy. And indeed, this was also the case this time. At the festive banquet, congratulations and words of gratitude were extended and a Festschrift was presented to Professor Jean Guichard.

### **(Tentative) Conclusion**

International congresses and conferences are often criticised for their repetitive subjects, insufficient time for satisfying scholarly debates, reduced options of

attending various sessions due to parallel scheduling, excessive focus on theory and inadequate connection to everyday practice. I also subscribed to these beliefs, widespread in the academia. However, the meeting in Montpellier stood out in many respects, such as solid organisation, making sure that all participants could take part in all scheduled events, and creating good settings for extensive discussions and opportunities for expanding cooperation within the IAEVG. Additionally, in professional discussions, critical voices and practitioners' remarks were heeded with due attention. Also, as difficult subjects were not avoided, the dangers and trouble counselling and advice work is embroiled in locally and globally were taken on board. Especially poignant were deeply realistic reflections, distressed and sometimes cut short by the moderators' "it wouldn't be of interest to our foreign guests," "it is our French context" or "we've neither place nor time for this discussion here." The congress offered also space and time for sharing options and solutions as well as opinions on the limitations encountered in everyday practice, research and teaching. These strengthen the feelings of solidarity and understanding but also an awareness of different social and cultural contexts in which various academic communities work.

To sum up, I will attempt to recapitulate all the major takeaways relevant to counselling practice which emerged in the debates and discussions held at the congress:

- ◆ Establishing close multilateral cooperation among theorists, counselling/ advising professionals and policy makers.
- ◆ Identifying and, if possible, combating the concealed mechanisms of neo-liberal economy, neo-liberal cultural policy and corporatism that turn counselling into an ideological battlefield (Rutkowiak 2010, p. 205), e.g. by re-allocating funds to designated agencies, foundations and state institutions and by prioritising certain social policy targets.
- ◆ At the international level, mutual learning of good, creative solutions for lifelong education of counsellors.
- ◆ Initiating debates and meetings in which the difficulties and limitations to counselling interventions as well as the ways to overcome them could be explored.
- ◆ Engaging in cooperation with intellectuals and resorting to what is referred to as post-neoliberal education focused on the values of social democracy, such as social sensitivity, social justice, etc. (cf. Potulicka, 2010, pp. 330-331; Rutkowiak, 2010, pp. 339-356).
- ◆ Organising help and support not only for the active advice-seekers but first of all for the rejected and abandoned, the "wasted lives" (Bauman, 2004)

not to be found in the monitored high-risk groups and in any statistics – people unlikely to ever contact an advisor on their own.<sup>1</sup>

- ♦ Brave and imaginative attitude (Rutkowiak, 2010, p.339) in defining the role of the counsellor/advisor. This role can be adopted by, for example, social workers, street workers, nurses, office workers, teachers and, also, by close relatives, compatriots, etc.<sup>2</sup>

We can only hope that the important arrangements and findings the congress arrived at and, particularly, the frustrated voices of counselling professionals and critical assessments of counselling researchers will be properly attended to and heeded in policy projects, decisions and legislation constructed by politicians and economists.

The tradition observed by the IAEVG scientific and organisational board has it that the conference venues alternate each year so as to enable different delegates to participate. The priority behind these events is to ensure fair chances for all the members and speakers to present novel, less familiar topics in the rich and diverse discipline of counselling. For this reason, in 2014, the IAEVG congress took place in Canada, and the next one will be held in 2015 in Japan. Regrettably, for many speakers and participants traversing the continents is thwarted by financial barriers.

*Translated from Polish by Aneta Słowik*

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<sup>1</sup> I have in mind chiefly refugees and illegal or legal immigrants who do not know the Labour Code and have only very poor command of the language of the country of arrival. See Ed Vulliamy (2012) for an account of the appalling situation of Mexican migrants manoeuvred into dependence on human and drug trafficking.

<sup>2</sup> Ewa Winnicka (2014) describes self-help, counselling meetings organised for Polish women migrants in London. She lets the compatriots speak and diagnostically address their problematical situations in which help-provision should be implemented by the relevant institutions.

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