

## INTRODUCTION

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### In the midst of events

It is estimated that in 2015 over one million refugees travelled into the territory of the states of the European Union, causing a crisis in the EU and on its peripheries. While Europe had experienced significant waves of inward and outward migration in living memory—e.g., the refugee waves caused by violent conflict in South-Eastern Europe in the 1990s—the 2015 peak and related wave posed a challenge for an EU that had only incorporated post-communist states as members eleven years previous. As such, a number of the countries highly affected by the refugee crisis in terms of administration and claims processing, humanitarian assistance and possible future integration were those that had little recent experience in facing such challenges. Furthermore, the societal response to the crisis revealed a deep divide within the EU regarding moral and legal obligations, the nature and protection of political communities and the execution of fundamental rights and values.

As a response to the recent wave of involuntary migration to Europe unleashed by global political, economic and environmental causes we organised a series of courses to be taught at CEU and ELTE in the academic years of 2015/2016 and 2016/2017. These courses were aimed at exploring the internal and external determinants of recent global migration to Europe. During the semesters researchers and experts shared their most important insights in their field with regard to migration and the refugee issue. Uniquely, the students were taken on field trips where they had the opportunity to meet refugee families in camps, unaccompanied minors left alone by their parents and representatives of non-government organisations caring and serving refugees during their stay in Hungary.

Based on their learning experiences the students were asked at the end of the course to write a paper discussing some of the points listed below:

- understanding the various forms of new migration and refugee trends affecting Europe;
- the context of globalization and migration;
- political, social and cultural conflicts between migrants and host countries, including terrorism-related security policy challenges;

- organizational contradictions with regard to national governments and the European Commission, the relationship between the state and the civic sector, and the potential of various civic activities;
- the tools of successful social and cultural inclusion of migrants, the strengthening of social solidarity, and the role of collective and corporate social responsibility;
- future trends of migration in Europe.

The best papers were collected and are presented in this volume. These papers offer a unique window of opportunity for social scientists to measure and evaluate a range of local phenomenon. For example, alternative theories of migration and integration can be tested and evaluated. As well, the response to the crisis of social institutions like those of the state, civil society and the media can reveal much about their flexibility and adaptability or firmness and rigidity. The reaction of such institutions to the refugee wave further offers an opportunity to study their stability and the execution of functions they are designed to carry out. Finally, the sets of stances and positions of host societies—be they potential integrators or transit overseers—offer us a view into some of the most basic values of these societies, including attitudes toward equality, humanism, community and justice.

The authors of this volume have undertaken the detailed study of institutional and civic responses to the crisis, largely in Hungary but also in Serbia, the United States and even the virtual sphere of the internet and social media. The first group of studies focuses on the civic and NGO responses to the refugee wave and its management in Hungary. Anikó Kenéz employs in-depth interviews to explore the reflections of a disadvantaged group of Roma in Hungary—one which has been affected by significant migration of its members to Canada—on the situation of incoming refugees and asylum seekers. Zsófia Nagy examines the efforts of the members of a small village in Hungary to oppose the placement of a refugee camp in their town. Zuzana Pavelková examines the approach taken by humanitarian activists in both Hungary and Serbia to the concept of the border. Rachel Surányi focuses on the attitudes and beliefs of the members of a Jewish faith group in their efforts to assist refugees staying at the Keleti train station in Budapest in the late summer of 2015. All four of these studies allow insight into the development of and shifts in values in the response to a novel crisis, and as such contribute to the deepening of our understanding of civic conceptions of justice and equality.

The next set of papers concentrates on responses to the crisis as reflected in the media. Eszter Szőnyi and Thomas Van Roey explore the use of twitter and particularly the #refugeeswelcome hashtag within twitter. Twitter's simplification of messages and pervasiveness create a new communicative sphere in which citizens react to arising crises, and the study aims to reveal the logic and structure of such communication. Zsolt Szabolcsi uses the concept of moral panic to conduct a comparative analysis of the approaches of a number of Hungarian television networks in reporting the events of mid-2015. His findings reveal the attempts of state and non-state actors to influence public opinion on the refugee crisis. A study conducted and a film directed by Borislav Buljić, Gabriella Komoly, and Darko Majstorović use comparative methods to gain insight into media approaches employed in Serbia vis a vis Hungary. The authors find fundamentally contrasting approaches to reporting events, revealing

major policy and perhaps value divisions between the two countries. It is apparent that compared to the NGO sector, the media provides an opportunity for state actors to encourage support for given policies and for the value choices upon which they are based. Civil society's interpretation of such encouragement is not necessarily unified, nor straightforward, as seen in the articles in the first section.

A third group of papers examines state-driven programs concerning foreigners, but outside of Central Europe and the EU. Ana Cukovic analyses the rationale and reasons for proactive refugee settlement and integration programs in the city of Detroit, which is known to have suffered severe economic and demographic crises recently. The treatment of refugee communities as an asset in the rebuilding of a city is a stark contrast to many of the policies explored in previous sections. Fanni Beck's study of the efforts of the Chinese state to influence the identity formation of second- and third generation Chinese overseas is an exploration of a state's attempt at modifying identity boundaries to broaden support for the in-group. The Chinese policy serves as a fascinating case study for comparison with European policies to expand or, on the other hand, limit the boundaries of the polis.

The volume concludes with Zoltán Csányi's reflections on the modelling of well-being in refugee circles. The study is evidence of the fact that the 2015 crisis has not only affected policy and values in EU states, but is the instigator of changes to existing theories in sociology and political science.

Taken as a whole, the papers in this collection point to a crisis of values and conceptualizations of justice in those EU states directly affected by the critical events of 2015. On one hand, the crisis led to the crystallization of groups supporting pluralism, human rights and humanism. On the other hand, a perhaps unexpected result of the crisis—one clearly illustrated in many of the studies published here—was a coalescence of communitarianism at the national level, whereby efforts to control state borders are placed in a context of securing cultural homogeneity and maintaining existing culture. In such a normative environment, it is difficult to lay claim to objectivity or neutrality in social science study. What is certain, however, is that studies like those written by the authors in this volume are a step forward in the clarification of values inherent in a society's ability to manage crisis.