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Stream: Transnational care markets: European care regimes in the age of migration

Author:

Minna Zechner

Department of Social Research

33014 University of Tampere

Finland

minna.zechner@uta.fi

+358-0-3551 7174

Migration is an increasingly feminine activity fuelled partly by the demand for care work labour in developed welfare states. Women are known for taking the main responsibility for care work, notwithstanding whether it is done in the private or public sphere of life. Family responsibilities, like care, do not fade away when family members live dispersed in various countries. Instead new ways to provide emotional, practical and economic care and guidance emerge in these transnational families. One of these new ways is transnational care, which refers to caring activities that are performed across the borders of nation-states.

Transnational caring activities are shaped by the public policies of the countries where the migrants giving or organising transnational care reside as well as by the policies of countries where children or elders receiving care reside. Transnational caring rests in the intersection of care and migration regimes since the public, private and market-based institutions and arrangements shape these caring activities. The most decisive institutions in this sense are the ones that govern the international movement of people, both short and long term and the ones that directly shape the care practices, namely care policies.

The topic of this paper is located in the care and migration regimes of various developed welfare states. I am looking at different policies that form the institutional structure of the regimes and analysing how they influence the transnational caring strategies of families in immigration countries, mainly developed European welfare states. Feminized international migration has increased the amount of transnational caring which in turn may have the power to reshape the existing care regimes.