

**CfP: International Research Conference  
*Decent Care Work? Transnational Home Care Arrangements***

**Goethe University Frankfurt am Main/Germany**

**Conference Date: May 27-29, 2020**

**\*\*\*Extended Deadline for Abstracts: January 31, 2020\*\*\***

## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONFERENCE AND SESSIONS

The ageing of industrialized societies in combination with the absence of an adequate (welfare) state response is engendering an alarming deficit in care work. This has paved the way for the commodification of care, formerly a typical case of feminized, reproductive work, carried out informally and unpaid within the family. This conference examines if and how a sea change concerning the commodification and formalization of elderly care work is gradually affecting the public understanding of *decent work* and *decent care*.

We draw on the findings of a collaborative research project of transnationally operating care agencies, which recruit migrant live-in carers from Central and Eastern Europe for work in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The project has examined how agencies, care receivers and care givers negotiate their expectations regarding decent care and decent work in these transnational home care arrangements. It also includes the perspectives of stakeholders in the field, for example trade unions, associations, NGOs, care workers' networks and activists, care workers' stay-behind relatives and others.

The conference seeks to bring this study into dialogue with the findings of current international research. It offers new insights by bringing together researchers in the fields of migration, labor, gender, care markets as well as care workers' organizations. By highlighting deficiencies in the economic, political and social regulation of elderly care work, it aims to shed light on the fundamental contradictions between decent care and decent work.

Four key areas will be addressed during the conference:

**(1) Transnational Commodification, Marketization and Corporatization of Live-in Care**

- What similarities and differences in the patterns of transnationally provided elderly care work can be observed in Europe and globally?
- What processes of commodification, marketization and corporatization can be identified?
- Who are the main actors in this field and how do they influence the organization of live-in care, the respective policies/politics and the working conditions of care givers?

**(2) Expectations, Contradictions and Social Inequalities in Transnational Home Care Arrangements**

- Which contradictions and conflicts arise among the actors involved in providing, receiving and brokering elderly care work?
- In what ways are transnational care arrangements structured by social inequalities?
- How are live-in care arrangements integrated in other care and nursing services (care mix) and affected by them?

**(3) Agency and (Self-) Organizing of Live-in Care Workers**

- What kinds of aspirations and agency do elderly care workers and their families have? How can agency in the live-in arrangement be conceptualized?
- Which forms of mobilization and organization of live-in care workers can be observed?
- What role do representatives of care workers, NGOs, trade unions etc. play and what challenges do these actors identify?

**(4) Regularization of Transnational Care Work**

- What are the weaknesses and loopholes of legal and political frameworks regarding transnational care work?
- What are the consequences both for the involved actors and inequality in society at large?
- How is legislation challenged by national as well as supranational and international regulations?

This set of questions requires an interdisciplinary analysis. Therefore, the conference aims at bringing together researchers from a variety of disciplines including anthropology, gerontology, sociology, history, geography, socio-legal studies, gender and migration studies, labor and social/public policy studies.

**Keynote speakers:** Sabrina Marchetti (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), Ito Peng (University of Toronto), Hila Shamir (Tel Aviv University).

For the conference program with a list of all invited speakers, please check back soon on the conference website: <http://decent-care-work.net/en/conference/>.

## PROCEDURE FOR ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

There are several slots for presentations. **Abstracts of 150 words** are to be submitted through the ConfTool application at the following address: <https://www.conftool.com/decent-care-work2020/> by **Friday, January 31, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. (extended deadline)**. Please select at least one of the above-mentioned key areas that best suits your submission.

Notifications of acceptance will be sent out by early **February 2020**.

We welcome proposals from researchers at all stages of their career. Please note that unfortunately we cannot cover expenses for travel and accommodation. The conference fee also applies to accepted speakers.

## PROCEDURE FOR REGISTRATION

**Conference fee:** €100 /reduced fee €60\*

\*The reduced fee applies to students who provide a copy of their student identity card (or similar) upon registering.

Furthermore, our research team is committed to engaging participants from traditionally underrepresented communities by awarding the reduced fee of €60 to participants from Central and Eastern Europe and from other countries according to the International Sociological Association's country categories B and C (for further information, please see: <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/membership/table-of-economies-by-category>).

**Conference registration and payment** opens on **February 01, 2020** and ends **May 20, 2020**.

The conference's Local Organizing Committee will be chaired by Helma Lutz. Other members of the Committee are Ewa Palenga-Möllnbeck, Aranka Vanessa Benazha and Iga Obrocka (Goethe University).

Our research and cooperation partners are Brigitte Aulenbacher, Veronika Prieler, Michael Leiblfinger (Johannes Kepler University Linz) and Karin Schwiter, Jennifer Steiner and Anahi Villalba (University of Zurich).

If you have any questions, please contact us at [decentcarework@soz.uni-frankfurt.de](mailto:decentcarework@soz.uni-frankfurt.de).

We very much look forward to receiving your proposal!