

HOW HAS WEMov CHANGED YOUR LIFE?
WOMEN ON THE MOVE

A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

This last newsletter marks our goodbyes and highlights the impact of COST Action Women on the Move on our professional and personal lives. Not just a professional project, WEMov is also a personal one that has given birth to many lifelong friendships. Following Sirpa Salenius's suggestion, the question WEMov members were asked was: "How has the COST Action changed your life?" Dive into the fascinating stories and unique memories of 4 years of cooperation across Europe and beyond.

Marie Ruiz
Chair of COST Action
Women on the Move (CA19112)



PROFESSIONALLY

Chairing a COST Action has been a unique opportunity to learn how to manage a team of researchers in an international context. Starting as an early career researcher, I was both frightened and excited. As we soon created strong bonds, I could not have done it without the generous support and help of WEMov members. Together, we have created a very dynamic and friendly work atmosphere, and have done so much to bring women migrants out of oblivion with exciting deliverables. The two major ones, which have changed my life, are the exhibition at the EU Parliament during the week the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum was voted, as well as shooting a documentary film. I have developed amazing new skills and from a frightened new Chair 4 years ago, I have gained so much confidence in my leadership skills.



I always thought that my work on the history of 19th century women's migration was incomplete without any contacts with actual women migrants, yet it was a perspective that scared me. WEMov has allowed me to make my dream come true by intervening in a remarkable reception center for women migrants at Odos, an experience I will never forget, and which has given meaning to my research, turning it into a useful contribution to women migrants.



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The personal impact of this unique adventure has been tremendous. I am a new person at the end of this experience, I have made amazing friends for life, I have discovered fascinating cultures and have fallen in love with the Balkan countries that I only discovered thanks to COST. There are so many people I want to thank for their support and friendship over this exciting and daunting adventure. COST for this unique opportunity; Fatime, Mickael, Matthew, Svetlana, and Karima for their constant help, kindness and friendliness. The COST Academy, Ana and Laryssa, as well as Judith from the policy team for the inspiring training sessions, advice and stimulating discussions. My lovely Vice-Chairs and Core Group members for their support and precious advice. I want to thank you all, WEMov colleagues, for your trust in me as leader, for your cooperation, hard work, good spirits and the many laughs as well as for welcoming us in your beautiful countries across Europe. And I thank you for trusting me with your personal life stories, which you have often shared with emotion and I felt privileged to be invited into your personal lives. We went through so much together: pandemic, war, diseases, personal crises, but we have kept good spirits and friendships alive and acted as a family ready to step up for each other and this is unique. COST is an experience of a lifetime that I will never forget. I am sad to see it end, but I am also eager to start new adventures with my new friends.

PROFESSIONALLY

Since becoming a member of the COST Action WEMov, my professional life has undergone significant transformation. The interdisciplinary environment fostered within the network has provided me with a platform to articulate and explore my research interests in new and dynamic ways. Through collaborative efforts within an international team, I've acquired invaluable skills in teamwork and cultural sensitivity. Additionally, exposure to diverse methodologies outside my discipline has broadened my research toolkit, enabling me to approach problems from fresh perspectives. Moreover, the experience of organizing events within the network has honed my organizational abilities. Most importantly, my involvement has underscored the importance of open-mindedness and advocacy in advancing research on critical issues such as women's and migrant rights, making me a more conscientious and effective contributor to my field and enhanced my capacity as a researcher.



Finally, the involvement in this COST Action has been instrumental in crystallizing my research direction that now focuses on women's return migration in post-revolutionary contexts. Specifically, through activities such as the development of the first timeline of women's migration and of a MOOC.



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PERSONALLY

The COST Action has had a profound personal impact on my life. It has served as a crucible for personal growth, nurturing my leadership skills and fostering meaningful friendships on an international scale. Through collaborative research efforts within the network, I've not only become a better researcher but also a better person, appreciating the value of conducting research alongside friends.

This experience has underscored the importance of team work and shared purpose in both professional and personal endeavors.





PROFESSIONALLY

I am honoured to have been part of the COST Women on the Move project. As admin support I gained a lot of experience in organising and running an international meeting, as Science Communication Coordinator I had the opportunity to participate in communication trainings organised by COST, and I also had the chance to try myself as a WG co-leader. As a member of the Core Group, I was able to see how difficult it is to manage a project involving so many countries. As a project member, I have learned a lot about the complex dynamics at work in a collaboration involving so many people.



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PERSONALLY

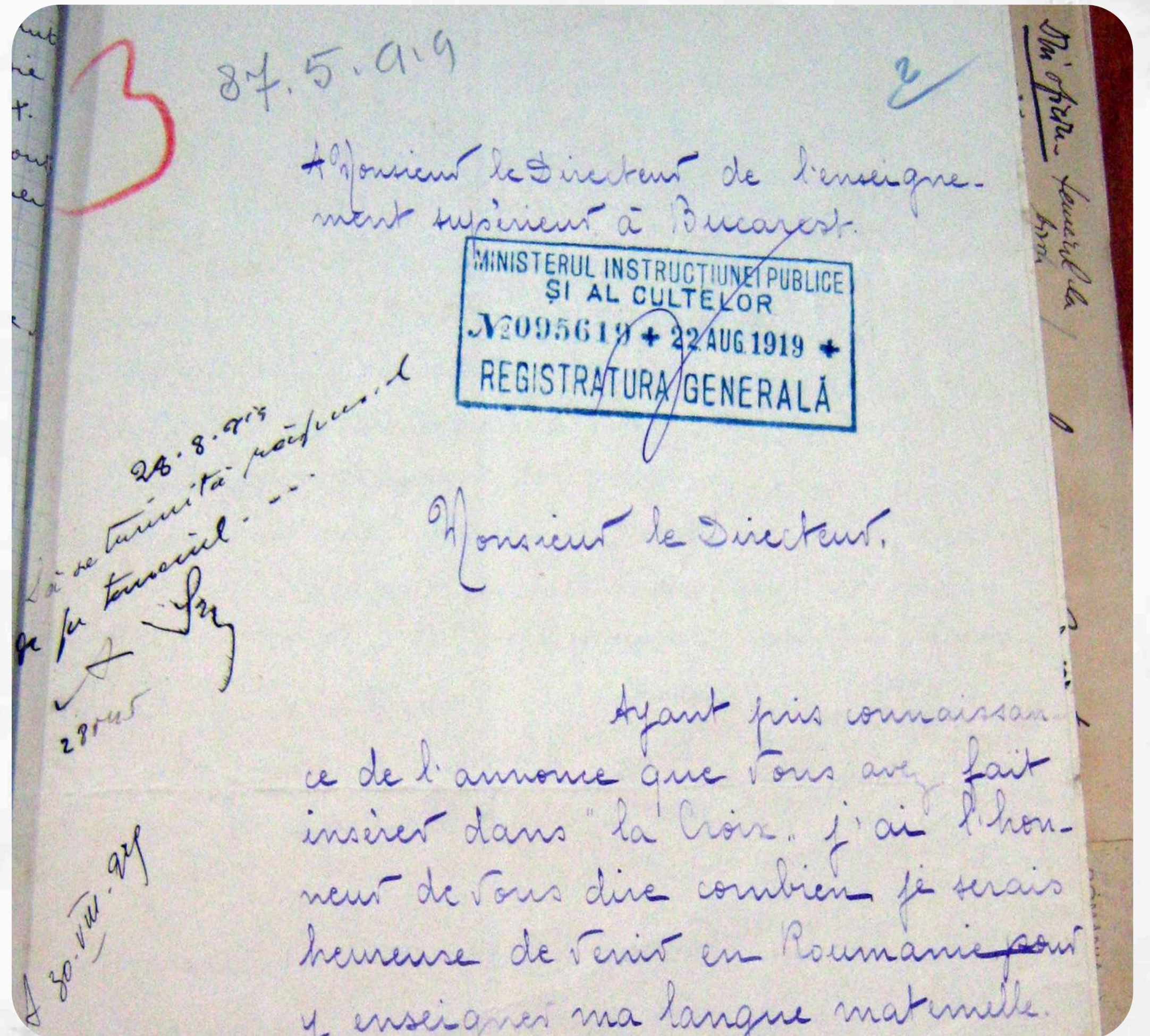


This project has opened up the world to me even more. I have learned a lot about the cultures of different countries, I have become a confident traveller and I have improved my English to the highest possible standard. I have made strong friendships, based on important base of shared values, which have given me support across borders. Not only during the project, but also afterwards. I have learned a lot about what I do well and what I do less well, and about the importance of respecting each other even when people are not formally connected by a working relationship.



PROFESSIONALLY

Being part of the Women on the Move network has allowed me to meet and connect to researchers all over Europe, with different areas of expertise. The tasks that we have worked on were not typical of my everyday activities and have made me grow professionally. Additionally, being a Stakeholders' manager, I had the privilege of interviewing amazing women and learning about their essential work related to migrant women; activist artists, archive and law professionals, gender equality activists, historians and economists they all taught me the importance of work ethics and making a difference by innovating and choosing the un-walked path.



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The two times I participated in the WEMov annual conference I always had a feeling of comradery, and sensed a genuine connection to the colleagues I met and interacted with. Being able to continue the discussions from the conference into an informal lunch or dinner was the best way to know one another and I think Marie has done an amazing job bringing us all together, not only as professionals with a common interest but also as colleagues and friends. Personally, I was able to overcome my shyness and become more confident after attending WEMov meetings and participating in the online working activities.



PROFESSIONALLY

This COST action and the colleagues I had the pleasure to work with, helped me grow professionally. As an early career researcher, the experience I had during this action, new perspectives and methods that I have learned, will help me develop my career too. Not to mention the new ideas for future research that came up. In many ways, WEMov has really set my career on a different, better path.



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The opportunity to work with an amazing group of people, colleagues who have become my friends, to be able to watch them work, and learn from them, I am so grateful for that. The institutions we were able to visit, and places we have seen, only prove how important the work we are doing is, and it has been recognized. I will never forget the experience WEMov has given me, and I indeed hope that I will have more opportunities to work with my colleagues again.

PROFESSIONALLY

It has offered me a supportive network of colleagues with whom it is a pleasure to work. I wish all work environments were like this! Stimulating discussions, exciting site visits, enjoyable team work, forming of friendships with colleagues around Europe - and much laughter. I am looking forward to our future collaboration projects. Thank you for including me in this COST Action.

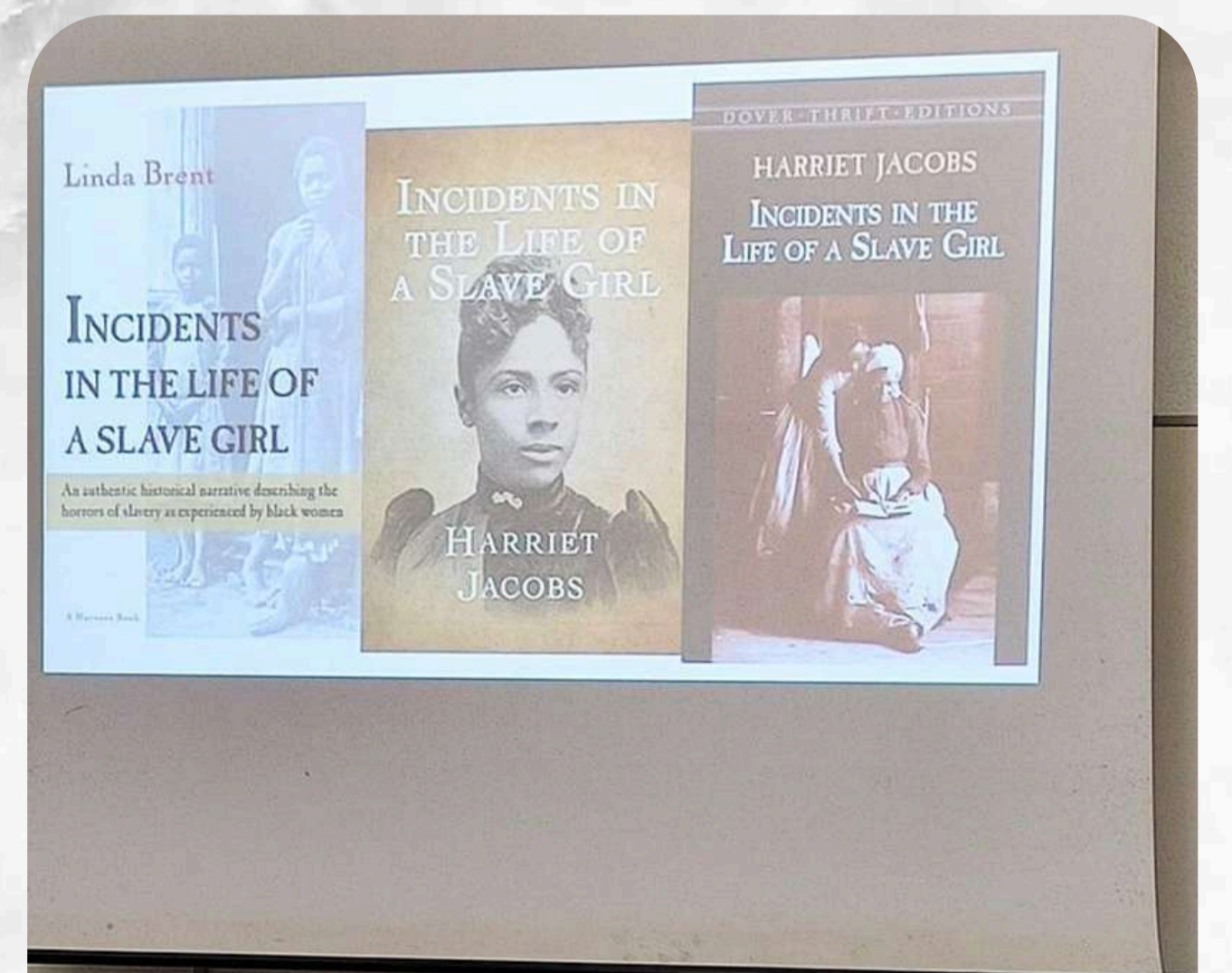


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The professional and personal changes I have experienced overlap. It has been such a pleasure to work with such supportive colleagues and to share with them not only experiences and the work we have been doing together but also fun moments. It is such a joy to have colleagues who I feel are also friends.





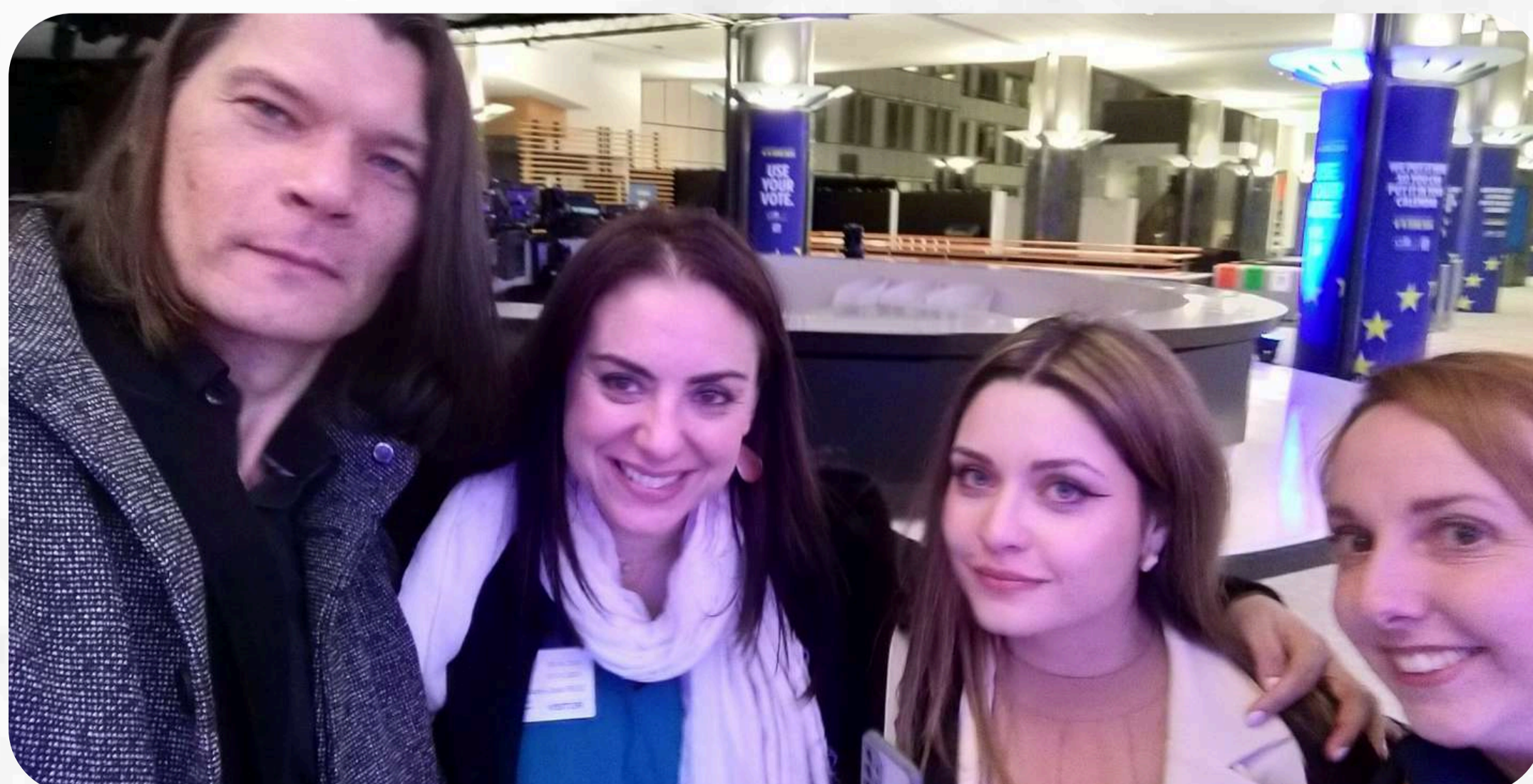
PROFESSIONALLY

Professionally, cooperation with colleagues at WEMov was both a great pleasure for me, and at the same time quite a challenge. The challenge is not only because WEMov brought together representatives of several dozen countries and many research fields. But also because, at first, for more than a year, we worked together exclusively online in the unusual conditions of the pandemic, and then - in the conditions of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, migration, and missile attacks, which led to blackouts of electricity and the Internet. But I can only be proud of the results of joint work in WEMov!



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PERSONALLY

For me, WEMov is not just a project. When, due to the full-scale invasion of Russia into Ukraine, migration became for me not only an object of research, but also the realities of my everyday life, I found real support, real friends in WEMov. In the conditions of war, I do not know what will happen tomorrow. But WEMov for me will forever be a symbol of the light at the end of a tunnel that inspires hope.



PROFESSIONALLY

It has given me an opportunity to learn leaderships skills in multinational environment and in different roles. Our Action has increased my knowledge in many levels: concerning the research about migrant women; about research environments in different countries, and how European history is experienced in the different parts of the continent. It has increased my respect towards scholars who pursue their research no matter the conditions.



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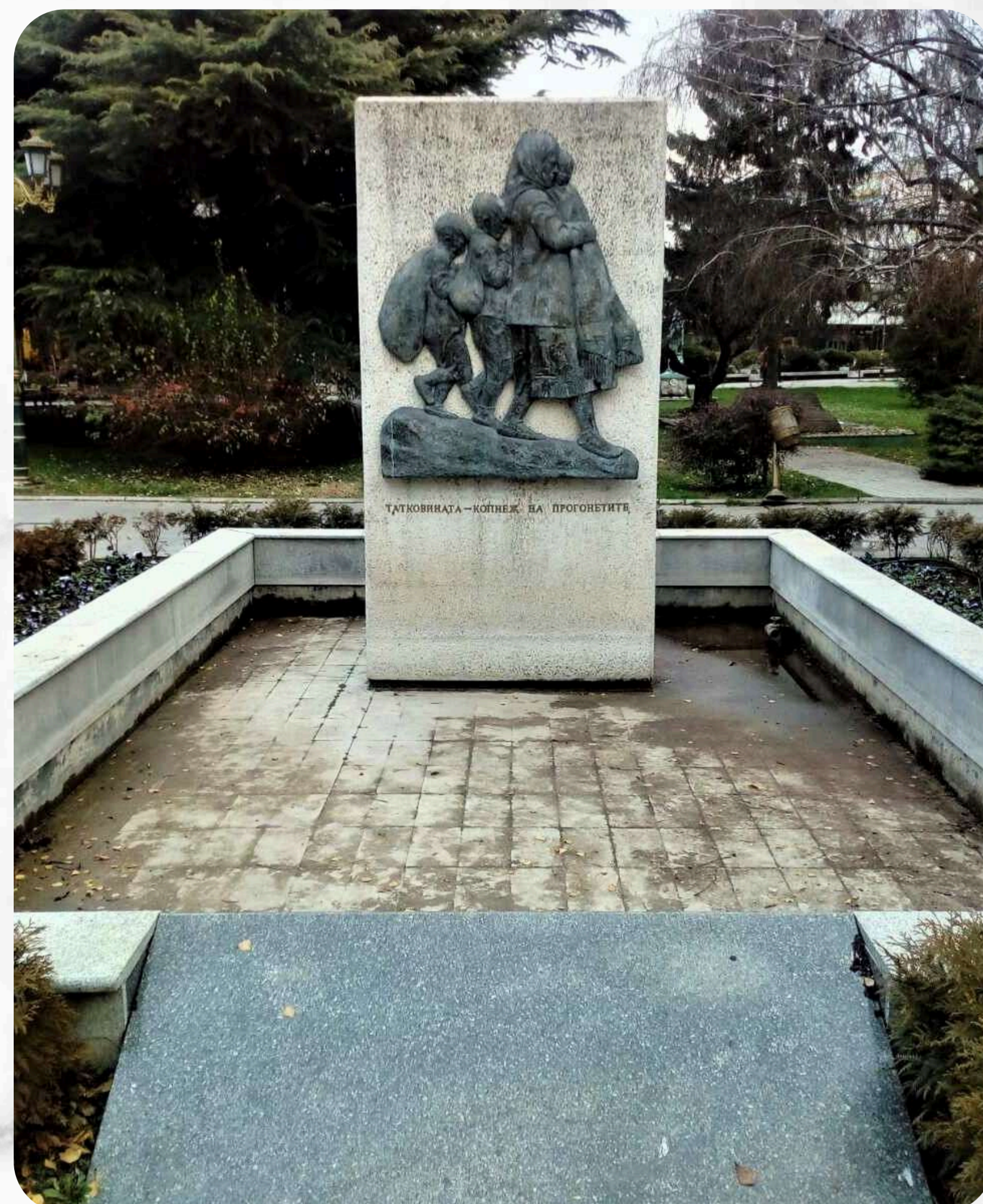
It has been wonderful to meet all these talented people from all over Europe and to make new friends. This has been a journey that I will always remember.





PROFESSIONALLY

With the invitation to be part of the COST action, first of all, I got the opportunity to collaborate with top specialists on the project's issues. Also, in the course of the work, I did extensive research, which not only gave me material for the current project, but opened new views and ideas for further projects. At the same time, my engagement in this project was presented and positively evaluated in the scientific community, to which I belong and work at the Institute of National History as a specialized Macedonian scientific institution for researching history.



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PERSONALLY

My participation in this COST action provided me personally with new contacts and friends.





PROFESSIONALLY

I deepened the knowledge of pioneer women and of mapping. Now I know of memorialising not only architects, but also other professions, so not only through built works, but also through street names etc. I also collaborated with other WGs and had the possibility to contribute about what I knew in collaboration with historians particularly on archives, and reflected about the large recent Romanian migration and the historic German migration in milestones, among others. I learned about collaboratively writing articles with the method of Benedicte (writing and then discussion with chronometre).



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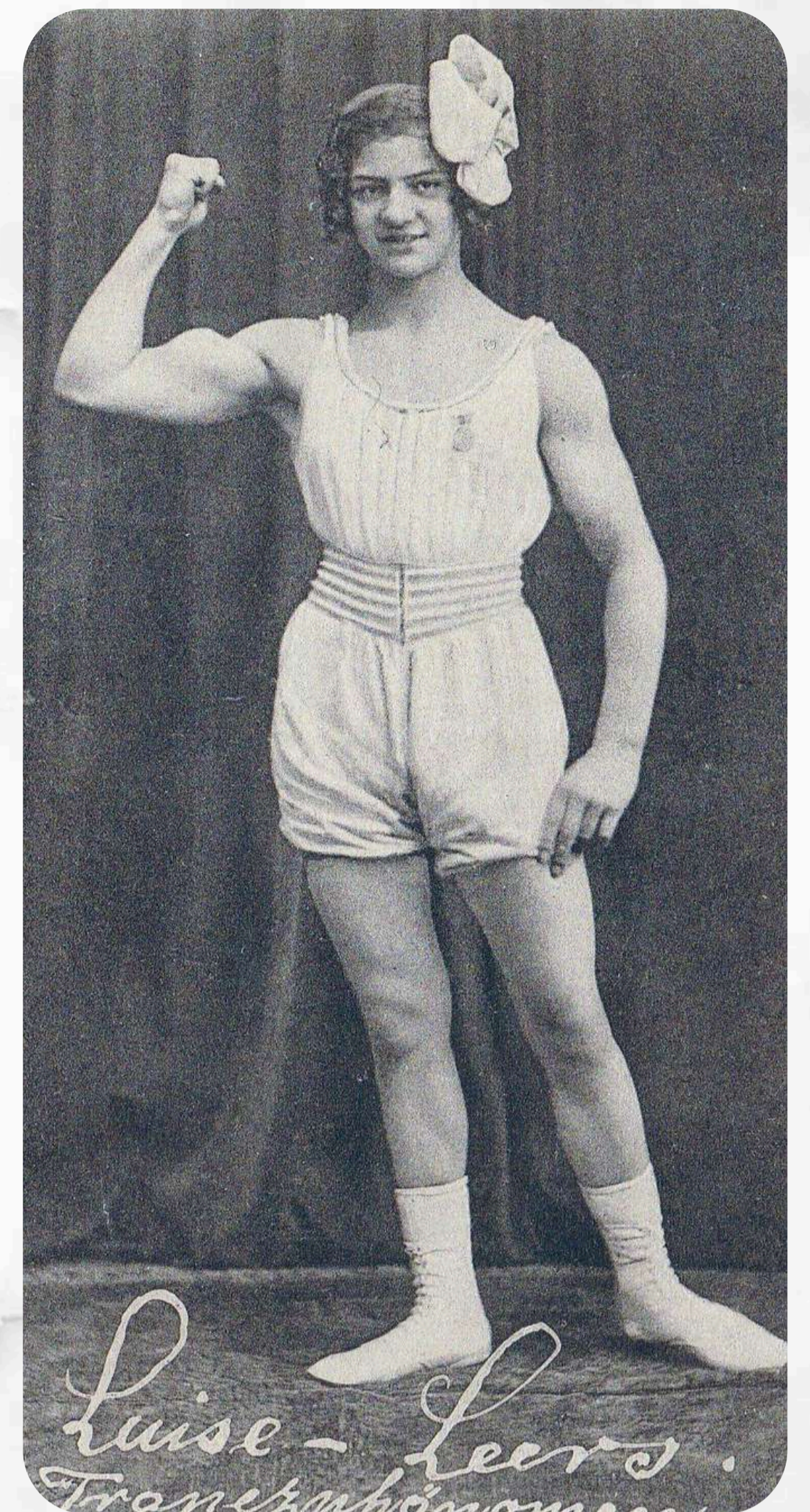


Well, before the first in person meeting of the action, I met Fiona Bakas in Lisbon just on the same day and hour when my current project was approved and we celebrated with cakes at Cafe Brasileira. I met her again then in Prague along with other members, and explored more cafes, but most importantly at the annual meeting in Lisbon, when I prepared for a trip from my project in Madeira. As I have myself a history of mobility and migration to Germany and Italy, and of my family, the topic was very important to me. (So glad to know Livia in the same WG, also I met her on my personal travels, Hungary and beyond.)



PROFESSIONALLY

COST Action has been a unique opportunity to get know to brilliant scholars across Europe, even from the more remote locations, that I would otherwise have no chances to meet ever. I was also blessed to present my own work for international colleagues and get insightful feedback. Also, the COST Action helped me to place my own research into migration context, that I would have overlooked. One of the most fruitful events was our collaboration in writing sessions hosted by Benedicte. I am now ready to explore more variational topics than before and to write in teams, which is not so common among Finnish historians, where we normally work alone or in a very small team. I am also thinking to "migrate" again for the Postdoctoral studies and continue my research about women circus and magic performers.



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I met wonderful friends that I really hope to connect in the future. For me, a personal highlight was our dinner together in Tbilisi tasting local specialities, and our dancing night out in Luxembourg, where we could act outside of Academia. Even though I have traveled a lot, most my travels were in Western Europe. However, our Eastern European meetings in Tbilisi and Sofia, were truly meaningful in getting to know the world beyond the West. For sure, I will head towards the Eastern Europe more in future, whether it is for personal or professional purposes.



PROFESSIONALLY

Thanks to the COST Action I have got new important expertise in communicating the academic knowledge to the wider audience in various formats such as collecting and converting data on migrant women landmarks and making



the MOOC course including its video filming. One of the most crucial new experiences for me has been the co-teaching together with colleagues from all over the world both online and in real life. The co-teaching classes that have been conducted together with the COST network members and their students have certainly been very unforgettable way of learning for the students as well. All in all, the best professional outcome of the COST has been making new scholarly contacts.



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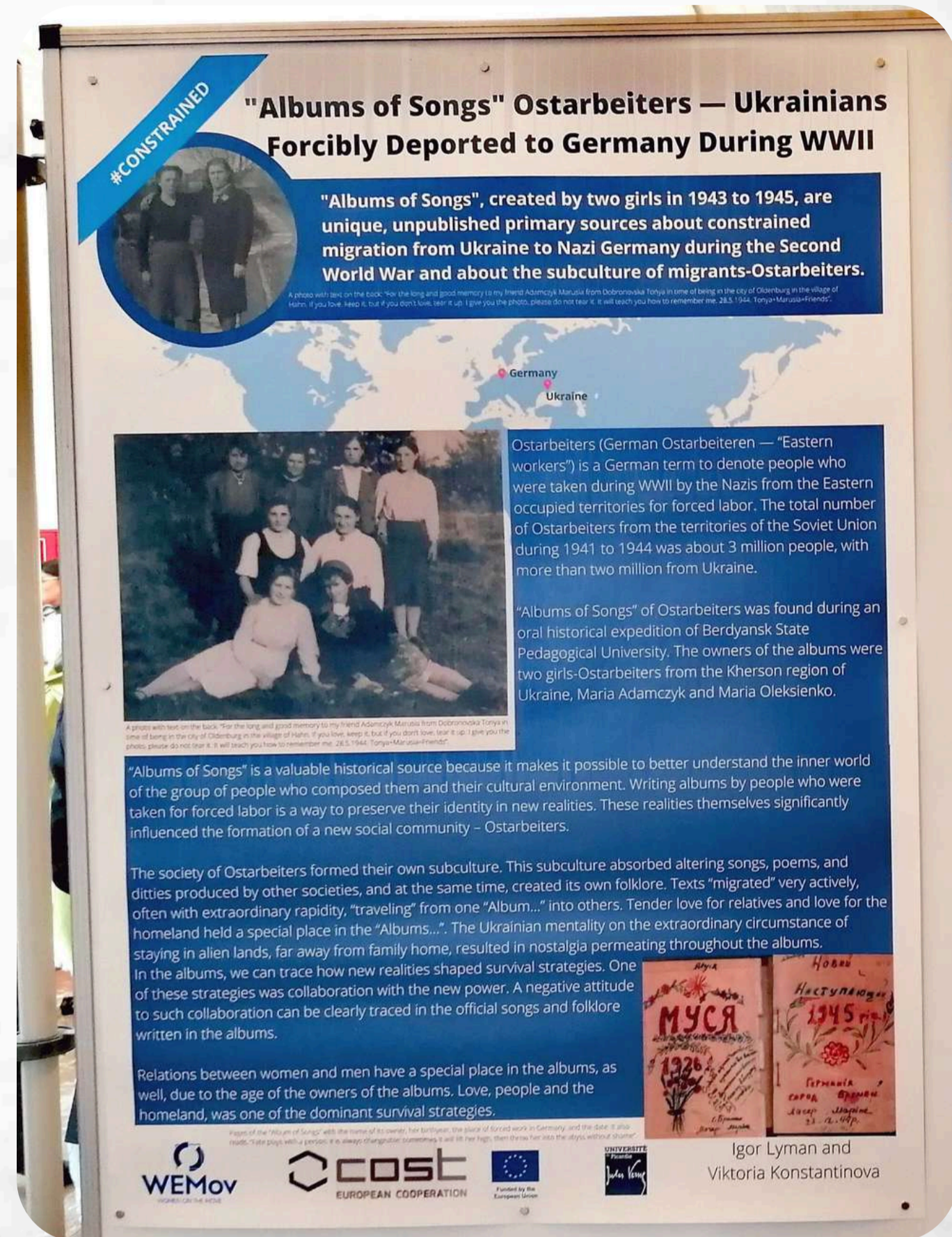
WOMEN ON THE MOVE

PERSONALLY



The COST Action has changed my personal life by bringing many, many new friends all over from Europe and beyond. I have had a privilege to make friendships with wonderful persons at different stage of their careers and learn a lot from them and their way of thinking and living academic lives. All this has encouraged me further on my personal path as a scholar and as a human being. I have also been amazed by the colleagues' passion and devotion to work hard for the COST goals despite the war in Ukraine as well as other present day calamities may they be on personal, national or international level.

PROFESSIONALLY



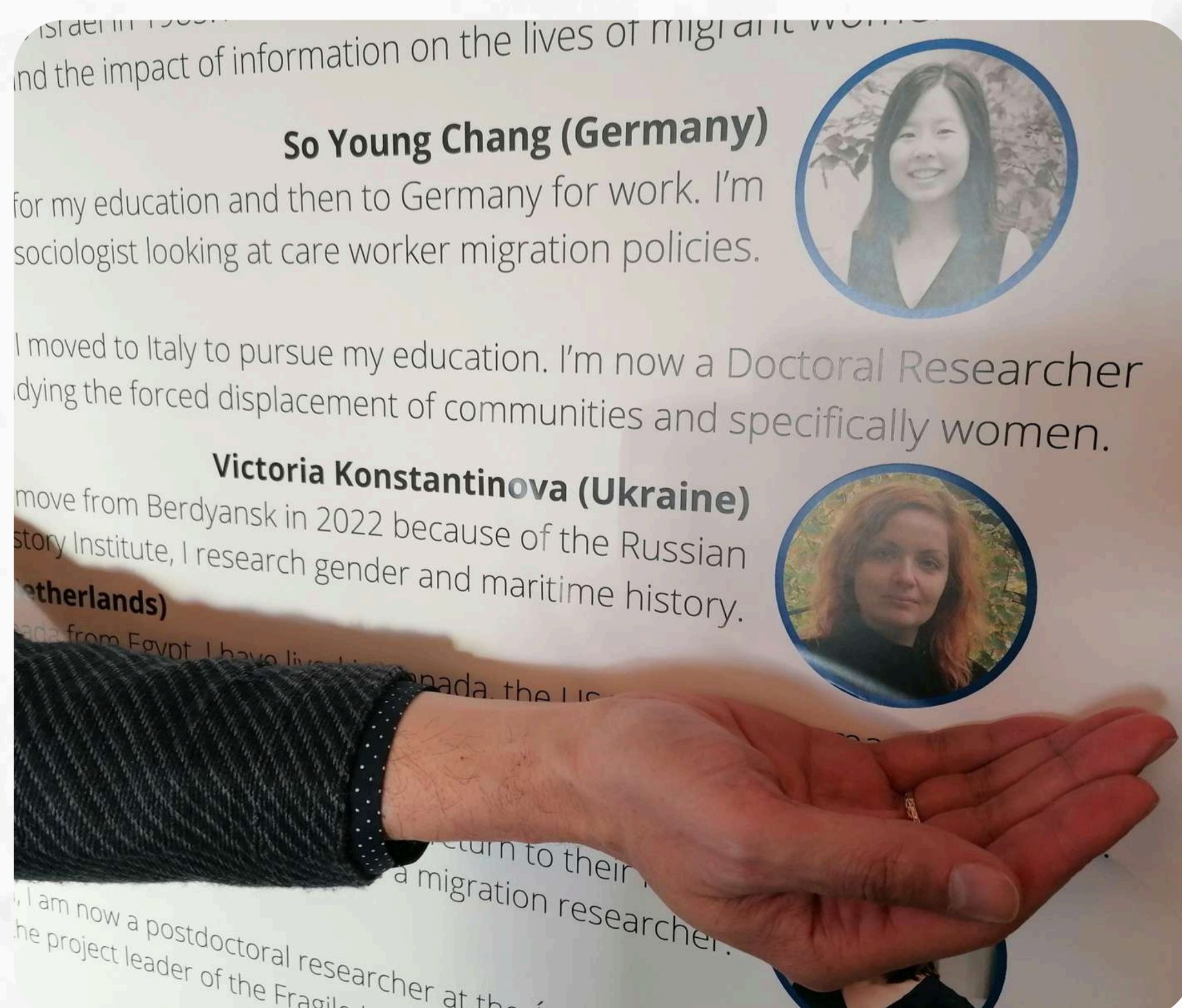
WEMov is a perfect opportunity for a historian to engage in interdisciplinary research that spans different chronological periods. The project brought together scholars from several dozen of countries with different backgrounds, which helps everyone see best research practices. The creation of a stable communication system made it possible to maintain a constant dialogue with team members. WEMov website provides access to project materials, both for participants and all interested persons. The use of various forms of research activities created conditions for expanding the possibilities of source heuristics and analytics. Fieldwork (visits to museums, migrant communities etc.) contributed to a broader understanding of the presence and economic contribution of migrant women in European history.



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It just so happened that my personal migrant story is developing in parallel with the research work in the Women on the Move project. Now, historical examples of migrant women inspire and support not only me, but millions of Ukrainian women around the world every day. The value of the project in Ukrainian realities is increasing every day. The members of the project team are united not only by common scientific goals, but also by values, which gives me the opportunity to feel important emotional support in difficult times.



PROFESSIONALLY

The COST Action has profoundly impacted my professional life by providing a focused platform for research on women migrants. It illuminated the pressing need for comprehensive exploration of female migration, a topic brimming with complexity and significance. Through COST, I've realized my capacity to contribute meaningfully to this discourse, leveraging my expertise and insights to address critical gaps in understanding. This journey has not only enriched my academic pursuits but also fostered collaborations, widened networks, and empowered me to make tangible contributions to the field.



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On a personal level, the COST Action has been transformative. It has been a gateway to meeting diverse scientists spanning various fields, enriching my knowledge and experience exponentially. Engaging with fascinating individuals, I've been exposed to innovative ideas that have broadened my perspective. The opportunity to travel to different COST member countries has been eye-opening, offering cultural immersion and widening my global understanding. Importantly, it has forged lasting friendships and professional connections worldwide, creating a supportive network that transcends geographical boundaries. This personal evolution has been invaluable, fostering growth, empathy, and a deeper appreciation for collaboration on a global scale.



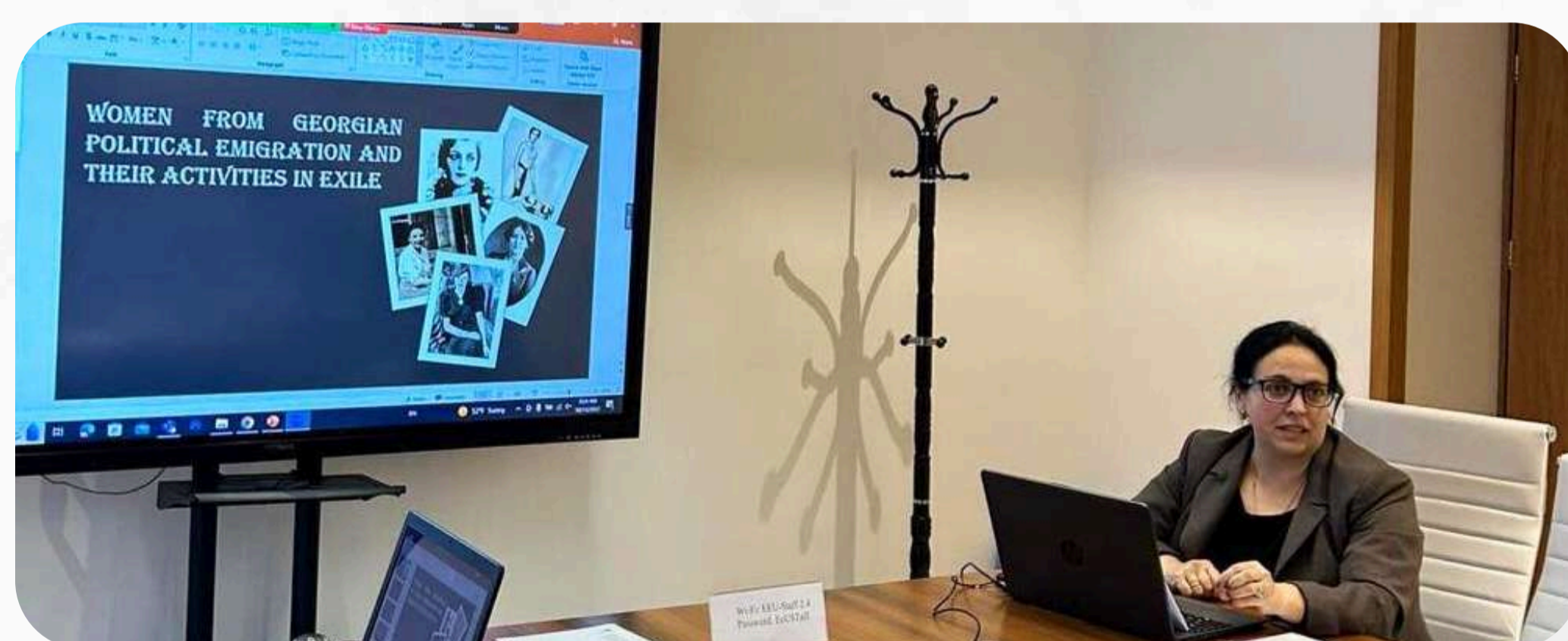
PROFESSIONALLY

It was a great experience for me as a researcher. Participating in the COST Action provided invaluable opportunities for networking, collaboration, and exposure to diverse perspectives within my field. After one year of engagement in this project, I became the co-leader of one of the working groups, and it was an invaluable opportunity for my professional growth and development of my personal skills as a leader. These interactions have enhanced my research skills, broadened my knowledge base, and opened doors to new professional opportunities.



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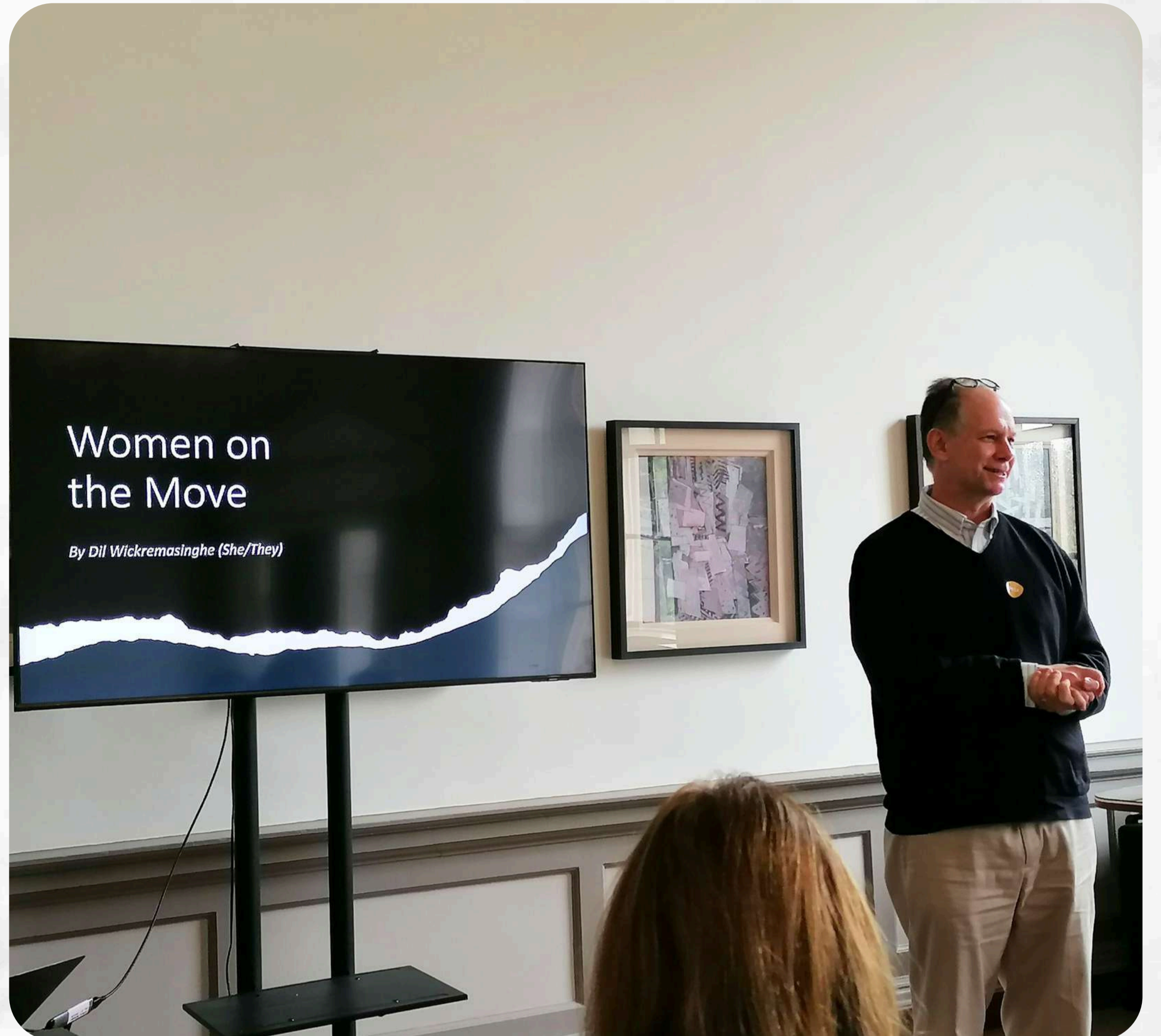
PERSONALLY

The COST Action has had a profound impact on my life personally. Beyond its professional benefits, engaging with colleagues from different countries and cultures has expanded my worldview, and the friendships and connections formed during COST activities have been invaluable. Moreover, the opportunities to travel, attend meetings in person, and explore new places have created lasting memories and enriched my life with unique experiences.



PROFESSIONALLY

WEMov has been a huge influence on my work. It has been great to get a historical perspective on contemporary issues that I work on, including migrant rights, justice for migrants and immigration policy. The varying theoretical approaches in the network has also been a great benefit. Finally, it has introduced me to new colleagues around the world who will be terrific partners in future research.



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PERSONALLY

I have made many new friends and have been able to travel to countries that have expanded my understanding of the larger European neighbourhood.



PROFESSIONALLY

Engaging in WEMov has created new connections, as well as new ideas and new insights. It made me look differently at how research can be approached and performed in an unconventional manner, through the synergy of tools, and utilising visual material, stories, objects, places, and data. It showed that knowledge is embedded in a multitude of domains around us. I hope future collaborations will emerge from the network.



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PERSONALLY

I got to meet wonderful people, share ideas, and widen my perspective on things.

Picture:

A monument to Siberian mothers in the Garden of fate (Likteņdārzs) in Latvia.

Reads:

"Mother, you gave life to me twice. When I was born and when I did not die from hunger. The siberian child."



PROFESSIONALLY

In the project I got the opportunity to demonstrate the importance of the competence of project management as a building block for the success of creative work in interpersonal relations. Managing a project is like conducting an orchestra, you control all the instruments, but the art is to know what is important at the moment and what to prioritize in the long term. Thanks to COST I had the opportunity to visit foreign universities and places of intellectual pleasure and inspiration.



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Lifelong friendships have been formed. I have discovered tremendous trust on the part of both the recipient and the provider, which is the foundation of a long-lasting relationship in every respect. It is a value that cannot be bought or temporarily known, but only built up through reverence, curiosity, understanding, an open mind and unconditional faith in eternity.





PROFESSIONALLY

WEMov has been very important for me professionally because it allowed me to expand my knowledge in the area of women and migration, both from an interdisciplinary and geographical point of view. It also allowed me to meet colleagues from universities and cultural institutions with whom I had the opportunity to engage in fruitful dialogue. I also had the opportunity to get to know the functioning of some European institutions as well as COST itself. It has allowed me to produce scientific knowledge in a broad and comparative way with other European colleagues, which has been very important for my own career.



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From a personal point of view, it has been very rewarding. The face-to-face meetings and the chance to share life experiences with colleagues from so many different backgrounds, as well as getting to know other countries and their history through these meetings has been really enriching.





PROFESSIONALLY

Being part of the COST Action has allowed me to meet and work with people from a different countries in Europe. These researchers come from a wide range of disciplines that I would probably not have otherwise met. Also, I've had the opportunity to work on projects such as the interview map and databases of landmarks through which I have learned new skills.



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PERSONALLY

I have met lovely people and faced personal challenges that have taught me a lot about myself. Traveling to different countries have allowed me to expand my personal horizons.



PROFESSIONALLY

The COST Women on the Move Action has changed my life professionally in so many ways. I am a PhD student who has had the ability to travel across Europe and work with scholars in various disciplines on women's migration, which is something that I thought I would never be able to do at this stage in my career. Everything I have learned and experienced has influenced the path that my professional life will take after this PhD, and I am so grateful for this life-changing experience.



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As a female migrant myself, this network has affected me personally because I have also been viewing much of what I have learned through the lens of my own migration experience. Additionally, I have struggled with some personal issues these past couple of years, including the loss of my mother, and the friends that I have made through this COST Action have supported me in such a beautiful way.





PROFESSIONALLY

It was an excellent opportunity to me, to find such an interesting COST action who fits with my research interests. It inspired me a lot. Exploring experiences of woman in migration opened to me an important window for further research in the field of sociology of migration.



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PERSONALLY

I met beautiful people from different European countries that treated me with respect and dignity. We shared together experiences and ideas, thoughts and feelings. I feel very happy for this opportunity.





PROFESSIONALLY

As a PhD student, this COST Action allowed me to listen to and network with brilliant scholars and inspiring professionals who boosted my curiosity and the meaning of the daily challenge of improving my work and myself as a potential future researcher. Besides, this COST Action allowed me to develop multifaceted research skills and insights, including research methods, strategies, and presentations.



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By partaking in this COST Action I felt enriched by the passion, dedication, and care for accomplishing the COST aims of the scholars I met. Feeling that my contribution could be part of "something bigger", this COST Action made me realize how effectively ideas can circulate and turn into projects and achievements when we are on the move.



PROFESSIONALLY

WEMov COST Action helped me to meet with both my peers as PhD student and also academics working in same area of research. This gave me the opportunity to work with them and expand the ideas around the topic.



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I started my PhD in 2020 in the middle of pandemic. This resulted in two years of working from home and being away from academic community. The COST Action helped me to compensate this isolation feeling and connect with academics that helped me to grow in my academic journey.

