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Rooted or Remote: Exploring the Impact of Digitally Mediated Work on Mobility and Belonging

This panel proposes an exploration of the interconnections between im/mobilities and digitally mediated work. Almost all work today entails the use of digital technologies, whose multiple applications are transforming how work is assigned, experienced, performed, and controlled. By digitally mediated work, we refer broadly to work practices reconfigured through digital platforms, algorithms, and data processing, resulting in practices that may include fully online labour—whether in person or remote—or physical labour facilitated by digital platforms. For instance, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the global adoption of remote work, raising fundamental questions about the future of professional mobility in an era where work is increasingly detached from physical location. Simultaneously, it triggered an intensification of the platform economy and on-demand labour, such as delivery or care work. By bringing together diverse empirical examples of digitally mediated work, this panel aims to foster reflection on how these transformations in the work realm affect how people imagine, desire, and practice im/mobility across different life stages and contexts. For some, digitally mediated work represents an opportunity to settle in one place; for others, it may offer a way to avoid migration or, conversely, a tool for embracing ongoing mobility. For others still, it might provide a means to return to a desired homeland. In sum, digitally mediated work can reshape not only patterns of migration and everyday mobilities, but also fundamental concepts of belonging, community-making, and citizenship. The panel welcomes empirically grounded studies and theoretical reflections on the connections between im/mobilities and digitally mediated work across various types of workers and mobile individuals: remote and gig workers, highly skilled migrants, digital nomads, and platform workers. Altogether, the papers will chart emerging meanings and practices of im/mobility, community, and belonging resulting from the impact of digitally mediated work. Fabiola Mancinelli (Universitat de Barcelona) Mónica Belén Fernández Suárez (Universidade da Coruña)
Catégorie
Conference panel

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