



ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH – LET’S GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER (PART I)

Within the project “Enhancing Social Cohesion in Host Communities of People on the Move” implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the lectures ‘Ethnographic approach - let's get to know each other (Part I)’ were held on Friday, June 3, 2022 at the Temporary Reception Center ‘Borići’.

The atmosphere created by 40 people present (Nepal, Iraq, Afghanistan, BiH) revealed the readiness to step ‘in’ and ‘from’ their culture; we have made the known unknown and vice versa; we have explored places, people’s experiences, language, and events based on real encounter and the power of human connection. The attendees’ conclusions led to the awareness of prejudice and stereotypical representations of groups, as well as the importance of learning about others, different and yet the same, from direct experience, without generalizations that lead to various forms of discrimination. The participants concluded that:

1. Human rights belong to everyone regardless of place of residence, discussing rights such as peace, security, work, movement, love, etc.
2. When we want to help someone, language is not a barrier. We can talk to one person we trust, and sometimes even with a small group of like-minded people, on different topics. The participants talked in a similar way, about common problems, but also about potential ways of solving them, even when those solutions are not implemented. They concluded that sometimes they can only offer each other a smile, a hug, or just listen, and that sometimes nothing more is needed.
3. When we do not know a particular language, the language of humanity is quite sufficient. They concluded that it would sometimes be verbal, sometimes pantomime, maybe even art, but it was quite enough for the intention of humanity to be present.

The interactive lecture combined with experiential learning was led by Šejla Bjelopoljak, Assistant professor, with the active participation of students from the Pedagogical Faculty of the University of Bihać. Students Almedin Ćatić, Ammar Arnautović, and Jasmin Musić gave a special contribution to the preparation of the lecture.