

Series Preface

Helena Hof's *The EU Migrant Generation in Asia* brings to the fore the life trajectories, migratory projects and aspirations of young EU migrants in two Asian global cities, Tokyo and Singapore. The book paints a rich, fine-grained portrait of a group of young people juggling the dream of spatial and social mobility central to the EU project, middle-class aspirations, and the consequences of the economic and financial crisis of the 2010s – as well as being on the verge of the COVID-19 pandemic that deeply disrupted international mobility and led to protracted border closures, particularly for non-nationals.

In the chapters of her book, Hof vividly captures and nuances the challenges young men and women face in the attempt to fulfil their aspirations in Asia. For many, moving away from Europe is the fulfillment of a dream and also the realisation that social status, professional recognition and economic gratification are hard to achieve on the continent in the current economic conjuncture. However, the reality of migration and settlement in Singapore and Tokyo, even for those who are often portrayed as privileged migrants, is far from trouble-free and often requires compromises and renegotiations of initial expectations.

We are delighted to have *The EU Migrant Generation in Asia* in our series. Alert to internal divisions and gender dynamics, the book offers novel perspectives on the EU generation outside its 'comfort zone' and invites readers to bring class back into the analysis of migration and mobility. It shows how personal and intimate relationships and lifestyle choices are intertwined with professional aspirations and the search for social mobility, and argues that migration to Singapore or Tokyo is, for the EU generation, an alternative route to middle-classness in times of social and economic transformation and global rising precariousness.

Nando Sigona
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