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*Common curricula for diversity:
education in media and integration of vulnerable groups*

NEWSLETTER JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2022

PILOTING OF THE BOOK “VULNERABLE GROUPS AND TRAUMA”

Coordinator of the course: Dr Savvatou Tsolakidou, NKUA

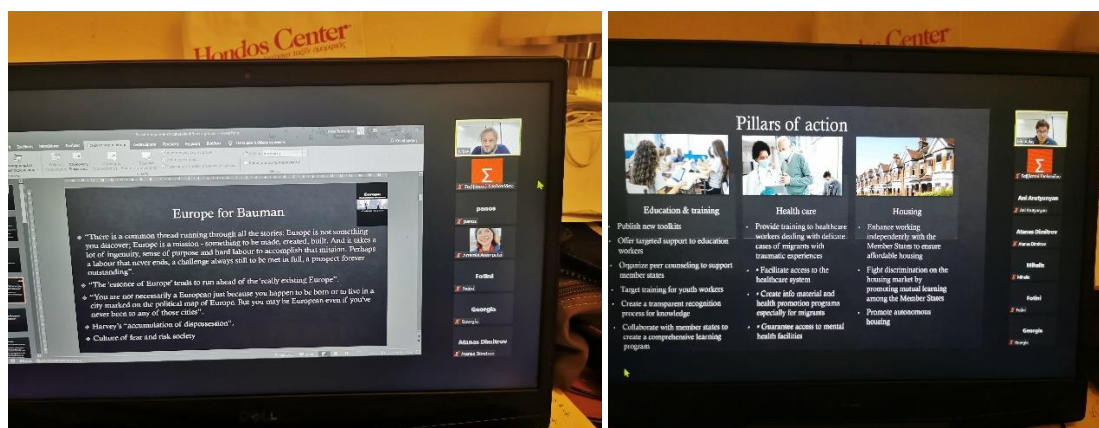
The piloting of the book *Vulnerable groups & Trauma* was held during the Winter semester 2021-2022, every Wednesday from 16:00 to 22:00 p.m. within the framework of the interdepartmental postgraduate programme: “Media & Refugee/Migration Flows” of the University of Athens, Department of Communication and Media Studies and the University of the Aegean, Department of Sociology.

The course consisted of the following subjects:

1. Vulnerability definition and classification of vulnerable groups. Key definitions, perceptions, values and heresies which lead to prejudice against different vulnerable groups were examined. A classification of vulnerable groups was provided e.g., by ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age and gender, as well as the barriers faced for inclusion.
2. Cultural identities and the media.
3. Theorizing trauma and its cultural dimension, collective consciousness, the relationship between personal and collective traumas, intergenerational trauma and trauma in the age of risk society.
4. Mediatization of trauma and Mediatization theory. This session focused on how traumatic experiences are depicted through media, the representation of trauma through films and news stories, as well as media effect on trauma.
5. Base of the pyramid (BoP). This session analysed the evolution of the concept, its characteristics, limitations and the challenges faced by BoP population, including case studies.
6. Inclusive Business Models. This session focused on vulnerable groups in businesses, poverty alleviation, community learning services and case studies.
7. Sustainable Business Models, Development Goals, Circular Economy, Social Enterprises and Case studies
8. Social integration of culturally different groups. This included the acculturation process, host society’s role, as well as building supporting mechanisms and frameworks via culture, entrepreneurship, etc.
9. Media coverage of vulnerability. This session examined digital journalism and population flows, the role of journalism in covering vulnerable groups and case studies
10. Media coverage and fake news on vulnerable groups, based on examples from the refugee context and the spread of disinformation on social media, e.g. on Uyghur Turks and Rohingya.

11. Cultural mediation I - Mediators and careers. Introduction to cultural mediation as a profession, support of vulnerable groups and cultural mediation strategies to support refugees.
12. Cultural mediation II – Communication skills, aspects and models for approaching vulnerable groups, migrants, and refugees in an intercultural context, in addition to cultural mediators' role as communication experts.
13. Ethical approach to trauma. This session explored the meaning of confidentiality, neutrality, objectivity, transparency, adoption of a holistic approach and intelligibility when approaching vulnerable groups, as well as practical and ethical issues. Moreover, it focused on the code of ethics applicable in various contexts, in addition to experiences and current practices in Europe

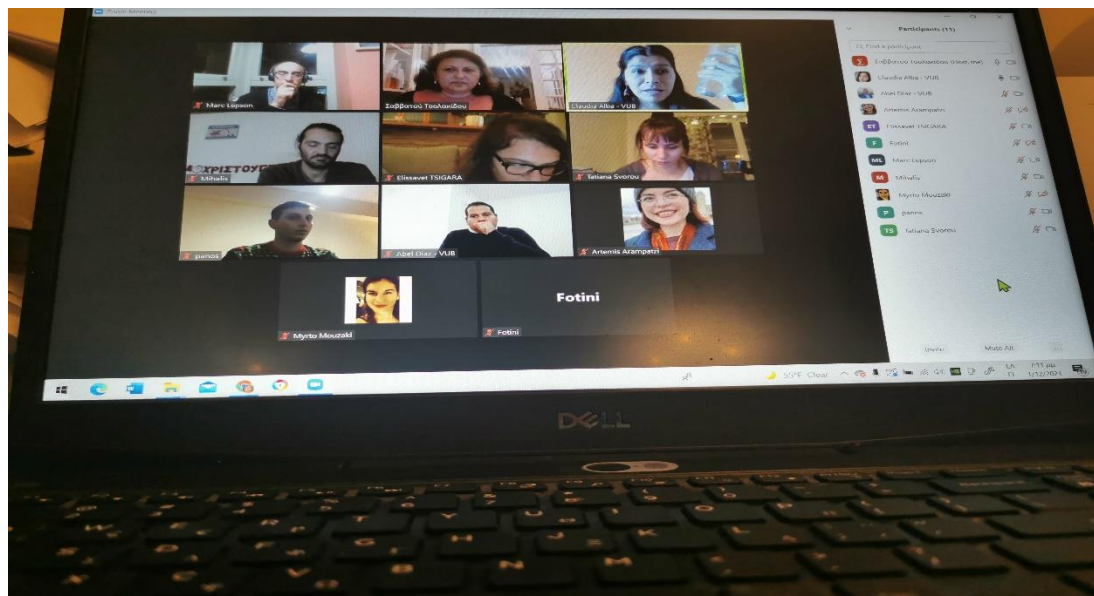
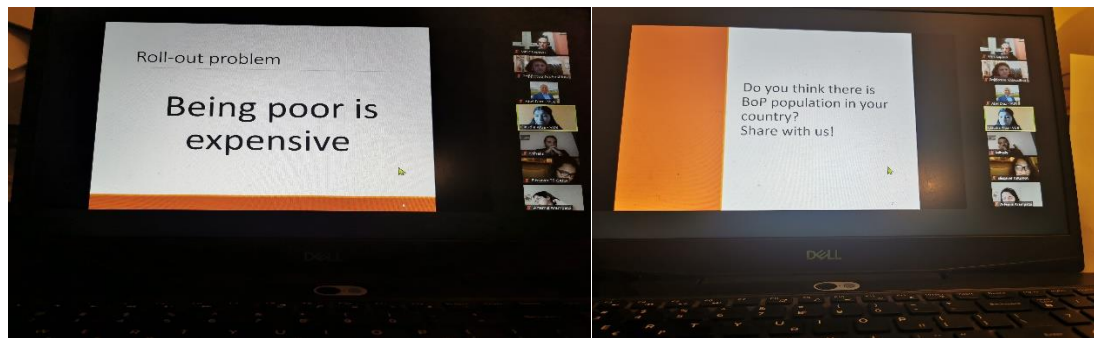
On Wednesday 10/11/2021 from 16:00 to 22:00 p.m. two subjects from the module Vulnerable groups & Trauma were presented. The first session focused on **“Defining vulnerability and vulnerable groups”** delivered by Dr. Savvatou Tsolakidou. Vulnerable groups are classified by specific categories, such as ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion, etc. Problems related to the barriers that a society places resulting to the exclusion of refugees and other vulnerable groups from integration were also discussed. Following this short and introductory presentation the **“Classification of Vulnerable groups and Cultural identities”** was delivered by Dr. Michael Tastsoglou. Reference to culture's give-and-take was made with the subjects as bearers of identities and the media as factors that construct and at the same time are constructed by culture. Questions such as how culture matters and how it affects citizens with a particular focus on the Frankfurt School, as well as the Birmingham School of cultural studies were made. The political essence of cultural studies by interpreting popular culture as the result of an ongoing struggle between different ideas that try to manufacture consent or to acquire the hegemonic sceptres were also discussed. In the second session, the concept of trauma was theorized and distinguished into individual and collective. A wide spectrum of trauma conceptualizations and various categorizations and aspects of trauma with specific examples were presented. Trauma was also analyzed as a factor of building collective consciousness.



On Wednesday 24 November 2021, the subject **“Mediatization of traumas”** was delivered by Dr. Michael Tastsoglou, & Alexandros Minotakis, NKUA. Analysis of the mediatization of

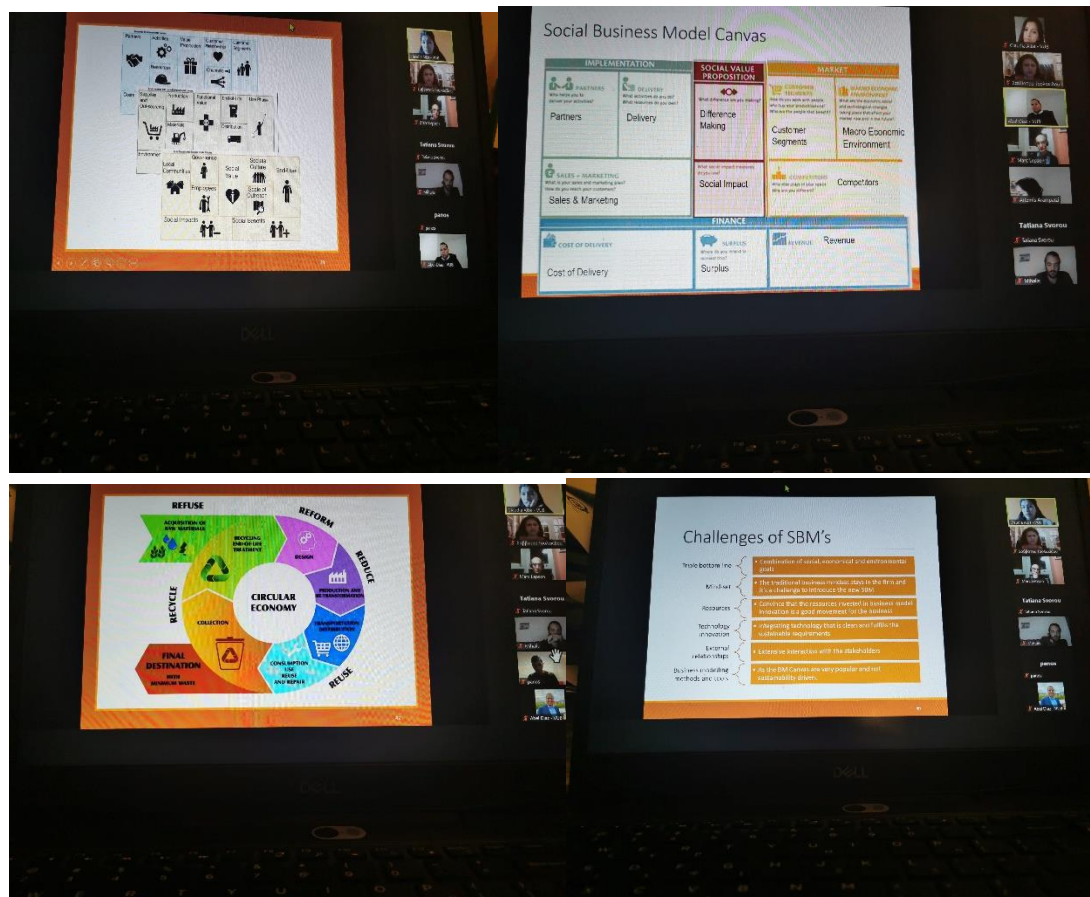
traumas in contemporary mass societies was the starting point of the presentation. Mediatization theory was described as a concept and a process at the same time. Examples on the way that media depict traumatic experiences were presented and how the media contributing to the transmission of traumas both nationally and intergenerational.

On Wednesday 1st of December, in a specific seminar coordinated by Dr Tsolakidou, delivered by Visiting Professor Abel Alan Diaz Gonzalez and researcher Claudia Alba of the Vrije Universiteit of Brussels three chapters were discussed. The base of the pyramid concept was presented. The pyramid concerns the social and economic structure, which is supported by the base: the people that have to live under an income not more than 2 US dollars, are the same that they have to keep the structure standing by working and consuming. Inclusive business models, able to embolden and develop a better way of living regarding the members of vulnerable groups were presented as a solution. These modes comprise a method for alleviating poverty and its hard consequences. As a result, communities of learning are placed at the heart of this chapter and education and life-long learning were presented as the activities that could strengthen and steel members of vulnerable groups by influencing their attitudes and social skills.



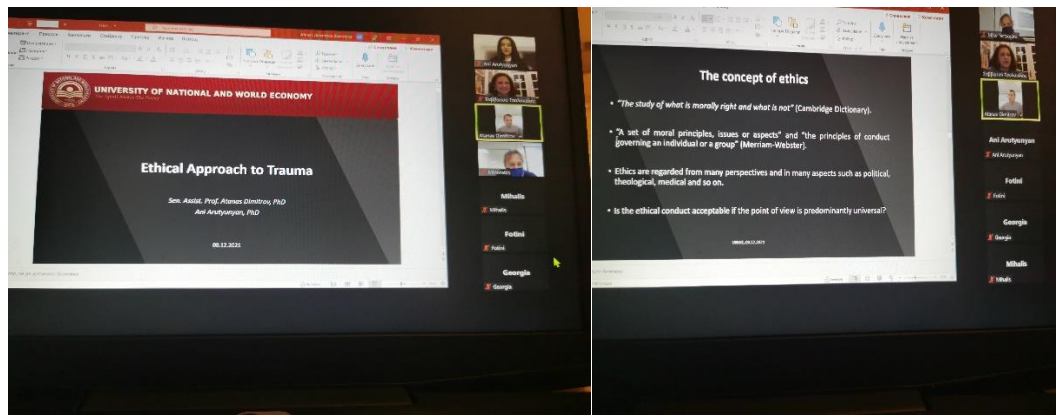
Lecture delivered by researcher Claudia Alba

The business models that could provide sustainability to economic and social realities and the sustainability goals as factors that could lead to a better future for the members of vulnerable groups were presented. Other subjects examined were the circular economy and social enterprises as a process and institutions contributing to the sustainability.



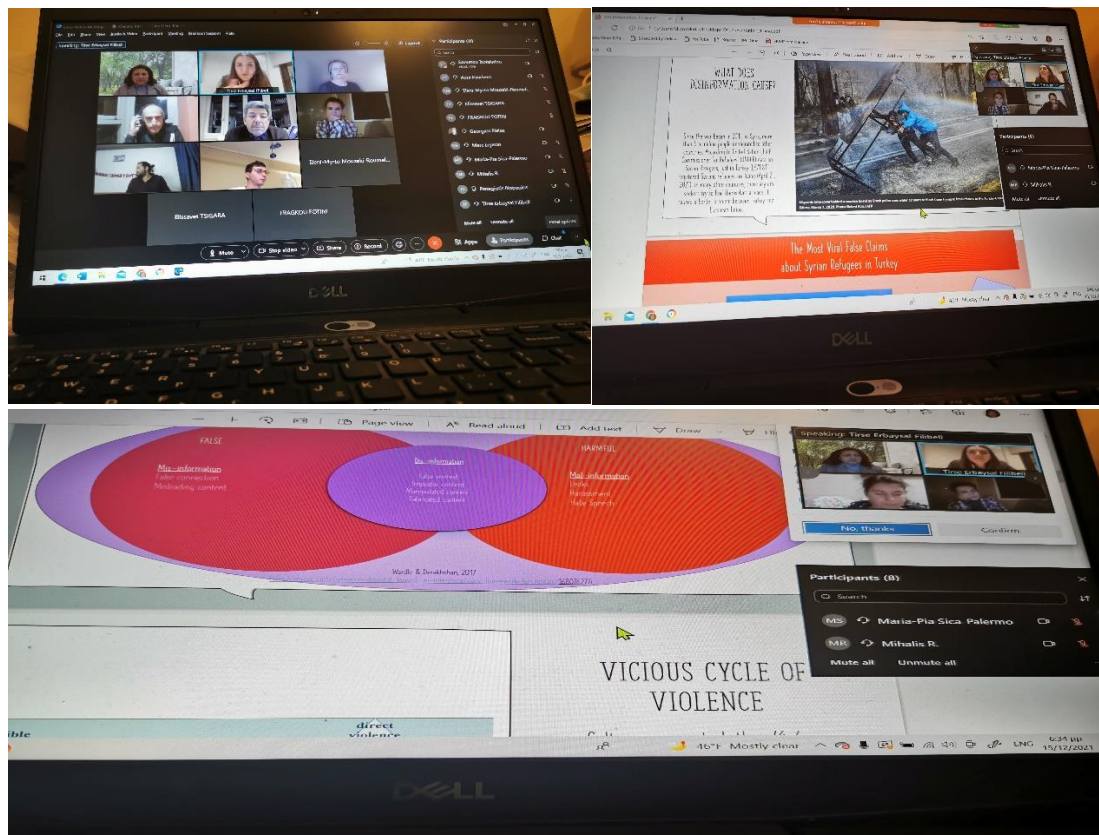
Lecture delivered by V. Professor Abel Alan Diaz Gonzalez

On Wednesday, 8th of December 2021 the social integration processes of culturally different groups, especially of migrant and refugees in their hosting societies was presented by M. Tastsoglou. Examples from different countries were given in order to facilitate the students' familiarization with civic integration. Integration refers to a process in which both the majority of the population and the minorities take part mutually and demands their availability for changing attitudes (Liedholm & Lindberg, 2007), as a result of transformative learning. The next session, ethical approach to trauma, was presented by professor Atanas Dimitrov and the researcher Ani Arutunyan from the National University of World Economy. Political actors, media outlets and citizens can often take a defensive stand when it comes to refugee and migrant flows. However, various scientific approaches suggest that these negative biases could lead to even more unpleasant situations. Ethics is a field of study that places humanism, values, morality and governmentality under the same roof. As a result, the concept of professional deontology emerges, and it was described both historically and practically.



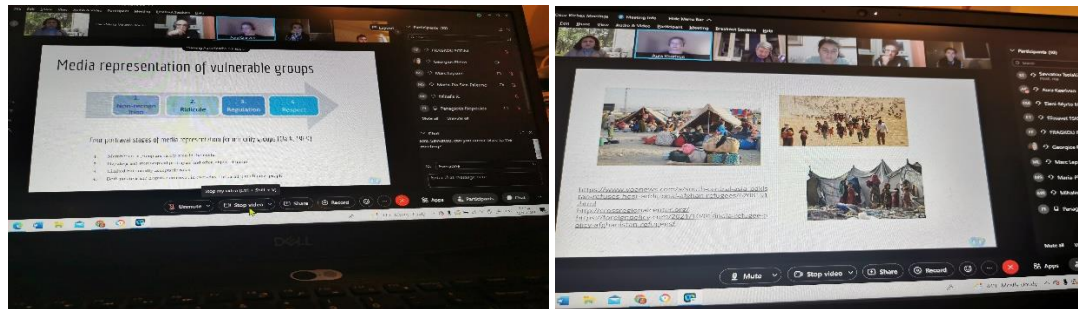
Lectures delivered by Professor Atanas Dimitrov and Ani Arutunyan

On Wednesday 15 of December 2021, the subject of **Media coverage and fake news on vulnerable groups** was delivered by Professor Tirse Erbayasal Filibeli from the Bahcesehir University of Istanbul. A description of practices of digital journalism that could facilitate the integration process was presented as well as good practices according to how professional journalism should deal with the representation for vulnerable groups. It was about a complex but controversial issue (Hargreaves, 2001: 23), while the media play an important role on the ideological constructions about refugees, asylum seekers etc. Case studies concerning minorities such as the Uyghur Turks and the Rohingya People were presented.



Lecture delivered by Professor Tirse Erbayasal Filibeli

The **Media coverage of vulnerability** was delivered by Dr Aura Neuvonen, Metropolia, Finland and the media coverage and fake news on vulnerable groups was delivered by Professor George Pleios. A contemporary problem, fake news on vulnerable groups, which is often consciously disseminated by far-right politicians, businessmen or citizens was presented via different examples. Fake news also contains an aspect of power which is expressed through the control of information.



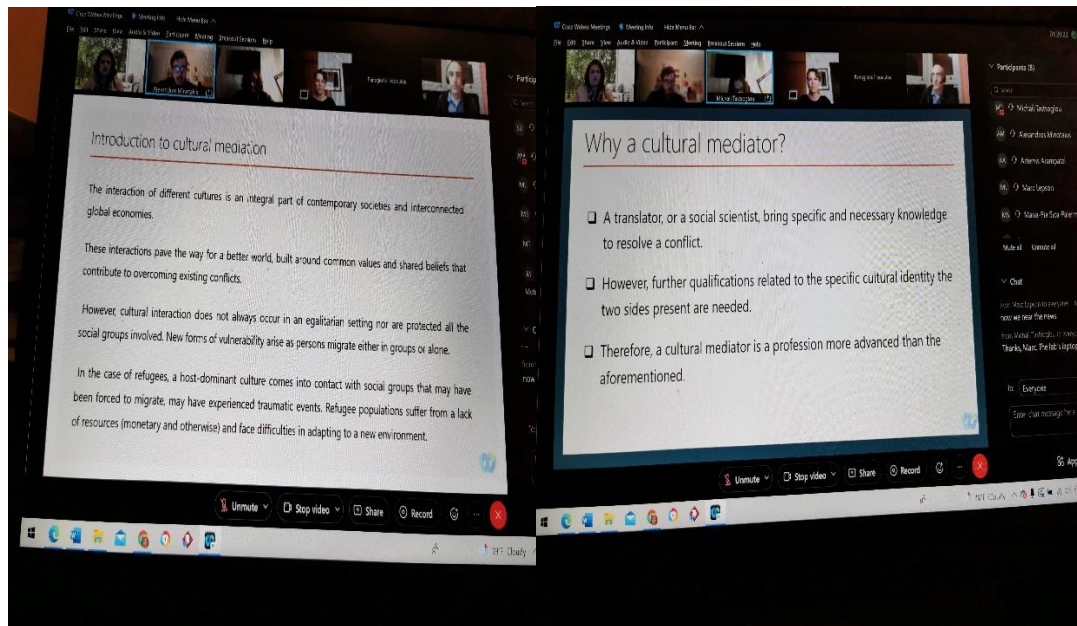
Lecture delivered by Dr. Aura Neuvonen



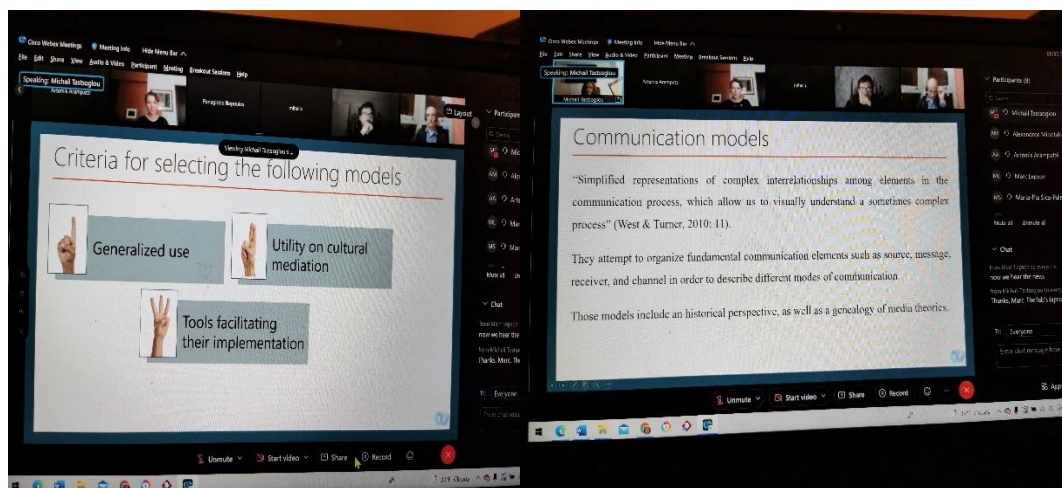
Lecture delivered by Professor George Pleios

On Wednesday 12 of January 2022, the subject of cultural mediation was delivered by Dr M. Tastsoglou and researcher A. Minotakis. The cultural mediation as a term both theoretically and practically, as well as the way it is applied into professional practices that contribute to the integration of refugee populations was presented. Cultural mediation as a scientific field where intercultural communication and social integration should be applied dialectically was also presented via examples. The communication aspects of cultural mediation and the basic characteristics of cultural mediation, as well as those of the related profession was part of the discussion and the communication skills that

the profession of cultural mediator requires were also discussed.



Lecture delivered by A. Minotakis



Lecture delivered by M. Tastsoglou

The seminar was evaluated (until the 15th of January) by the students of the Interdepartmental postgraduate program “Media and Refugee/Migration Flows” and a certificate of attendance was delivered to them. The comments and suggestions of the students formed the basis for the update of the educational material.