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IMMIGRATION IN MOUNTAIN AND REMOTE REGIONS OF EUROPE. A DRIVE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

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Sala Conferenze, ex Ospedale Militare
Via Fabio Severo 40, Trieste and on Zoom

For a long time, socio economic and demographic studies of mountain regions in Europe emphasized out-migration from the highlands to large lowland cities and degradation of peripheral mountain areas, within processes of decline and progressive shrinkage of these territories "left behind". Since the 2000s, however, there has been an increasing emphasis on the opposite trend of neo population: while these studies focused originally on immigration of wealthy and often retired people (the so-called amenity migrants), in the last 10-15 years voluntary internal migration of young and highly educated "new

highlanders" has been investigated, together with an increasing attention to international immigration of "highlanders by necessity" (foreign labor migrants) and even "highlanders by force (asylum seekers and refugees), in particular in the Alpine macro-region.

Welcoming and including immigrants (both internal and international ones) inside revitalized local societies and economies can represent an opportunity to empower marginalized areas, within a framework of sustainable development, social innovation and territorial equity, "leaving no one behind".