In the first half of the 1990s, about one million ethnic Germans of all ages resettled in Germany. Many of those movers wanted to return to their ‘homeland’ and improve their life chances through spatial mobility. But how do the movers and stayers evaluate their migration and social protection now, more than 25 years after their migration? Data from mixed-methods and multi-sited research on protective networks of migrants from Kazakhstan in Germany and their relatives in Kazakhstan provide multifaceted answers to this question. This presentation discusses findings concerning the role of transnationality for informal social protection. In addition, it gives attention to aspects of symbolic social protection and formal protection in movers’ and stayers’ evaluations of life chances and social inequalities in the Kazakh-German social space.

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