Public Lecture Series Spring 2015
Paradigmatic Perspectives on Migration and Mobility
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Thursday, 7 May 2015
Migration, Sovereignty and Human Rights: How Law Mediates between Conflicting Perspectives on People on the Move
Prof. Jürgen Bast
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Discussant: Prof. Christin Achermann, University of Neuchatel and nccr – on the move

18:15 – 19:45 h, University of Neuchatel, Rue Abraham Louis Breguet 1, Lecture Hall 301

Abstract
Migration is a colorful phenomenon whose shades reflect highly diverse legal and political judgments. One can consider migration as an issue of international security or as a challenge to state sovereignty, but also as a primarily economic process, a cultural phenomenon, or a human rights issue. None of these perceptions can be deemed right or wrong. They represent normative perspectives that assign a certain meaning to a social situation, and hence ‘construct’ it by approaching it from different perspectives. The dependency of migration on such paradigmatic perspectives and a multitude of constructions is characteristic of attempts to exert a meaningful influence on, let alone control of, processes of migration by means of public authority and its language, public law.
The lecture will identify five paradigmatic perspectives on migration that can be related to distinctive social constructions of migrants and aims of migration governance, respectively. These perspectives are the public order perspective, the inter-state perspective, the economic perspective, the cultural perspective, and the individual rights perspective. The lecture will trace their genealogy and identify typical legal institutions that are affiliated with a particular perspective. The lecture will conclude with a broader reflection on the role of public law in mediating between conflicting perspectives on people on the move.

Curriculum Vitae
Jürgen Bast is Professor of Public Law at Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany. Earlier he was a Full Professor of International and European Law at Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands, and a Senior Research Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law in Heidelberg, Germany. Jürgen Bast holds a PhD in law and degrees at master level in law and sociology. In Giessen he teaches German and European Constitutional Law and Public International Law. His main research interests are in European and international migration law and policy, including refugee and citizenship studies. Further, his research centers on European constitutional law, in particular the institutional law of the EU as well as studies of the future of economic governance and the welfare state in Europe. In the realm of public international law, he is interested in developing the public law of globalization, in particular studies of the exercise of public authority by international institutions and theories of supranationalism and multilayered governance.

Selected Publications
– Aufenthaltsrecht und Migrationssteuerung, Tübingen (Mohr Siebeck), 2011.