



Public Lecture at the Neuchâtel Graduate Conference

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Tuesday, 11 July 2023

European Migration Governance in the Context of Uncertainty

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Mathias Czaika, University for Continuing Education Krems

11:45 – 13:15 h

This lecture will be held in person at the University of Neuchâtel, Avenue du 1er-Mars 26, room C46, on WEBEX ([link](#)) as well as live-streamed on the nccr – on the move YouTube channel ([link](#)).

Abstract

Migration processes are uncertain and volatile, eluding precise conceptualization, definition, and measurement. Their embeddedness into complex migration driver environments, coupled with a high-level human agency of different actors involved in migration decisions – prospective migrants, intermediaries, and policymakers – hampers both prediction and efficient policy responses. Therefore, uncertainty and complexity as inherent features of international migration flows create challenges for the governance of migration both in the short and longer term. This talk aims to unpack the implications and transmission of migration-related uncertainties on European migration governance. Using the so-called Syrian ‘refugee crisis’ and environment-induced migration as illustrative cases of how uncertainty affects European migration decision-making across a range of time horizons, we show that in the context of uncertainty European states rather fine-tune existing policies than making major changes. I will also reflect of the reverse direction of the relationship between policy and uncertainty, by which scant legal options for migrating contributing to the greater unpredictability of flows and migration decisions.

About the Speaker

Mathias Czaika is University Professor of Migration and Integration and Head of the Department of Migration and Globalization at Danube University Krems, Austria. In this role, he leads a larger team of migration researchers and is also the coordinator of the PhD program in Migration Studies. Mathias Czaika holds a degree in economics from the University of Konstanz and a PhD in political economy from the University of Freiburg, Germany. After completing his PhD in 2008, he worked as an economic policy analyst and consultant for the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Between 2010 and 2017, he was a Senior Researcher and Associate Professor at the University of Oxford, UK. In 2016, he became Director of the International Migration Institute at the University of Oxford. Mathias Czaika's main research interests include areas as diverse as international migration processes and decision-making in the context of social transformations, globalization, development, poverty and inequality, and migration policy design and impact evaluation.