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National Center of Competence in Research –
The Migration-Mobility Nexus

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Université de Neuchâtel

Core Course #4

“Migration-Mobility Governance and Narratives Across Time and Space”

28 September 2023

University of Neuchâtel

Doctoral students are asked to register [here](#) until **26 September 2023**



Swiss National
Science Foundation

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Core Course #4 “Migration-Mobility Governance and Narratives Across Time and Space”

This Core Course is part of the second block of the Doctoral Program of the nccr – on the move (Introduction to theories and concepts, module-related). All doctoral students of Module I enrolled in the Certificate in Migration and Mobility Studies are expected to attend. Other members of the NCCR community are welcome to attend.

General Description

This course is aimed at discussing the conceptual, theoretical and methodological challenges in the study of attitudes, narratives and policies on migration and mobility across time and space. Through a multidisciplinary approach, students will learn how to trace the politicization of immigration in Europe over time, how to reconstruct migration histories and narratives through the use of archives writ large, and how to conceptualize and measure migration policies. After each lecture, we will have engaging discussions where we can collectively explore ways to enhance our research by sharing insights and learning from one another.

Date and Place

The course takes place on Thursday 28 September at the University of Neuchâtel, Rue Abram-Louis Breguet 2, room 2.310 and on and on [Webex](#).

Doctoral students and interested NCCR Fellows are asked to register [here](#) until 26 September 2023.

Timetable

- 11:00 *The Politicization of Immigration in Europe over Time*
Didier Ruedin, University of Neuchâtel
- 12:30 Lunch Break
- 14:00 *'In their own Words': Archives, Testimonies and Interviews in Migration Research*
Sara de Athouguia Filipe, University of Neuchâtel
- 15:30 Coffee Break
- 16:00 *How to Conceptualise and Measure Migration Policies?*
Philipp Lutz, University of Geneva & Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

The Politicization of Immigration in Europe over Time

Didier Ruedin, Senior Lecturer, University of Neuchâtel

Abstract

The objective of this paper is to trace the politicization of immigration in Europe over time. Drawing on over 19,000 manually coded claims in national newspapers in 10 countries between 1990 and 2018, this paper explores the key actors in the public debate, and how they shape politicization. To do so, different aspects of politicization will be explored, including the way immigrants and their descendants are constructed in media narratives, the arguments used, or the position taken in claims about immigration. Changes in salience and polarization will be presented, such as the high polarization of the topic in Hungary, or the low salience in Portugal.

'In their own Words': Archives, Testimonies and Interviews in Migration Research

Sara de Athougua Filipe, PostDoc, University of Neuchâtel

Abstract

Researchers often need first-person accounts to reconstruct migration histories and grasp different, often competing, narratives. The word 'archive' commonly evokes thoughts of dusty boxes and old binders in which the past fights against oblivion. Yet, archives are much more than that; they are dynamic places shaped by their own past and by our present-day questions. They come, therefore, in many forms: from the state archives (where there are indeed dusty boxes) to digital archives, private collections, and more. Although primarily envisioned as an archival skills training session, this course will also cover other qualitative research methods used to collect primary data, thus speaking to different needs and academic backgrounds. During the discussion, researchers will be encouraged to consider the benefits of these methods and sources to migration research and discuss the conduct of historical and qualitative research. The participants will also be invited to share some of the uncertainties and challenges stemming from these research processes that they already faced or can anticipate at this stage of their PhD.

How to Conceptualise and Measure Migration Policies?

Philipp Lutz, Assistant Professor, University of Geneva & Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Abstract

Researchers and policymakers need reliable and valid data to understand migration policies and to study their causes and effects. This course is aimed at discussing the conceptual and theoretical challenges in the measurement of such policies across time and space. After the course, participants will have an overview of the most important policy data sets in the migration field, learn about their different purpose, design and coverage, and be able to reflect on some important conceptual and methodological challenges that researchers face when measuring policies.

Transnational Migration Research: Key Concepts and Current Debates

Prof. Mihaela Nedelcu, University of Neuchâtel

Abstract

In migration studies, the transnational turn has started in early nineties when migration scholars adopted an analytical lens focusing on various cross-border ties, activities and interactions, instead of migration processes within solely destination or origin countries. What becomes visible when conceiving (im)migrants as transmigrants? What are the main conceptual and methodological tools for observing and analyzing transnationality within migration processes? What lessons have been learned from transnational migration research for advancing the understanding of cross-border dynamics within contemporary societies?

The lecture starts with an overview of key concepts of the transnational approach (e.g. transnational networks, transnational communities, transnational social spaces and fields, transnational ways of being and of belonging). Then, it discusses how these conceptual lenses allow for putting in evidence, for instance, complex processes of deterritorialization and multiple embeddedness, and forms of dual/multiple belonging and participation. In addition, it stresses the contribution of transnational migration studies to the critic of methodological nationalism. Finally, based on empirical examples, this talk invites to a reflexive discussion about the heuristic value of the transnational approach beyond the research field of transnational migration.

Compulsory Reading

Levitt, Peggy and Nina Glick Schiller (2004). "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society". *The International Migration Review*, 38 (3), pp. 1002-1039.

Additional Requirement

Nedelcu, Mihaela (2013). "(Re)thinking Transnationalism and Integration in the Digital Era: A Shift Towards Cosmopolitanism in the Study of International Migrations", in Söderström, Ola et al., "Critical Mobilities", PPUR & Routledge, pp. 153-175.

Tedeschi, Miriam, Ekaterina Vorobeva, and Jussi S. Jauhiainen (2020). "Transnationalism: current debates and new perspectives". *GeoJournal*, 87, pp. 603–619.

Wimmer, Andreas and Nina Glick Schiller (2002). "Methodological nationalism and the study of migration". *European Journal of Sociology*, 43 (2), pp. 217-240.

Expanding the Critical Knowledge Potential of Transnational Migration Research: How to Analyze Cross-Border Linkages, Hierarchies and Colonialities

Prof. Anna Amelina, Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg

Abstract

What concepts of current reflexive migration studies provide the most important criticisms of nation state-centered migration and integration research? To address this question, the proposed talk brings together critical impulses from transnational migration research, intersectional theories, and post- and decolonial approaches.

The first part provides an overview of transnational studies in migration, focusing on the micro-level (biographies), meso-level (families, kinship, etc.) and macro-level (labor markets, migration regimes) of analysis. It identifies transnational studies' central critical inquiries into methodologically nationalist research and gives insights into methodological strategies for limiting its biases. The second part addresses the question of how to advance transnational migration studies by means of intersectional theories. It suggests considering the interplay of gendering, racialization and class-related hierarchizations in analyses of 'migration' and 'integration' in institutional and non-institutional settings. This second part of the presentation will allow us to question the gender-blind elements that still exist in migration research and to identify methodological pathways for gender-sensitive and intersectional research strategies. The third part of the presentation focuses on approaches to embed transnational migration research into the analysis of wider and long-term societal dynamics, including postcolonial and postsocialist transformations. Inspecting the invitations to decolonize migration research and using the transnational perspective, this part suggests analyzing transnational linkages between the sending and receiving settings of migration as potentially embedded in the intersection of different forms of coloniality (e.g. [post]colonial, neocolonial, [post]socialist). The talk concludes by identifying central elements of the above-mentioned research strands and summarizing their added value for empirical migration studies.

Compulsory Reading

Amelina, Anna (2022). "Knowledge production for whom? Doing migrations, colonialities and stand-points in non-hegemonic migration research". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 1-23.

Additional Requirement

Amelina, Anna & Kenneth Horvath (2020). "Regimes of Intersection: Facing the Manifold Interplays of Discourses, Institutions, and Inequalities in the Regulation of Migration". *Migration Letters*, 17 (4), 487-497.

Lutz, Helma & Anna Amelina (2021). "Gender in Migration Studies: From Feminist Legacies to Intersectional, Post-and Decolonial Prospects". *Zeitschrift für Migrationsforschung*, 1(1), 55-73.