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Swiss Association of
Migration and Mobility Studies

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Université de Neuchâtel

Keynote Lecture at the Swiss Conference of Migration and Mobility Studies

Tuesday, 7 July 2026

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Reclaiming Cosmopolitanism for a Mobile World

Alex Sager, Portland State University, University of Washington

Discussant: Matteo Gianni, University of Geneva, nccr — on the move

17:15 – 18:45 CET
This keynote will take place in person at the University of Neuchâtel, Avenue du 1er-Mars 26, room C46 (Aula) and on WEBEX (link).

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Abstract

Cosmopolitanism has many enemies and more than a few fair-weather friends. When not denounced as deracinated, tyrannical, or utopian, it is too often reduced to a vague commitment to moral equality, fully compatible with closed borders and a system of sovereign territorial states. In this talk, I defend a radical, institutional cosmopolitanism that takes the ideal of the world citizen seriously and places human migration at its center. Critical scholarship on methodological nationalism, the mobility turn, and citizenship points the way, revealing the inadequacy of dominant understandings of central political concepts — including citizenship, community, democracy, and equality — for a mobile world. It also provides us with resources to reconstruct these concepts for a renewed cosmopolitanism that treats the migrant not as anomaly, but as the paradigmatic world citizen.

About the Speaker

Alex Sager is Professor of Philosophy and University Studies at Portland State University and Affiliate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Washington. He is the author of *Against Borders: Why the People of the World Need Free Movement* (Off the Fence Series: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2020), *Toward a Cosmopolitan Ethics of Mobility: The Migrant's Eye View* (Palgrave Pivot, 2018), and many articles and book chapters on the political philosophy of migration.

Lecture organized by
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