

Call for Papers

16th International Conference on Migration

Thursday to Saturday, 23–25 June 2016, Innsbruck/Austria

Migration und Generation/Migration and Generation

In the discourse on migration and integration, generation is a very manifest feature for categorizing and distinguishing aspects of migration. Thus, for example, within the complex of immigration, a distinction is made between first- and second-generation migrants. In this connection, the concept of generation points to an actual or supposed shared content of experience as constituted by the migration situation. As a rule, the concept of generations is not given further explication in these contexts; it would appear to be 'self-explanatory.' The fact of immigration evidently tends to mask and overshadow all other contents of experience. Thus the question arises: in using the concept of generation in this way, is this more a symbolic-discursive employment or is it actually an analytical category? Both those aspects need to be interrogated. The first gives rise to the impression of a kind of stepwise sequence of immigration and integration. The second seeks to describe shared features among members of the same age-group who are living under comparable social conditions and in a specific historical context. In referring to shared generation-specific experiences, the intention often is to designate a jointly shared social, political or cultural understanding of generation as an imagined social group, such as 'Generation X.'

In migration research, the concept of generation already appears in the work of the earlier Chicago School. Its model of a process of assimilation extending over three generations has found broad acceptance within migration research. The associated notions of generational structures introduced into the discussion continue to be employed in order to point out deficits and problems connected with the integration of various generations and to situate these within a context of generations. But due to various criticisms of this use of the concept of generation, it tends now to be employed in migration research in a limited way, to refer to the 'second generation.' By contrast, in public debates, the concept often continues to be used in an instrumental and ideological sense. For that reason, it is useful to examine what in a specific instance is meant when reference is made in the context of migration to the notion of generation, and whether one can speak at all of different generations. Does the concept tend to serve the aims of scientific analysis and self-description, or is this rather even a discriminatory practice of designation?

Against the backdrop of these controversies and issues, the conference will discuss the concept of generation in the context of migration, and will also examine the use of the concept of generations in empirical research and in public discourse. Likewise of central concern here is to view the phenomenon of migration from an inter-generational perspective and to ask to what extent this can contribute to a better understanding of migration.

Thematic focal areas:

1. Theory
2. Politics
3. Culture
4. Education
5. Family
6. Gender
7. Reproduction/Care
8. Gainful employment/independence
9. Cultures of memory

Proposal Submission

Interested potential presenters are requested to submit an abstract of 500 words maximum with a short title, along with a brief bio and contact address (e-mail, telephone and postal address). For that purpose, please use the online form available at www.migrationskonferenz.ch. Please indicate the subtopic under which your presentation should be included, and also whether you can present and discuss in both the conference languages (English and German) or only in one.

Proposal submission deadline: 31 December 2015
Submit proposal per email to: Tobias Studer, tobias.studer@fhnw.ch
Notification on proposals by: 15. February 2016

Conference languages: German and English
Information and contact: www.migrationskonferenz.ch

Organizers

- Institute for the Educational Sciences, Faculty of Education, Innsbruck University, Austria
- Centre de Documentation sur les Migrations Humaines CDMH (Dudelange, Luxembourg)
- Institute for Integration and Participation, School of Social Work, University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland (Olten, Switzerland)
- Institute for Regional and Migration Research IRM (Trier, FRG)
- Competence Center for Migration, Intercultural Education and Organizational Development, University of Applied Sciences Cologne, Faculty for Applied Social Sciences (Cologne, FRG)

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