

CALL FOR ABSTRACT

WORKSHOP: 'Migration and mobilities in an urbanising world'

Dates: 16th to 17th June 2016 (Thursday and Friday)

Location: Utrecht, the Netherlands

Organisers: Utrecht University (Department of Human Geography and Planning) and
The Transnational Mobility-Development Network

Globalisation has given rise to new and intensified transnational and translocal relationships. This is reflected in the rise and intensification of a range of mobilities of individuals and communities. In the 'age of migration', workers in varied skill sectors, investors, tourists, students, (health) care providers and seekers etc. are moving across and within national borders and living in transnational/translocal spaces more than ever before. New and/or intensified flows and circulations of people (bundled with other non-human flows) are contributing to rapid transformations in all parts of the world. Human mobility has indeed become one of the most important stratifying factors in this time of globalisation. While there is a global competition for so-called skilled migrants and talented students creating smooth pathways for some movers, other migrants looking for humanitarian protection face hard borders and long asylum procedures in their migration processes.

This 2-day Workshop focuses on the politics of mobility and examines the nature of different types of mobilities and their impact on human development in our urbanising world. The Workshop considers the importance of place, space and temporalities. It encourages in particular a translocal perspective to interrogate the causes, nature and impact of migration and mobilities, paying attention to the contexts of and processes in migrants' places of origin, destinations and on the road. In particular, the Workshop aims to advance our theoretical and empirical understanding in six key topics:

	Panel theme (see below for abstracts)	Panel organisers
1	Beyond Fortress Europe: The politics and emotionalities of refugee-support on the ground	Giulia Sinatti (Free University Amsterdam), Benjamin Etzold (University of Bonn) and Kolar Aparna (Radboud University Nijmegen)
2	Urban governance of translocal spaces	Margit Fauser (University of Bielefeld) and Gery Nijenhuis (Utrecht University)
3	Skilled migration, elite formation and knowledge networks	Mayke Kaag (Leiden University) and Maggi Leung (Utrecht University)
4	Environment-mobilities nexus: Migration in the context of rapid urbanisation and climate-variability	Annelies Zoomers, Femke van Noorloos and Janwillem Liebrand (Utrecht University)
5	Migrant trajectories & mobility regimes: re-thinking transnational identities in a global, but bordering, world	Joris Schapendonk (Radboud University Nijmegen), Ilse van Liempt (Utrecht University) and Griet Steel (Utrecht University and KU Leuven)
6	Immobility: shifting migrant identities, notions of transit, and states of transnationality	Lothar Smith and Martin van der Velde (Radboud University Nijmegen)

You are kindly invited to submit your abstract of no more than 300 words to the respective panel organiser(s) by noon, 8 April 2016. Abstracts should be written in English and submitted in a Word-file. The workshop organising committee will decide on the selection of abstracts.

Registration for the Workshop is free-of-charge. Participants are expected to cover their own travel and accommodation costs.

In case of queries, please contact Janwillem Liebrand j.liebrand@uu.nl and Maggi Leung w.h.m.leung@uu.nl.

Panel 1: Beyond Fortress Europe: The politics and emotionalities of refugee-support on the ground

Organisers: Giulia Sinatti (g.sinatti@vu.nl), Benjamin Etzold (etzold@uni-bonn.de) and Kolar Aparna (k.kolaraparna@fm.ru.nl)

Recent developments of mass movements of migrants and refugees in Europe and the emergence of civic and grassroots initiatives all over Europe call for attention beyond the binary debates of securitisation versus humanitarian efforts captured within the 'Fortress Europa' metaphor used by scholars. These initiatives, taking place in localities at the external EU border as well as along migrant mobility routes within Europe, have so far been largely left out of scholarly interest despite the political urgency of such spaces in shaping the politics of immigration and asylum in Europe.

In this session we seek to understand how migrant and refugee (im)mobilities, civic initiatives, and grassroots movements on the ground shape political subjectivities and positionalities of people in relation to Europe's geographic as well as symbolic borders.

In particular, the session seeks to open discussions from three main angles:

First, who are the actors responding to refugee (im)mobilities? What are their motivations? Whose needs are being addressed? How are these needs defined and by whom?

Second, what kinds of actions are being initiated? What emotionalities are driving such actions? What kinds of relations and political subjectivities are being enacted, practiced, and forged between actors? In what ways are such actions complementary/antagonistic to macro resolutions at the national and EU level?

Third, where are such subjectivities and inter-relations being enacted? And what are their implications for how we imagine and act upon geographies of migration, borders and identities in and beyond Europe. If previously the so-called 'external' EU borderlands were considered to be the 'hot' contact-zones for citizens/tourists and migrants/refugees, recent developments have witnessed the emergence of migrant and refugee (im)mobilities and support in smaller towns and cities 'internal' to EU space producing their own border politics.

With the above questions in mind, we invite papers that address the relational dimension of refugee support from various locations and angles

- Emerging political and emotional subjectivities through spaces of refugee support
- Politics and emotionalities of refugee support
- Everyday encounters and actions in relation to refugee (im)mobilities
- Geographies of refugee support
- Local civic responses to refugee (im)mobilities

Panel 2: Urban governance of translocal spaces

Organisers: Margit Fauser (margit.fauser@uni-bielefeld.de) and Gery Nijenhuis (G.Nijenhuis@uu.nl)

Global spatial mobilities of a diversity of migratory agents are among the top public and political priority of our time. Thereby, the translocal spaces that emerge through cross-border migrants' practices also confront multiple approaches in both places of origin and of arrival, intersecting with other urban and rescaling dynamics of economic development and state power. This panel aims at exploring these emerging forms of urban governance of translocal spaces. Rather than following on the notion of de-territorialized actors, communities or institutions, this panel is interested in the new place-specific encounters. It situates the local and translocal in multi-scalar perspective, with changing governance arrangements that put the local and often specifically urban at the centre, now often stretching out to translocal networks. In this vein, the panel favours the inclusion of state and non-state actors, civil society and migrant actors, as well as private enterprises into the analysis. Topics for papers include – but are not limited to following questions:

- How can we describe forms of governance and policies, originating from multiple scales - including the national -, affecting translocal networks in different cities and places?
- How do migrants' and other civil society actors' cross-border practices relate to local and urban transformations?
- How do translocal spaces and their governance ameliorate, create or reinforce social inequalities?
- How does a view on translocalities inform our concepts and methodologies in the fields of migration studies and urban development and change, including its governance?
- To what extent can we observe the emergence of trans-urbanities?

Panel 3: Skilled migration, elite formation and knowledge networks

Organisers: Mayke Kaag (m.m.a.kaag@asc.leidenuniv.nl), Maggi Leung (w.h.m.leung@uu.nl)

This panel aims at extending our understanding of elite formation in the context of migration/mobilities and transnationalism, and how the exchange and production of skills and knowledge reflect and contribute to these processes. It unpacks the notion of skilled/skilling mobility, interrogates the politics and practices of knowledge mobility and production, and map out their impact both in places (esp. in cities – cities as skilling and elite hubs) and in the formation of translocal elites and knowledge networks. Abstracts may address, but are not limited to, the following questions: (i) how knowledge and skills are framed in our mobile world, (ii) what kinds of idea, knowledge and skills move (or not) and are produced as a result of 'skilled/skilling' migration/ mobilities, (iii) transnational processes of elite formation within migrant communities, (iv) how migration/mobilities may influence processes of elite formation back home. The panel particularly welcomes papers that advance our understanding on issues surrounding conventionally-defined skilled mobilities (e.g. professional, businesses, education mobilities), but also contribution that motivates a critical perspective on 'knowledge' and 'skills' that may redefine 'lower-' or de-skilled populations, fields and processes. Pursuing a translocal and relational perspective, the paper should analyse processes of skill mobility/production and elite formation within migrants' communities by not only paying attention to the internal dynamics in these communities but also on how these may intersect with processes of power in host contexts, contexts of origin , and the larger diaspora.

Panel 4: Environment-mobilities nexus: Migration in the context of rapid urbanisation and climate-variability

Organisers: Annelies Zoomers (E.B.Zoomers@uu.nl), Femke van Noorloos (H.J.vanNoorloos@uu.nl) and Janwillem Liebrand (j.liebrand@uu.nl)

Papers in this panel explore the complex and shifting relations between environment(s) and mobilities. Globalisation and climate variabilities have given rise to new and intensified flows of people, goods, capital and knowledge, contributing to rapid transformations, especially in the South it seems. The presence of migrants, tourists, and (new) settlers and entrepreneurs shape urban and rural environments and people in distinct ways. New development trajectories and networks are producing new livelihood opportunities for some, and constraints for others. Topics that researchers for this panel are invited to reflect on are, very broadly:

- Climate variability and migration/mobilities, especially in relation to poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.
- Resilience of urban and rural communities in relation to their environments.
- Migration/mobilities and spatial transformation of urban and rural environments.
- Individual and group interactions in the context of mobilities and environment-based livelihoods.
- Migration experiences of urban dwellers, farmers and pastoralists, in relation to rapid urbanisation.
- New environment and/or migration policies in development.
- Development projects (e.g. roads, irrigation, tourism, land acquisition) that impact the environment and mobilities of people.

Panel 5: Migrant trajectories & mobility regimes: re-thinking transnational identities in a global, but bordering, world

Organisers: Joris Schapendonk (j.schapendonk@fm.ru.nl), Ilse van Liempt (I.C.vanLiempt@uu.nl) and Griet Steel (G.Steel@uu.nl)

Inspired by the mobilities turn, migration scholars have started to pay attention to the often complex mobility trajectories of migrants. This varies from studies focusing on the experiences attached to migrant journeys to (un)known destinations (e.g. Vogt 2013; Schapendonk and Steel 2014), to studies focusing on the various onward and/or return mobilities that reflect migrant lifeworlds (e.g. Ahrens et al. 2014; Sinatti 2011). The politics of mobility is clearly reflected in these individual and collective trajectories. Whereas some migrants are confronted with harsh mobility regime (Glick-Schiller & Salazar 2013), others move relatively freely across borders. Moreover, these pathways question the linear logic of migration – as if migration processes follow the line of departure-movement-arrival. These two main findings provide interesting opportunities to critically reflect on the dominant conceptual framework of ‘transnational migration’. This panel has three main dimensions:

- It explores new theoretical and methodological approaches to investigate migrants trajectories in a globalising, but bordering, world
- It analyses how migrants encounter mobility regimes, and the various ways they overcome the barriers to their movements in specific urban contexts
- It pays explicit attention to the multiple moments and places of departure and arrival and the ways they affect migrant identities and experiences.

These dimensions help us to question frictionless (as if migrants are un-problematically ‘connected’) and bipolar conceptualisations of transnationalism (as if migrants’ mobilities bind together only their place of origin and destination). We welcome contributions that...:

- ... present empirical findings on migrant trajectories/onward movements /return mobilities and how these trajectories affect migrant identities
- ...discuss the methodological implications of trajectory research. What are possible research designs to investigate migrant trajectories? What are the promises and pitfalls of these designs?
- ...discuss the conceptual (dis)connections of migration studies and mobilities studies. How are migrant mobilities exceptionalized in social sciences (e.g. Hui 2015)? When/where/how do migrant experiences attached to their trajectories overlap with that of other mobile people, and what do we learn from these analytical connections (e.g. Schapendonk, Van Liempt, Spierings 2015)?

Panel 6: Immobility: shifting migrant identities, notions of transit, and states of transnationality

Organisers: Lothar Smith (l.smith@fm.ru.nl) and Martin van der Velde (m.vandervelde@fm.ru.nl)

With the concept of migration, but also related concepts such as globalisation and transnationality, emphasis is given to flows, to continuities, at any given scale. Yet in the edited volume van der Velde & van Naerssen (2015) we argue how this fails to give cognisance not only to the hurdles met along the way by migrants, which may halt or hinder these flows, but also to conscious decisions to become immobile during a process of migration, or even to remain immobile altogether.

In this panel we want to give attention to actors who are going through a mental shift in their connection with migration. Thus we do welcome papers that move beyond a focus on migrants alone, papers that might for instance also give attention to the non-rational side of migration as linked to mutated identities and constantly shifting decision-making arising out of a spatial-placial conflict between an engagement with places versus the constant presence of transnational ties. Notably urban contexts, as apparently semi-autonomous yet also connected sites, are places of delicate balance, as actors deal with the continual influence of a ‘here’ and (perceived) ‘there’. This panel thus focuses on the meaning and value of immobility, and hopes to thereby also provide room for some in-depth reflections on assumed meanings and values attached to concepts like ‘the left-behind’, ‘social remittances’ as well as morally enveloped dichotomies like consumptive remittances versus productive remittances. Finally this panel hopes to also engage on the ways to research these more submersed dimensions of migration and its effects and we encourage all paper presenters to devote some of their time on this.